
SENATE BILL 6192

State of Washington

62nd Legislature

2012 Regular Session

By Senator Ericksen

Read first time 01/13/12. Referred to Committee on Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections.

1 AN ACT Relating to defining terms under the growth management act;
2 and reenacting and amending RCW 36.70A.030.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 36.70A.030 and 2009 c 565 s 22 are each reenacted and
5 amended to read as follows:

6 Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in
7 this section apply throughout this chapter.

8 (1) "Adopt a comprehensive land use plan" means to enact a new
9 comprehensive land use plan or to update an existing comprehensive land
10 use plan.

11 (2) "Agricultural land" means land primarily devoted to the
12 commercial production of horticultural, viticultural, floricultural,
13 dairy, apiary, vegetable, or animal products or of berries, grain, hay,
14 straw, turf, seed, Christmas trees not subject to the excise tax
15 imposed by RCW 84.33.100 through 84.33.140, finfish in upland
16 hatcheries, or livestock, and that has long-term commercial
17 significance for agricultural production.

18 (3) "City" means any city or town, including a code city.

1 (4) "Comprehensive land use plan," "comprehensive plan," or "plan"
2 means a generalized coordinated land use policy statement of the
3 governing body of a county or city that is adopted pursuant to this
4 chapter.

5 (5) "Critical areas" include the following areas and ecosystems:
6 (a) Wetlands; (b) areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers
7 used for potable water; (c) fish and wildlife habitat conservation
8 areas; (d) frequently flooded areas; and (e) geologically hazardous
9 areas.

10 (6) "Department" means the department of commerce.

11 (7) "Development regulations" or "regulation" means the controls
12 placed on development or land use activities by a county or city,
13 including, but not limited to, zoning ordinances, critical areas
14 ordinances, shoreline master programs, official controls, planned unit
15 development ordinances, subdivision ordinances, and binding site plan
16 ordinances together with any amendments thereto. A development
17 regulation does not include a decision to approve a project permit
18 application, as defined in RCW 36.70B.020, even though the decision may
19 be expressed in a resolution or ordinance of the legislative body of
20 the county or city.

21 (8) "Forest land" means land primarily devoted to growing trees for
22 long-term commercial timber production on land that can be economically
23 and practically managed for such production, including Christmas trees
24 subject to the excise tax imposed under RCW 84.33.100 through
25 84.33.140, and that has long-term commercial significance. In
26 determining whether forest land is primarily devoted to growing trees
27 for long-term commercial timber production on land that can be
28 economically and practically managed for such production, the following
29 factors shall be considered: (a) The proximity of the land to urban,
30 suburban, and rural settlements; (b) surrounding parcel size and the
31 compatibility and intensity of adjacent and nearby land uses; (c) long-
32 term local economic conditions that affect the ability to manage for
33 timber production; and (d) the availability of public facilities and
34 services conducive to conversion of forest land to other uses.

35 (9) "Geologically hazardous areas" means areas that because of
36 their susceptibility to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other
37 geological events, are not suited to the siting of commercial,

1 residential, or industrial development consistent with public health or
2 safety concerns.

3 (10) "Long-term commercial significance" includes the growing
4 capacity, productivity, and soil composition of the land for long-term
5 commercial production, in consideration with the land's proximity to
6 population areas, and the possibility of more intense uses of the land.

7 (11) "Minerals" include gravel, sand, and valuable metallic
8 substances.

9 (12) "Public facilities" include streets, roads, highways,
10 sidewalks, street and road lighting systems, traffic signals, domestic
11 water systems, storm and sanitary sewer systems, parks and recreational
12 facilities, and schools.

13 (13) "Public services" include fire protection and suppression, law
14 enforcement, public health, education, recreation, environmental
15 protection, and other governmental services.

