



May 2023
**Advocacy
Newsletter**

2023 State Legislative Session Final Report

The 2023 Washington State Legislative session came to a close on April 23rd after 105 days of in-person meetings, marking a return to pre-pandemic norms. With 30 newly elected or promoted legislators, both chambers saw significant turnover, and Democrats expanded their majorities in the House and Senate. In total, over 1,600 bills were introduced, with almost 500 expected to become law after being passed by both chambers and sent to the Governor for his signature. The session was a productive one, with significant progress made on important legislation which is highlighted below.

Budgets

Legislators have only one constitutional requirement to accomplish each session, and that is to pass the state's three major budgets: operating, capital, and transportation. As this was the first year of the biennium, legislators spent the long session creating, debating, and passing the two-year budgets.

Operating Budget: The operating budget compromise for the next biennium has been finalized by the House and Senate, and it will allocate a record-breaking \$69.8 billion, representing an 8.8 percent increase from the previous biennial budget. The budget prioritizes funding for K-12 schools, prisons, mental health services, social programs, wildfire response, and climate initiatives. The budget will not require general tax increases, but will instead rely on transfers from various reserve and dedicated accounts. The plan assumes approximately \$1 billion in revenue from the state's new tax on capital gains, which was recently upheld by the state Supreme Court. Despite receiving criticism from House Republicans, the budget passed with a 37-12 bipartisan vote in the Senate and a mostly party-line vote of 58-40 in the House. The budget will leave \$3 billion in the state's reserve account.



Capital Budget: The adopted capital budget was unanimously passed by both chambers and will allocate \$8.9 billion over the next two years. Key investments will include \$717 million for environmental protection, with a focus on floodplain resilience, habitat acquisition and restoration in the Puget Sound region, and the removal of fish passage barriers. The budget also includes \$694 million for affordable housing projects, \$613 million for a new forensic hospital at Western State Hospital in Lakewood, and \$588 million for K-12 school construction and seismic safety projects. Despite Governor Inslee's proposal to seek voter approval for \$4 billion in bonds to construct affordable housing, it was ultimately not included in the budget.

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Budgets, *continued*

Transportation Budget: The transportation budget was passed with mostly unanimous votes in both chambers on the day before adjournment. The budget will allocate \$13.5 billion over the next two years, with a focus on reducing delays on highway projects, improving the state's ferry system, enhancing traffic safety, reducing carbon emissions, and recruiting more workers for transportation-related jobs. Notably, \$5.4 billion will be directed towards highway projects, \$1.3 billion for the ferry system, \$1 billion for fish passage work, and \$2.6 billion to improve recruitment and retention efforts at the Washington State Patrol. In addition, the bill will allocate around \$1 billion from the Climate Commitment Act auction towards reducing emissions from the transportation sector.



Next Steps

Governor Inslee has not yet signed all of the bills approved by the legislature. He has 20 days from the time a bill is delivered to his desk to take action. To see bills that the governor has or will be signing into law, [click here](#).

Bills introduced during the 2023 session that did not make it through the legislative process will have another chance to advance next year. As a reminder, all bills introduced in the first year of the biennium are revived the following year. Legislators will be working on many of these bills in the interim in hopes of a better outcome during the 2024 session.

Governor Inslee calls WA Legislature Special Session



On May 2nd, Gov. Inslee called for a 30-day special session to begin on May 16. The focus of the special session is for legislators to negotiate and pass a bill to address the criminalization and/or treatment for drug possession - the so-called "*Blake fix*". Lawmakers failed to pass a new drug possession law this year, which as of July 1st would leave WA without a statewide law in effect resulting in each city and county handling drug possession in its own way.

Although the special session can last for up to 30 days, if lawmakers reach a deal, it could adjourn upon passage of that bill.

Governor & Insurance Commissioner will not seek reelection

Governor Inslee announced on May 1st that he will not be seeking a 4th term as Governor.

Bob Ferguson, current WA State Attorney General, has announced he is exploring a run for the Governorship. It is also expected that Hilary Franz, WA Commissioner of Public Lands, will announce her candidacy in the near future.

Another notable announcement came from longtime WA Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler. He announced he will not be seeking reelection following more than two decades in the position.

