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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1700**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2025 Regular Session**

**By** House Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Volz, Graham, Schmidt, Low, Schmick, Klicker, Dye, Abell, Chase, Connors, Engell, Ormsby, and Hill)

1 AN ACT Relating to the timing of updates for comprehensive plans  
2 and development regulations; amending RCW 36.70A.130; and creating a  
3 new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that it has  
6 placed additional requirements to be incorporated into comprehensive  
7 plans and development regulation updates due at the end of 2026. It  
8 further recognizes there is a shortage of qualified planners to do  
9 the work and local governments are struggling to accomplish the  
10 additional work. Therefore, local governments are being granted a  
11 six-month extension for compliance with the upcoming comprehensive  
12 plan update.

13 **Sec. 2.** RCW 36.70A.130 and 2024 c 17 s 1 are each amended to  
14 read as follows:

15 (1)(a) Each comprehensive land use plan and development  
16 regulations shall be subject to continuing review and evaluation by  
17 the county or city that adopted them. Except as otherwise provided, a  
18 county or city shall take legislative action to review and, if  
19 needed, revise its comprehensive land use plan and development  
20 regulations to ensure the plan and regulations comply with the

1 requirements of this chapter according to the deadlines in  
2 subsections (4) and (5) of this section.

3 (b) (i) A city or town located within a county planning under RCW  
4 36.70A.040 may opt out of a full review and revisions of its  
5 comprehensive plan established in this section if the city or town  
6 meets the following criteria:

7 (A) Has a population fewer than 500;

8 (B) Is not located within 10 miles of a city with a population  
9 over 100,000;

10 (C) Experienced a population growth rate of fewer than 10 percent  
11 in the preceding 10 years; and

12 (D) Has provided the department with notice of its intent to  
13 participate in a partial review and revision of its comprehensive  
14 plan.

15 (ii) The department shall review the population growth rate for a  
16 city or town participating in the partial review and revision of its  
17 comprehensive plan process at least three years before the periodic  
18 update is due as outlined in subsection (4) of this section and  
19 notify cities of their eligibility.

20 (iii) A city or town that opts out of a full review and revision  
21 of its comprehensive plan must update its critical areas regulations  
22 and its capital facilities element and its transportation element.

23 (c) Except as otherwise provided, a county or city not planning  
24 under RCW 36.70A.040 shall take action to review and, if needed,  
25 revise its policies and development regulations regarding critical  
26 areas and natural resource lands adopted according to this chapter to  
27 ensure these policies and regulations comply with the requirements of  
28 this chapter according to the deadlines in subsections (4) and (5) of  
29 this section. Legislative action means the adoption of a resolution  
30 or ordinance following notice and a public hearing indicating at a  
31 minimum, a finding that a review and evaluation has occurred and  
32 identifying the revisions made, or that a revision was not needed and  
33 the reasons therefor.

34 (d) The review and evaluation required by this subsection shall  
35 include, but is not limited to, consideration of critical area  
36 ordinances and, if planning under RCW 36.70A.040, an analysis of the  
37 population allocated to a city or county from the most recent 10-year  
38 population forecast by the office of financial management.

39 (e) Any amendment of or revision to a comprehensive land use plan  
40 shall conform to this chapter. Any amendment of or revision to

1 development regulations shall be consistent with and implement the  
2 comprehensive plan.

3 (2) (a) Each county and city shall establish and broadly  
4 disseminate to the public a public participation program consistent  
5 with RCW 36.70A.035 and 36.70A.140 that identifies procedures and  
6 schedules whereby updates, proposed amendments, or revisions of the  
7 comprehensive plan are considered by the governing body of the county  
8 or city no more frequently than once every year. "Updates" means to  
9 review and revise, if needed, according to subsection (1) of this  
10 section, and the deadlines in subsections (4) and (5) of this section  
11 or in accordance with the provisions of subsection (6) of this  
12 section. Amendments may be considered more frequently than once per  
13 year under the following circumstances:

14 (i) The initial adoption of a subarea plan. Subarea plans adopted  
15 under this subsection (2) (a) (i) must clarify, supplement, or  
16 implement jurisdiction-wide comprehensive plan policies, and may only  
17 be adopted if the cumulative impacts of the proposed plan are  
18 addressed by appropriate environmental review under chapter 43.21C  
19 RCW;