16 (14) "Recreational land" means land so designated under RCW
17 36.70A.1701 and that, immediately prior to this designation, was
18 designated as agricultural land of long-term commercial significance
19 under RCW 36.70A.170. Recreational land must have playing fields and
20 supporting facilities existing before July 1, 2004, for sports played
21 on grass playing fields.

22 (15) "Rural character" refers to the patterns of land use and
23 development established by a county in the rural element of its
24 comprehensive plan:

25 (a) In which open space, the natural landscape, and vegetation
26 predominate over the built environment;

27 (b) That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based
28 economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas;

29 (c) That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in
30 rural areas and communities;

31 (d) That are compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and
32 for fish and wildlife habitat;

33 (e) That reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land
34 into sprawling, low-density development;

35 (f) That generally do not require the extension of urban
36 governmental services; and

37 (g) That are consistent with the protection of natural surface

1 water flows and groundwater and surface water recharge and discharge
2 areas.

3 (16) "Rural development" refers to development outside the urban
4 growth area and outside agricultural, forest, and mineral resource
5 lands designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170. Rural development can
6 consist of a variety of uses and residential densities, including
7 clustered residential development, at levels that are consistent with
8 the preservation of rural character and the requirements of the rural
9 element. Rural development does not refer to agriculture or forestry
10 activities that may be conducted in rural areas.

11 (17) "Rural governmental services" or "rural services" include
12 those public services and public facilities historically and typically
13 delivered at an intensity usually found in rural areas, and may include
14 domestic water systems, fire and police protection services,
15 transportation and public transit services, and other public utilities
16 associated with rural development and normally not associated with
17 urban areas. Rural services do not include storm or sanitary sewers,
18 except as otherwise authorized by RCW 36.70A.110(4).

19 (18) "Urban governmental services" or "urban services" include
20 those public services and public facilities at an intensity
21 historically and typically provided in cities, specifically including
22 storm and sanitary sewer systems, domestic water systems, street
23 cleaning services, fire and police protection services, public transit
24 services, and other public utilities associated with urban areas and
25 normally not associated with rural areas.

26 (19) "Urban growth" refers to growth that makes intensive use of
27 land for the location of buildings, structures, and impermeable
28 surfaces to such a degree as to be incompatible with the primary use of
29 land for the production of food, other agricultural products, or fiber,
30 or the extraction of mineral resources, rural uses, rural development,
31 and natural resource lands designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170. A
32 pattern of more intensive rural development, as provided in RCW
33 36.70A.070(5)(d), is not urban growth. When allowed to spread over
34 wide areas, urban growth typically requires urban governmental
35 services. "Characterized by urban growth" refers to land having urban
36 growth located on it, or to land located in relationship to an area
37 with urban growth on it as to be appropriate for urban growth.

1 (20) "Urban growth areas" means those areas designated by a county
2 pursuant to RCW 36.70A.110.

3 (21) "Wetland" or "wetlands" means areas that are inundated or
4 saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration
5 sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support,
6 a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil
7 conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and
8 similar areas. Wetlands do not include those artificial wetlands
9 intentionally created from nonwetland sites, including, but not limited
10 to, irrigation and drainage ditches, grass-lined swales, canals,
11 detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, and
12 landscape amenities, or those wetlands created after July 1, 1990, that
13 were unintentionally created as a result of the construction of a road,
14 street, or highway. Wetlands may include those artificial wetlands
15 intentionally created from nonwetland areas created to mitigate
16 conversion of wetlands.

17 (22) "Low-density sprawl" means development taking place outside of
18 urban growth areas that does not conform to the county's adopted rural
19 element and hinders a county's ability to achieve the goals established
20 by the legislature in RCW 36.70A.011.

21 (23) "Sprawl" means growth taking place outside of established
22 urban growth areas because city or county comprehensive plan
23 approaches, development regulations, or other factors hinder the
24 ability of the county's urban growth areas to adequately capture growth
25 that would otherwise be attracted to the urban growth areas of the
26 county.

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