Linking Community Revitalization and Brownfields: The Role of the Growth Management Act

Brownfields and Land Redevelopment Conference
May 12, 2011
The GMA Applies to all Cities and Counties in Washington State
GMA 101 – The Basics

- Statewide Planning Goals
- Protecting Resource Lands and Critical Areas
- Countywide Planning Policies (Including Designating Urban Growth Areas)
- Comprehensive Plans
- Development Regulations to Implement Plans
- Public Participation
The Planning Hierarchy

- County-wide planning policies
- Comprehensive plan
- Development Regulations
- Project Review
GMA Statewide Planning Goals

- Compact Urban Growth
- Reduce Sprawl
- Transportation
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Property Rights
GMA Planning Goals

• Permits
• Natural Resource Industries
• Open Space
• Environment
• Public Participation
• Public Facilities and Services
• Historic Preservation
• Shorelines
Rural Areas – Special Provisions

- Define Rural Character – scale, intensity, type of development; level of service
- Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development (LAMIRDs) - logical outer boundary
  - Existing clusters
  - Tourist uses
  - Cottage industries

Existing industrial areas may be developed or redeveloped – can be a different use
SEPA and the Promise of GMA (2003)

- Address cumulative impacts
- Provide certainty
- Assure environmental protection
- Minimize later project review
- Up-front cost an issue
Study Questions:

1) Private- and public-sector benefits using and not using SEPA integrated actions?

2) SEPA actions’ contribution to the stimulation of development?
Study Question 1: Predefined Mitigation

As predefined mitigation conditions increase and extensive project-level SEPA review declines; time-to-permit, cost, and risk for developers were reported to decrease.

- Umbrella Development Agreements
- Subarea and Citywide Plan-Level Mitigation
- City-Wide Impact Mitigation Like Transportation and Stormwater Programs
- Development Regulations, Including Critical Areas Mitigation
- Zoning Regulations

MORE

Project-Level SEPA Review

LESS
Study Question 1: Opportunity Cost Exercise

• Predefined mitigation resulted in:
  • Increased certainty and predictability
  • Time and cost savings for developers and cities
  • Increased revenues with other economic tools

• Predefined mitigation estimated savings in opportunity costs for:
  • Private developers was $8.8 million to $35.2 million,
  • Public developers from $2.8 to 11 million in opportunity costs.
Study Question 2: Key Findings

Predefined mitigation used as part of set of economic development tools, including one or all of:

- Public infrastructure improvements
- Expedited permitting and land use incentives
- Tax increment or LID financing for infrastructure
- Brownfield site clean up and land consolidation
- Development project financing incentives
Planning and Environmental Review Fund (RCW 36.70A.490 and .500)

- Grant program funded only once (1997)
- 2010 ESHB 2538 Transit –Oriented Subarea Plans
  - Eliminates project-level SEPA appeals
  - Cost recovery through proportionate development fee
- 2011 Commerce proposal (not funded – yet)
  - PERF revolving loan fund
  - Expand cost recovery option
For more information on SEPA Case Studies, go to: www.commerce.wa.gov/growth and click on “What’s New”

leonard.bauer@commerce.wa.gov
(360) 725-3055