20 (ii) The development of an initial subarea plan for economic  
21 development located outside of the 100 year floodplain in a county  
22 that has completed a state-funded pilot project that is based on  
23 watershed characterization and local habitat assessment;

24 (iii) The adoption or amendment of a shoreline master program  
25 under the procedures set forth in chapter 90.58 RCW;

26 (iv) The amendment of the capital facilities element of a  
27 comprehensive plan that occurs concurrently with the adoption or  
28 amendment of a county or city budget; or

29 (v) The adoption of comprehensive plan amendments necessary to  
30 enact a planned action under RCW 43.21C.440, provided that amendments  
31 are considered in accordance with the public participation program  
32 established by the county or city under this subsection (2) (a) and  
33 all persons who have requested notice of a comprehensive plan update  
34 are given notice of the amendments and an opportunity to comment.

35 (b) Except as otherwise provided in (a) of this subsection, all  
36 proposals shall be considered by the governing body concurrently so  
37 the cumulative effect of the various proposals can be ascertained.  
38 However, after appropriate public participation a county or city may  
39 adopt amendments or revisions to its comprehensive plan that conform  
40 with this chapter whenever an emergency exists or to resolve an

1 appeal of a comprehensive plan filed with the growth management  
2 hearings board or with the court.

3 (3) (a) Each county that designates urban growth areas under RCW  
4 36.70A.110 shall review, according to the schedules established in  
5 subsections (4) and (5) of this section, its designated urban growth  
6 area or areas, patterns of development occurring within the urban  
7 growth area or areas, and the densities permitted within both the  
8 incorporated and unincorporated portions of each urban growth area.  
9 In conjunction with this review by the county, each city located  
10 within an urban growth area shall review the densities permitted  
11 within its boundaries, and the extent to which the urban growth  
12 occurring within the county has located within each city and the  
13 unincorporated portions of the urban growth areas.

14 (b) The county comprehensive plan designating urban growth areas,  
15 and the densities permitted in the urban growth areas by the  
16 comprehensive plans of the county and each city located within the  
17 urban growth areas, shall be revised to accommodate the urban growth  
18 projected to occur in the county for the succeeding 20-year period.  
19 The review required by this subsection may be combined with the  
20 review and evaluation required by RCW 36.70A.215.

21 (c) If, during the county's review under (a) of this subsection,  
22 the county determines revision of the urban growth area is not  
23 required to accommodate the urban growth projected to occur in the  
24 county for the succeeding 20-year period, but does determine that  
25 patterns of development have created pressure in areas that exceed  
26 available, developable lands within the urban growth area, the urban  
27 growth area or areas may be revised to accommodate identified  
28 patterns of development and likely future development pressure for  
29 the succeeding 20-year period if the following requirements are met:

30 (i) The revised urban growth area may not result in an increase  
31 in the total surface areas of the urban growth area or areas;

32 (ii) The areas added to the urban growth area are not or have not  
33 been designated as agricultural, forest, or mineral resource lands of  
34 long-term commercial significance;

35 (iii) Less than 15 percent of the areas added to the urban growth  
36 area are critical areas;

37 (iv) The areas added to the urban growth areas are suitable for  
38 urban growth;

39 (v) The transportation element and capital facility plan element  
40 have identified the transportation facilities, and public facilities

1 and services needed to serve the urban growth area and the funding to  
2 provide the transportation facilities and public facilities and  
3 services;

4 (vi) The urban growth area is not larger than needed to  
5 accommodate the growth planned for the succeeding 20-year planning  
6 period and a reasonable land market supply factor;

7 (vii) The areas removed from the urban growth area do not include  
8 urban growth or urban densities; and

9 (viii) The revised urban growth area is contiguous, does not  
10 include holes or gaps, and will not increase pressures to urbanize  
11 rural or natural resource lands.

12 (4) Except as otherwise provided in subsections (6) and (8) of  
13 this section, counties and cities shall take action to review and, if  
14 needed, revise their comprehensive plans and development regulations  
15 to ensure the plan and regulations comply with the requirements of  
16 this chapter as follows:

17 (a) On or before June 30, 2015, for King, Pierce, and Snohomish  
18 counties and the cities within those counties;

19 (b) On or before June 30, 2016, for Clallam, Clark, Island,  
20 Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, San Juan, Skagit, Thurston, and Whatcom  
21 counties and the cities within those counties;

22 (c) On or before June 30, 2017, for Benton, Chelan, Cowlitz,  
23 Douglas, Kittitas, Lewis, Skamania, Spokane, and Yakima counties and  
24 the cities within those counties; and

25 (d) On or before June 30, 2018, for Adams, Asotin, Columbia,  
26 Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Grays Harbor, Klickitat, Lincoln,  
27 Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Wahkiakum, Walla Walla, and  
28 Whitman counties and the cities within those counties.

