



2023 Issue Paper: Growth Management

Position Statement

The League of Women Voters played a significant role in adoption of the state Growth Management Act in 1990 and in monitoring its implementation thereafter. LWVWA positions support comprehensive land use plans that address urban growth and long-range land use goals, and use of these goals, plans and policies by other agencies. Protection of areas of critical concern are of special importance in planning. The League position also states that state planning assistance to local governments should include uniform guidelines, information, technical assistance and adequate financial resources.

Legislative Background

In 2021, the housing element of the Growth Management Act (GMA) was expanded via HB 1220 to assure that the planning includes housing for all of the population, including low-income, severely low-income and those expected to need shelter.

In 2022 a number of technical changes to the GMA were made to increase the functionality of the Act and its implementation, including mandating local jurisdictions to plan and consult with tribes in their comp planning, providing some flexibility in shifting urban growth area boundaries and extending the planning period.

Also, in 2022 a variety of bills were introduced to assure additional housing via ADUs, none of which passed. Additionally, a high priority of League was to get HB 1099 passed. This bill would have added environmental resiliency to the listed goals of the Growth Management Act (GMA) and to the requirements of local comprehensive plans. However, it did not pass, though it came very close. Similarly, League supported a bill that promoted salmon recovery through revisions to the state's comprehensive planning network; but that bill also did not pass.

Upcoming 2023 Legislative Session

It is anticipated that the 2023 session will resume efforts on the bills mentioned above that did not pass in 2022. Additional priorities will be established in conjunction with ally coalitions between now and the beginning of session and will be described in the Legislative newsletter.

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