

Legislation Text

File #: 17-4699, **Version:** 1

POTENTIAL ADDITION TO THE CITY'S STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA - SUPPORT FOR HB 1086

COUNCIL STRATEGIC INITIATIVE ADDRESSED:

Strengthen economic conditions and create new opportunities

CITY ATTORNEY REVIEW: N/A

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

House Bill 1086 (and companion Senate Bill 5438) have been called to staff's attention as legislation that the city might want to support as part of our state legislative agenda. The bills include a legislative finding that "excessive delays in the environmental impact analysis process required under the state environmental policy act (SEPA) add uncertainty and burdensome costs to those seeking to do business in the state of Washington." The intent of the bills is to "promote timely completion of SEPA processes, and in doing so, restore balance between the need to carefully consider environmental impacts and the need to maintain the economic competitiveness of state businesses."

Specifically, a lead agency preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) under SEPA would be called upon to complete it "in as expeditious a manner as possible while not compromising the integrity of the analysis." If not completed within 24 months of making a threshold determination of a probable significant adverse environmental impact (the aspirational time limit), the agency would be directed to submit a brief report to the legislature explaining the circumstances that caused it to fail to meet that time limit, an estimate of when the EIS *would* be completed, and a plan of action to ensure that *future* EISs it undertakes would be completed within 24 months.

Refer to the links below for further information.

This bill would apply to cities and other local agencies as well as state agencies preparing EISs under SEPA. It would *not* apply to EISs being prepared under the national environmental policy act (NEPA). Based on recent experience, it would rarely apply directly to the city; we have not made a finding of probable significant adverse environmental impact as a lead agency during the past 12 years. If and when that *might* happen, our community development staff believe an aspirational goal of completing an EIS within 24 months is a realistic goal.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

This subject is being introduced for discussion only on February 9. Following discussion, the recommended action is to direct the city manager that it be placed on the February 23 agenda for further consideration by a decision whether or not to add it to our state legislative agenda.

STAFF CONTACT:

Dave Campbell, City Manager