29 (5) Except as otherwise provided in subsections (6) and (8) of  
30 this section, following the review of comprehensive plans and  
31 development regulations required by subsection (4) of this section,  
32 counties and cities shall take action to review and, if needed,  
33 revise their comprehensive plans and development regulations to  
34 ensure the plan and regulations comply with the requirements of this  
35 chapter as follows:

36 (a) Except as provided in subsection (10) of this section, on or  
37 before December 31, 2024, with the following review and, if needed,  
38 revision on or before June 30, 2034, and then every 10 years  
39 thereafter, for King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties and the  
40 cities within those counties;

1 (b) On or before December 31, 2025, with the following review  
2 and, if needed, revision on or before June 30, 2035, and then every  
3 10 years thereafter, for Clallam, Clark, Island, Jefferson, Lewis,  
4 Mason, San Juan, Skagit, Thurston, and Whatcom counties and the  
5 cities within those counties;

6 (c) On or before (~~June 30~~) December 31, 2026, with the  
7 following review and, if needed, revision on or before June 30, 2036,  
8 and every 10 years thereafter, for Benton, Chelan, Cowlitz, Douglas,  
9 Franklin, Kittitas, Skamania, Spokane, Walla Walla, and Yakima  
10 counties and the cities within those counties; and

11 (d) On or before June 30, 2027, and every 10 years thereafter,  
12 for Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Grant, Grays Harbor,  
13 Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Stevens,  
14 Wahkiakum, and Whitman counties and the cities within those counties.

15 (6)(a) Nothing in this section precludes a county or city from  
16 conducting the review and evaluation required by this section before  
17 the deadlines established in subsections (4) and (5) of this section.  
18 Counties and cities may begin this process early and may be eligible  
19 for grants from the department, subject to available funding, if they  
20 elect to do so.

21 (b) A county that is subject to a deadline established in  
22 subsection (5)(b) through (d) of this section and meets the following  
23 criteria may comply with the requirements of this section at any time  
24 within the 24 months following the deadline established in subsection  
25 (5) of this section: The county has a population of less than 50,000  
26 and has had its population increase by no more than 17 percent in the  
27 10 years preceding the deadline established in subsection (5) of this  
28 section as of that date.

29 (c) A city that is subject to a deadline established in  
30 subsection (5)(b) through (d) of this section and meets the following  
31 criteria may comply with the requirements of this section at any time  
32 within the 24 months following the deadline established in subsection  
33 (5) of this section: The city has a population of no more than 5,000  
34 and has had its population increase by the greater of either no more  
35 than 100 persons or no more than 17 percent in the 10 years preceding  
36 the deadline established in subsection (5) of this section as of that  
37 date.

38 (d) State agencies are encouraged to provide technical assistance  
39 to the counties and cities in the review of critical area ordinances,  
40 comprehensive plans, and development regulations.

1 (7) (a) The requirements imposed on counties and cities under this  
2 section shall be considered "requirements of this chapter" under the  
3 terms of RCW 36.70A.040(1). Only those counties and cities that meet  
4 the following criteria may receive grants, loans, pledges, or  
5 financial guarantees under chapter 43.155 or 70A.135 RCW:

6 (i) Complying with the deadlines in this section; or

7 (ii) Demonstrating substantial progress towards compliance with  
8 the schedules in this section for development regulations that  
9 protect critical areas.

10 (b) A county or city that is fewer than 12 months out of  
11 compliance with the schedules in this section for development  
12 regulations that protect critical areas is making substantial  
13 progress towards compliance. Only those counties and cities in  
14 compliance with the schedules in this section may receive preference  
15 for grants or loans subject to the provisions of RCW 43.17.250.

16 (8) (a) Except as otherwise provided in (c) of this subsection, if  
17 a participating watershed is achieving benchmarks and goals for the  
18 protection of critical areas functions and values, the county is not  
19 required to update development regulations to protect critical areas  
20 as they specifically apply to agricultural activities in that  
21 watershed.

