

2023 Legislative Session Summary:

Growth Management

Issue Team Chair: Cynthia Stewart

Contact: cstewart@lwvwa.org

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Several bills moved ahead at the end of this session. The biggest wins this year in the Growth Management issue were HB 1181, Improving the state's response to climate change by updating the state's planning framework; and HB 1101, Increasing middle housing in areas traditionally dedicated to single-family detached housing. These bills will have a deep effect on how local comprehensive planning is done and should improve the state's ability to respond to both climate change and housing needs.

Additionally, SB 5412, Reducing local governments' land use permitting workloads; and HB 1425, Facilitating municipal annexations, moved ahead at the end of the session. Each simplifies processes that have proven to be burdensome to local jurisdictions.

Several bills died this week because they did not pass the opposite chamber by the deadline of April 12. These were HB 1167 Concerning residential housing regulations, SB 5235 Concerning accessory dwelling units, and SB 5466 Promoting transit-oriented development,.

As of this writing, among the bills League was following, only HB 1620, Concerning the number of inhabitants required for incorporation as a city or town, has been signed by the Governor; but four other bills have passed both Chambers and have been transmitted to the Governor for signature.

Bills that Passed Both Chambers

HB 1620 Concerning the number of inhabitants required for incorporation as a city or town would remove the requirement that an area must have at least 3,000 inhabitants, instead of the otherwise standard 1,500, to incorporate if it is within 5 air miles of a city with a population of 15,000 or more. This bill passed the House on February 9 with a vote of 97 to 0; and passed the Senate on March 31, with a vote of 47-1. It has been signed by the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate and will be transmitted to the Governor for signature.

HB 1110 Increasing middle housing in areas traditionally dedicated to single-family detached housing. This bill passed the House as a second substitute with a vote of 75-21 on March 6. It passed the Senate on April 11 with amendments on a vote of 35 to 14. The House concurred with Senate amendments on April 18, and the bill has been sent to the Governor for signature.

HB 1181 Improving the state's response to climate change by updating the state's planning framework. This bill passed out of the House on March 3 with a vote of 57-41. It passed the Senate with amendments on a vote of 29-20. On April 13, the House concurred with Senate amendments on a vote of 55 to 41, and the Speaker of the House signed the bill on April 14. It was signed by the President of the Senate on April 17 and has been sent to the Governor for signature.

HB 1425 Facilitating municipal annexations would change the number of residents required for annexation in small communities passed the House with a vote of 96-0 on March 3 and passed the Senate on April 19.

SB 5412 Reducing local governments' land use permitting workloads. Permitting has been described as one of the barriers to development of affordable housing. League has taken the position that no regulations related to safety or environmental protection should be removed, but that processes to expedite permitting should be enhanced. This bill passed the Senate on March 6 with a vote of 49-0 and passed the House with amendments on April 12 with a vote of 95 to 2. After extensive negotiations and two more votes, the Senate concurred with House amendments and the bill has been sent to the Governor for signature.

Bills That Died

HB 1133 Establishing limitations on detached accessory dwelling units outside urban growth areas. (*Recall that League is watching this, in case it is amended to allow more than nominal change in rural areas.*) This bill had a public hearing on January 19 and was passed out of the House Housing Committee as a substitute bill on January 26. It was in the House Rules Committee but died because it was not sent to the floor for a vote by the cutoff date. Its companion bill, SB 5357, also died.

HB 1167 Concerning residential housing regulations, establishes a grant program to assist counties and cities adopt preapproved middle housing plans and prohibits a city or county from imposing any regulations, reviews, or standards on multiplex housing that is not applied to detached single family residences. This bill passed the House on March 4 with a vote of 95-0 and passed both the Senate Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs and Ways & Means Committees with amendments. It is now in the Senate Rules Committee. However, since it is not deemed necessary to implement the budget and did not pass the Senate by the April 12 cutoff, it has died.

HB 1245 Increasing housing options through lot splitting, HB 1245 passed the House with a vote of 94-2 and had a public hearing in the Senate Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs Committee on March 14. It had an executive session on March 28 but no action was taken. Because it did not pass out of committee by the cutoff of March 29, it has died.

[HB 1351](#) Encouraging transit-oriented development through a prohibition on the imposition of minimum parking requirements. This bill passed the House Local Government Committee on February 8 and was in the House Rules Committee but did not make it to the floor for a vote by the cutoff date. Its companion bill, SB 5456, died in committee.

[HB 1401](#) Allowing cities and counties to create a simple, standardized housing permit process for affordable housing units in areas designated for housing. This bill passed the House Housing Committee on February 2 and was referred to the Rules Committee but died because it was not sent to the floor for a vote by the cutoff date.

[HB 1611](#) Local government permitting. This bill passed the House Housing Committee on February 7 and has been referred to the Finance Committee but it did not pass out of that committee by the cut-off date.

[HB 1723/SB 5651](#) Concerning equity and environmental justice in the growth management act would add environmental justice and equity as a goal in the Growth Management Act and as an element in local comprehensive plans. Both bills died because they were not passed out of the committees by the cut-off dates.

[HB 1735](#) Adding net ecological gain as a voluntary element of comprehensive plans under the growth management act passed the House Environment and Energy Committee on February 13 and was referred to the Appropriations Committee, but it died there because it did not pass by the cut-off date.

[SB 5190](#) Increasing middle housing in areas traditionally dedicated to single-family detached housing was passed from the Senate Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs on January 12 and referred to the Senate Housing Committee, where it was moved out of committee as a substitute bill and has been referred to the Ways & Means Committee but was never scheduled for public hearing in that committee. So it died because it did not pass out of the policy committee by the cut-off date.

[SB 5203](#) Improving the state's response to climate change by updating the state's planning framework. This bill passed the Senate Local Government, Land Use and Tribal Affairs Committee as a substitute and has been referred to the Senate Ways & Means Committee but did not pass out of that committee by the fiscal cut-off date.

[SB 5235](#) Concerning accessory dwelling units. This passed the Senate on February 27 with a vote of 42-6 and had a public hearing in the House Housing Committee on March 13 and at executive session on March 27 was referred to the House Rules Committee. It did not move to the House floor by the cutoff of April 12 so has died.

[SB 5364](#) Increasing housing options through lot splitting, passed the Senate Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs Committee as a substitute and died in the Senate Rules Committee. Its companion bill, HB 1245, is described above.

SB 5357 Establishing limitations on detached accessory dwelling units outside urban growth areas. This bill had a public hearing in the Senate Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs Committee on January 26 was never scheduled for executive session, so it died.

SB 5456 Encouraging transit-oriented development through a prohibition on the imposition of minimum parking requirements. SB 5456 had a public hearing in the Senate Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs Committee but no action was taken in executive session. It died because it did not pass out of the committee by the cut-off date.

SB 5466 Promoting transit-oriented development, passed the Senate with a vote of 40 – 8. It has passed the House Housing and Capital Budget Committees with amendments and is now in the House Rules Committee. It did not pass by the cutoff for bills to pass from the opposite chamber, which was April 12, so this bill has died.

How You Can Be Involved

- Respond to Action Alerts in the legislative newsletter. These will primarily appear in the section of the newsletter related to growth management.
- Contact Cynthia Stewart, cstewart@lwvwa.org, to receive additional information.