

2024 Legislative Session Summary: Growth Management

Issue Team Chair: Cynthia Stewart

Contact: cstewart@lwwwa.org

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The biggest wins for the Growth Management issue in 2023 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, were passed in 2023. Each simplifies processes that have proven to be burdensome to local jurisdictions.

In 2024, there has been little action on Growth Management bills.

Bills That Passed

SB 5834 Concerning urban growth areas, would allow comprehensive plan amendments to reconfigure urban growth areas under certain conditions, addressing areas where the buildable lands report indicates insufficient land for development. This bill is currently in the Senate Rules Committee. **This bill passed the Senate with a vote of 49-0 and in the House by a vote of 96 to 0. It has been sent to the Governor for signature.**

Bills That Died

Sometimes bills that die in the first session of the biennium are brought back and passed in the second session of the biennium. Unfortunately, none of the following bills that League supported moved forward in 2024.

HB 1133/HB 5357 Establishing limitations on detached accessory dwelling units outside urban growth areas. (*Recall that the 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. Neither this bill nor its companion bill, SB 5357, progressed in 2024.

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. In 2024 it was referred to the House Rules Committee but then back to the Housing Committee, where it did not progress further.

HB 1245/SB 5364 Increasing housing options through lot splitting, HB 1245 passed the House with a vote of 94-2 in 2023 but did not progress in the Senate that year. In 2024, the House passed this bill with a vote of 94 to 4, but again it did not even get a committee hearing in the Senate.

SB 5364 passed the Senate Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs Committee as a substitute and died in the Senate Rules Committee. It did not progress in 2024.

HB 1351/SB 5456 Encouraging transit-oriented development through a prohibition on the imposition of minimum parking requirements. HB 1351 passed the House Local Government Committee 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 and did not make further progress in 2024. In 2024, neither bill moved ahead.

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. In 2024 it was referred back to the House Housing Committee but did not progress.

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. It did not progress in 2024.

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. Neither bill progressed in 2024.

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. It did not progress in 2024.

HB 2113 Concerning compliance with the housing element requirements of the growth management act. This bill would require a city or county planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA) to submit any housing development regulations to the Department of Commerce (Commerce) for a determination of compliance within six months after a comprehensive plan update and would prohibit said jurisdictions from denying an affordable or moderate-income housing development unless the jurisdiction has received a final determination of housing development regulation compliance from Commerce, or certain other conditions are met. This bill was in the House Rules Committee and assigned to an "X" file.

HB 2160 Promoting community and transit-oriented housing development. This bill would make a number of changes to regulatory requirements to facilitate more development of multi-family housing near transit facilities. The original bill prohibited minimum parking requirements in these transit-oriented development areas, but that provision was removed in the most recent substitute bill. The intention had been to encourage transit use by reducing parking capacity. **This bill passed the House with a vote of 56 to 40 and it did not pass the Senate Ways & Means Committee so could not move to the floor for a vote.**

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. It did not progress in 2024. However, its companion bill, HB 1110, passed in 2023.

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. Its companion bill, **HB 1181**, passed and was signed by the Governor in 2023 so this bill was no longer needed in 2024.

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. In 2024, the House Rules Committee put this bill in the "X" file, so it did not progress. Its companion bill, **HB 1276**, also did not progress in 2024.

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 and died. In 2024, the Senate Rules Committee put this bill in the "X" file, and it 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 revenue.
- Contact **Cynthia Stewart**, Growth Management Issue Chair, to receive additional information.