AIA Issues: Legislative Session

Climate

HB 1181— The top priority bill for our Climate Committee made it across the finish line! Rep. Duerr worked to get a version of this bill passed for the last three years, and has finally found success. HB 1181 Adds a goal of climate change and resiliency to the listed goals of the GMA and adds climate change and resiliency element to the list of elements that must be included within the comprehensive plans that certain counties and cities must adopt under the GMA. This is lengthy bill, but ultimately it encourages developers to build high-density housing along transit corridors, limit single-family development, and ease the kind of traffic congestion that creates more CO₂. The House concurred in the Senate amendments and the bill has been delivered to the Governor.

SB 5165- This bill outlines new requirements for Electric Utility Integrated Resource Plans (IRPs) in Washington state, which must now include a 20-year forecast of regional generation and transmission capacity, taking into account the state's emissions reduction limits and the electrification of transportation. Electric utilities are encouraged to consider renewable resources and to seek support from industry organizations to improve transmission planning. Clean Energy Action Plans are also required for COUs with over 25,000 customers, detailing potential cost-effective demand response, renewable resources, and alternative compliance options under CETA. EFSEC certification is required for the construction, reconstruction, or enlargement of transmission facilities with a nominal voltage of 500,000 volts or more, located in more than one county and serving more than one retail electric utility. The Senate concurred in House amendments which cleared the way for final passage. It is now awaiting a signature from the Governor.

HB 1170- Introduced by Rep. Street, this bill directs the Department of Ecology, in consultation and collaboration with multiple state agencies, to compile an updated Integrated Climate Change Response Strategy by September 30, 2024, and provide recommendations to the Governor and Legislature on a durable structure for coordinating and implementing the state's strategy, including a process to prioritize and coordinate state agency funding for climate resilience. The House concurred in the Senate amendments and has now been signed into law by the Governor.

HB 1117- This good little bill requires that the state of Washington will hold an annual resource adequacy meeting until 2031 to ensure power supply adequacy and reliability, address proposed laws and regulations, and identify regulatory and statutory incentives. The meeting will also invite the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory to provide relevant analytics to inform the discussion, and representatives from their energy analytics experts will be included in the stakeholder list. The bill passed with unanimous support, and has been signed into law by the Governor.

HB 1216- A priority bill for Rep. Fitzgibbon, HB 1216 take steps to improve the process of siting and permitting clean energy projects in Washington. It does so by establishing an interagency coordinating council, creating a designation for clean energy projects of statewide significance, and amending State Environmental Policy Act processes. These measures aim to streamline the process of developing renewable energy infrastructure and limit the environmental impact of such projects. The Washington State University Energy Program has also been directed to conduct a pumped storage siting process to identify potential sites for pumped storage projects. These policies and measures reflect the state's commitment to promoting clean energy and reducing its carbon footprint. The House concurred in the Senate amendments, and the bill is awaiting action by the Governor.

HB 1390- HB 1390 requires the owners of campus district energy systems to develop a decarbonization plan that outlines a strategy for replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy sources within 15 years. The plan must be submitted to the Department of Commerce by June 30, 2025, with progress reports submitted every five years thereafter. The bill provides an alternative compliance pathway to the state's energy performance standard for owners who submit an approved plan and meet the requirements for benchmarking, energy management, and operations and maintenance planning. The bill also requires Commerce to ensure that a state campus district energy system and all connected buildings comply with any energy efficiency measures identified in an energy audit. The recipient of broad bipartisan support, this bill just needs a signature from the Governor to become law.

Livability

HB 1110: Our Livability Committee's top priority bill this session, HB 1110 passed out of the Legislature with bipartisan support. The bill has been amended from the original version we saw at the beginning of session, but still focuses on the goal of increasing housing supply and density by allowing more homes on plots of land that have traditionally allowed only single-family. As passed, HB 1110 mandates cities and counties across the state to allow duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, and smaller apartment buildings to be built in areas previously zoned for single-family houses. Under the bill, all fully planned cities must include a minimum number of units for all lots zoned for residential use. The minimum number of units depends on the city's population, and proximity to major transit stops. Furthermore, the bill requires that at least one unit must be affordable housing. The bill's alternative density requirement allows cities and counties to implement the density requirements for at least 75 percent of lots primarily dedicated to single-family detached housing units. However, certain areas, such as critical areas or those subject to sea level rise or other hazards, are exempt from the requirements. Cities may apply for extensions to implementation timelines for various reasons, such as lack of infrastructure capacity or risk of displacement.