22 (b) A county that has made the election under RCW 36.70A.710(1)  
23 may only adopt or amend development regulations to protect critical  
24 areas as they specifically apply to agricultural activities in a  
25 participating watershed if:

26 (i) A work plan has been approved for that watershed in  
27 accordance with RCW 36.70A.725;

28 (ii) The local watershed group for that watershed has requested  
29 the county to adopt or amend development regulations as part of a  
30 work plan developed under RCW 36.70A.720;

31 (iii) The adoption or amendment of the development regulations is  
32 necessary to enable the county to respond to an order of the growth  
33 management hearings board or court;

34 (iv) The adoption or amendment of development regulations is  
35 necessary to address a threat to human health or safety; or

36 (v) Three or more years have elapsed since the receipt of  
37 funding.

38 (c) Beginning 10 years from the date of receipt of funding, a  
39 county that has made the election under RCW 36.70A.710(1) must review  
40 and, if necessary, revise development regulations to protect critical

1 areas as they specifically apply to agricultural activities in a  
2 participating watershed in accordance with the review and revision  
3 requirements and timeline in subsection (5) of this section. This  
4 subsection (8)(c) does not apply to a participating watershed that  
5 has determined under RCW 36.70A.720(2)(c)(ii) that the watershed's  
6 goals and benchmarks for protection have been met.

7 (9)(a) Counties subject to planning deadlines established in  
8 subsection (5) of this section that are required or that choose to  
9 plan under RCW 36.70A.040 and that meet either criteria of (a)(i) or  
10 (ii) of this subsection, and cities with a population of more than  
11 6,000 as of April 1, 2021, within those counties, must provide to the  
12 department an implementation progress report detailing the progress  
13 they have achieved in implementing their comprehensive plan five  
14 years after the review and revision of their comprehensive plan. Once  
15 a county meets the criteria in (a)(i) or (ii) of this subsection, the  
16 implementation progress report requirements remain in effect  
17 thereafter for that county and the cities therein with populations  
18 greater than 6,000 as of April 1, 2021, even if the county later no  
19 longer meets either or both criteria. A county is subject to the  
20 implementation progress report requirement if it meets either of the  
21 following criteria on or after April 1, 2021:

22 (i) The county has a population density of at least 100 people  
23 per square mile and a population of at least 200,000; or

24 (ii) The county has a population density of at least 75 people  
25 per square mile and an annual growth rate of at least 1.75 percent as  
26 determined by the office of financial management.

27 (b) The department shall adopt guidelines for indicators,  
28 measures, milestones, and criteria for use by counties and cities in  
29 the implementation progress report that must cover:

30 (i) The implementation of previously adopted changes to the  
31 housing element and any effect those changes have had on housing  
32 affordability and availability within the jurisdiction;

33 (ii) Permit processing timelines; and

34 (iii) Progress toward implementing any actions required to  
35 achieve reductions to meet greenhouse gas and vehicle miles traveled  
36 requirements as provided for in any element of the comprehensive plan  
37 under RCW 36.70A.070.

38 (c) If a city or county required to provide an implementation  
39 progress report under this subsection (9) has not implemented any  
40 specifically identified regulations, zoning and land use changes, or



1 taken other legislative or administrative action necessary to  
2 implement any changes in the most recent periodic update in their  
3 comprehensive plan by the due date for the implementation progress  
4 report, the city or county must identify the need for such action in  
5 the implementation progress report. Cities and counties must adopt a  
6 work plan to implement any necessary regulations, zoning and land use  
7 changes, or take other legislative or administrative action  
8 identified in the implementation progress report and complete all  
9 work necessary for implementation within two years of submission of  
10 the implementation progress report.

11 (10) Any county or city that is required by RCW 36.70A.095 to  
12 include in its comprehensive plan a climate change and resiliency  
13 element and that is also required by subsection (5)(a) of this  
14 section to review and, if necessary, revise its comprehensive plan on  
15 or before December 31, 2024, must update its transportation element  
16 and incorporate a climate change and resiliency element into its  
17 comprehensive plan as part of the first implementation progress  
18 report required by subsection (9) of this section if funds are  
19 appropriated and distributed by December 31, 2027, as required under  
20 RCW 36.70A.070(10).

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