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**Community Development, Housing &  
Tribal Affairs Committee**

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**HB 2583**

**Brief Description:** Authorizing specified local governments to designate a portion of their territory as a creative district subject to certification by the Washington arts commission.

**Sponsors:** Representatives McBride, Haler, Zeiger, Stambaugh, Moscoso, Bergquist, Fitzgibbon, Peterson, Van De Wege, Springer, Santos, Goodman, Hickel and Tharinger.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Authorizes the Washington Arts Commission to certify creative districts designated by local governments as areas that promote cultural facilities, creative industries, or arts-related businesses.

**Hearing Date:** 1/25/16

**Staff:** Sean Flynn (786-7124).

**Background:**

The Washington Arts Commission (Commission) was established to promote the conservation and development of the state's artistic resources that contribute to the quality of life and general welfare of the state's citizens. The Commission is composed of 19 members appointed by the governor and four members of the legislature.

The Commission has a broad authority to sponsor and administer activities or programs related to the growth and development of the arts and humanities, and assist any private or public agency, or person in such pursuits. The Commission administers the state's public arts collection and the state poet laureate program.

**Summary of Bill:**

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*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 Commission may certify a creative district that is an area designated by a city or county containing a hub of cultural facilities, creative industries, or arts-related businesses. The creative district must be:

- contiguous;
- distinguished by artistic and cultural resources involving economic and cultural development; and
- engaged and contributing to the community arts and culture.

The Commission may require additional eligibility criteria at its discretion. A creative district also may include vacant property in proximity to the artistic activities that is suitable for similar development.

The city or county seeking certification of a creative district must submit an application for review by the Commission. The Commission may approve or reject the application, and include terms and conditions upon approval. The Commission may revoke certification for a city or county's failure to comply with the conditions of approval.

A Commission employee is designated to administer the creative district certification program, including reviewing applications, developing policies and standards, and overseeing compliance. The coordinator also identifies public and private resources and incentives to support and enhance development within the districts. The Commission may offer incentives to a certified creative district to encourage business, facilitate connections to state economic development assistance, and provide technical assistance, among other resources.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on 1/20/2016.

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