

Legislative Objectives

Land Use



Background/Problem:

Land development and construction are a critical part of Washington's economy. While building and construction in some communities are enjoying a strong recovery, the same cannot be said for other parts of Washington state. The complex and burdensome land use and environmental regulatory system threatens the fragile recovery in these areas, while contributing to the lack of industrial zoned land and housing affordability in those areas with rapid economic growth. The current regulatory system creates uncertainty and can be needlessly complex and duplicative. In addition, recent decisions to expand the scope of state environmental reviews to include climate impacts outside the state's jurisdiction has also introduced unnecessary ambiguity.

Objectives:

AWB supports the following objectives for the upcoming legislative session:

1. The protection of vesting laws and oppose any new erosion or curtailment of vesting rights.
2. Regulatory reforms to add greater certainty, predictability, and efficiency to land use, environmental policies, and reviews.
3. Expansion of voluntary programs and incentives among all codes.
4. Oppose regulatory mandates that are not justified without economic, health, or safety impact analysis.
5. Adopt more effective metrics and economic standards, monitoring, and transparency within all building codes.
6. Support programs and policies that encourage and support housing affordability (increase supply and diversity of housing types) and oppose policies that contribute to increased housing costs (exclusionary zoning, artificial limits on supply, rent control, etc).
7. Preserve and expand the use of industrial lands for industrial purposes.
8. Protect and preserve essential public facilities that support Washington's trade-based economy.
9. Reform of condominium construction liability laws that reduce the supply of new condominium units and prevent homeownership opportunities.
10. Clarify limits on regional planning organizations' authority regarding local growth planning.