HB 1042- This bill, concerning the use of existing buildings for housing purposes, passed out of the House early in the session and passed out of the Senate a couple weeks ago. The final version of the bill outlines restrictions that a city may not impose on existing commercial or mixed-use buildings in regard to adding housing units. These include restrictions on housing unit density, parking requirements, permitting requirements, design standards, exterior design or architectural requirements, prohibitions on the addition of housing units in certain parts of the building, current energy code requirements, and transportation concurrency or SEPA studies. Cities are required to incorporate these standards into their development and zoning regulations within six months after their next comprehensive plan update. The House concurred in Senate amendments and the bill has been delivered to the Governor.

SB 5412- The Washington state legislature has passed Senate Bill 5412, which aims to reduce local governments' land use permitting workloads and ensure objective and timely design review for housing and other land use proposals within cities and counties. The bill allows proposed housing within urban growth boundaries to rely on environmental reviews completed at the comprehensive planning level. It also authorizes cities and counties to establish categorical exemptions from environmental review requirements for infill and housing development in certain cases, as long as they meet specific criteria. The legislation is intended to facilitate the development of affordable housing and promote economic growth while protecting the environment. SB 5412 is awaiting a signature from the Governor.



HB 1337- HB 1337 reduces regulatory and construction barriers for the construction of accessory dwelling units. This policy will take effect six months after the next periodic comprehensive plan update. The bill requires cities and counties to adopt or amend ordinances to allow at least two ADUs on all lots within an Urban Growth Area (UGA) that allow for single-family homes and may not assess impact fees on ADUs greater than 50% of the fees imposed on the principal unit. Additionally, the bill waives off-street parking requirements for ADUs within half a mile of major transit stops and allows ADUs to be converted from existing structures. The House concurred in Senate amendments and the bill passed with broad bipartisan support.

HB 1293- This bill establishes a categorical exemption from SEPA for residential housing units within an urban growth area, requires counties and cities planning under GMA to apply clear and objective design review standards to the exterior of new development, and clarifies project review provisions and adds expedited review of project permit applications that include dwelling units that are affordable to low- and moderate-income houses. The bill did not include the language we provided so we may do some work during the interim to amend the language.

Engaging in Advocacy

Get to know your state legislators

- Sign up for your legislators' email newsletters via their homepage (search for/click on their names [here](#)).
- Watch a town hall for constituents—your delegation hosts these throughout the year to talk about what they're working on and answer questions—info is available via their newsletters or check out their homepage.
- Meet with one or more of your legislators to discuss an issue important to you or one of AIA's issues—legislators are very accessible between sessions. We can help you with the request.
- Host one of your legislators on a tour of a building in their district. We can help with this, too.

Join AIA's Advocacy Efforts

- Join one or more of AIA's policy committees:
 - ⇒ Practice
 - ⇒ Tax/Education/Capital Budget
 - ⇒ Climate
 - ⇒ Livability & Affordability
- Ask AIA|WA to make a presentation on advocacy to your firm
- Share your ideas for what AIA should be working on at the state government level.



OPPORTUNITIES

CPARB-PRC Position Open

The CPARB-PRC is looking for an Architect to add to the Review Committee. The Project Review Committee is responsible for reviewing and approving public body certifications and project approval applications for the utilization of General Contractor/Construction Manager (GC/CM) and Design-Build (DB) delivery methods of public works construction. Currently there is only one applicant and there is a desire to have additional applicants for the position. Requirements for the position include:

- Licensed architect in the state of Washington
- Employed by a private architectural design firm
- Professional experience designing or managing the design of non-residential projects
- Experience with school district and municipal projects preferred.
- Working knowledge of alternative capital projects delivery methodologies as defined in RCW 39.10
- Must have worked on at least one alternative delivery method project within the last five (5) years

More information about this position is available [here](#).

COMPONENT EVENTS

AIA Seattle

AIA Seattle Housing Design Forum: *Housing Now! Design / Access / Delivery*

- June 15 9:00 AM-6:00 PM. 415 Westlake Ave N, Seattle, WA 98109
- [Register here.](#)

2023 Seattle Design Festival

- Theme: **Curiosity**
- August 19-24 (In person and Virtual Main Stage)
- Call for proposals due May 25
- [Learn more here.](#)

AIA Southwest Washington

AIA SWW Golf Tournament

- June 23 10:00 AM– June 24 5:30 PM. 8383 Vicwood Ln NE, Lacey, WA 98516, USA
- [Register here.](#)



AIA Washington Council

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AIA Washington Council serves as the collective voice for and a resource on state government policies that impact the practice of architecture for all architects and the profession through AIA components in Washington State.

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