

Planning for a Climate Friendly Future

HB 1181 | SB 5203



A bill to ensure Washington cities and counties are planning for climate-resilient communities while reducing our contributions to the climate crisis.

Last year, Washington state legislators had the opportunity to update to the Growth Management Act. They didn't take it--but this year they must!

Thirty years ago, Washington state passed the Growth Management Act to help our cities and counties accommodate rapid growth while protecting what makes the Evergreen state a great place to live: vibrant cities, working farms and forests, healthy rivers and mountains, and a beautiful rural landscape.

Today, residents are calling for updates to our approach to development. HB 1181/SB 5203 answers the need for climate considerations as we build more resilient communities, from flood protection to transit, clean water to wildfire prevention. This update to the Growth Management Act will protect our communities and our environment as the climate changes.

**HB 1181 sponsored by Rep. Duerr, and Rep. Fitzgibbon
SB 5203 sponsored by Sen. Lovelett, and Sen. Liias**

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Why now?

From wildfires and drought to flooding and sea level rise, we know that we need to take action now as we make plans for the decades to come to secure a climate-resilient future for Washingtonians from Aberdeen to Spokane and the many rural towns and big cities in between. But right now, Washington's biggest and fastest-growing counties and cities aren't planning adequately for climate change and every year we delay means our communities continue to face the increasingly-severe impacts of inaction.

By passing HB 1181/SB 5203, state legislators ensure our counties and cities reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, and strengthen communities and natural resources against the accelerating impacts of a changing climate. This update will also embed a definition and considerations for environmental justice into the GMA.

We have waited too long to comprehensively address climate change in land use and development planning, which is why we are committed to getting HB 1181/SB 5203 passed in 2023.

Here's what the update will do:

Improve local land use and transportation planning to reduce emissions

The largest and fastest-growing counties and cities will upgrade their land use and transportation planning to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and build more livable and connected communities that don't rely exclusively on private car transportation.

The benefits

Transportation accounts for 40% of Washington state greenhouse gas emissions. That's why reducing vehicle miles traveled is such an important strategy to achieve emissions reductions.

Local governments play a crucial role in creating vibrant, accessible neighborhoods that provide parks, jobs, schools, and restaurants that don't require long drives, or driving at all. In particular, by encouraging walkable, bikeable, transit-accessible neighborhoods that benefits communities and families while reducing carbon emissions.

Strengthen the resiliency of communities and landscapes across the state

Climate change is already upon us. Communities across the state are experiencing the impacts of floods, heat domes, drought, wildfires, and wildfire smoke. Land use planning is a tool of systemic change that can strengthen community and ecological resilience in the face of these challenges.

The benefits

Climate impacts look different across our state: coastal communities face ever-rising tides, mountain towns grapple with increased wildfire danger and all of us now live through unprecedented heat waves. No matter where you live in Washington, every one of our communities faces a new climate reality we must prepare for. HB 1181/SB 5203 ensures that every community in Washington is planning to protect their residents from extreme weather events and adapt for a changing future.