

# Commission on Local Government

## Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact

2022 General Assembly Session

**Bill:** HB520

**Special Session:**

**Patron:** Bulova

**Date:** 1/21/2022

In accordance with the provisions of §30-19.03 of the Code of Virginia, the staff of the Commission on Local Government offers the following analysis of the above-referenced legislation:

### Bill Summary:

Comprehensive plan; climate resilience. Requires a locality's comprehensive plan to consider strategies to address climate resilience in order to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and adapt to changing conditions and hazardous events.

### Executive Summary:

Localities have evaluated a negative fiscal impact ranging from \$0 - \$0.7 million.

Some localities reported that the bill would produce no fiscal impact, as their comprehensive plans already addressed climate risk and mitigation strategies. Other localities mentioned that their Hazard Mitigation Plan, which performs many of the activities described in the bill, could or already was incorporated into their comprehensive plans, thereby reducing the fiscal impact.

For those localities which did report a fiscal impact, the costs would stem from increases in staff time needed to meet the requirements in the bill. A few localities also mentioned the need to hire additional consultants or contract services. Several noted that the cost were difficult to estimate, and as such reported an unknown, but non-zero, fiscal impact.

Some localities also noted that the implementation of the bill's requirements would generate a significant fiscal impact. That cost is not included in these estimates.

### Local Analysis:

**Locality:** Amherst

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

Would be included in our update

**Locality:** Augusta County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

As currently written, there is very little detail as to what would be required. With that being said, I think a locality would have a lot of discretion as to the extent they would want to pursue outside strategies. Because this bill is pretty vague at the moment and because we are not as high-risk for weather events associated with climate change as other parts of the state, I would think we would be able to keep any Comp. Plan updates high level and stick to staff input, maybe getting a little input from Planning District Commission if the language tightens. Cost is not of great concern at this time.

**Locality:** City of Alexandria..

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$700,000.00

Please note that the dollar total above represents a rough estimate as fiscal impact of this proposed bill is currently unknown, though thought to be significant. There are significant costs associated with this proposed bill and these efforts are not included in the City's Energy and Climate Change Action Plan (ECCAP). The ECCAP is only identifying climate changes as an area that will need updating in the planning process. There would be a significant cost associated with evaluating the strategies for climate resilience as some of our regulations, guidance, and planning documents that are not using updated data or forecasted data due to climate change. In the City's Environmental Action Plan 2040 action 1.1.2, the cost estimate is based on a project by project basis.

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**Locality:** City of Danville

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$5,000.00

This was estimated to be a one time cost to a consultant.

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**Locality:** City of Harrisonburg

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$50,000.00

The most obvious financial impact is the staff time and/or the amount of money we might need to expend to hire a consultant to study, research, and draft strategies to "address climate resilience in order to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and adapt to changing conditions and hazardous events." It is hard to put any kind of dollar amount on the exact cost..

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**Locality:** City of Manassas

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

The City of Manassas comprehensive plan already addresses this issue. There is no fiscal impact.

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**Locality:** City of Roanoke

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

Roanoke City's comprehensive plan already addresses this.

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**Locality:** County of Mecklenburg

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

Generally, comprehensive plan contracts have been done via overall scope of work. This requirement would merely be built into the new scope of work. It may made RFPs received for such work slightly more expensive, but a breakdown of the increased marginal cost can not be obtained as that is dependent on vendor assignment of cost to work to be performed. The total overall cost of a comp plan has traditionally been \$60,000.

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**Locality:** County of York

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

This is already addressed in our Hazard Mitigation Plan which is incorporated into the comp plan by reference.

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**Locality:** Montgomery County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

Our current Comprehensive Plan would likely not meet this requirement so at minimum an update to the plan would be required. Given current workload and staffing this would have to be done with consulting services; however, the actual cost is unknown.

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**Locality:** Prince George County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$30,000.00

Prince George County estimates that a fiscal impact of \$30,000 in contracted services to incorporate climate resilience into our comprehensive plan.

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**Locality:** Rappahannock County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$1.00

"F. The comprehensive plan shall consider strategies to address climate resilience in order to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and adapt to changing conditions and hazardous events."

Negligible fiscal impact to meet a very subjective ("Consider strategies") requirement that could be accomplished with a paragraph .

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**Locality:** Richmond County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

Not necessarily a financial impact, just another mandate requirement that takes time and understanding.

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**Locality:** Town of Blacksburg

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$100,000.00

The Town's comprehensive planning staff would need consultants to assist in considering strategies to address climate resilience. The strategies would require future costs for the Town.

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**Locality:** Town of Christiansburg

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$15,000.00

This would likely require a minimum of several public meetings, 5 Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee Meetings, 2 dedicated Planning Commission work sessions, and 1 Town Council work session. It would also entail 70 to 80 hours of staff time and public hearing advertising costs.

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**Locality:** Town of Leesburg

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$50,000.00

Would required a Consultant led study of about \$50,000 to implement.

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**Locality:** Town of Luray

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$125,000.00

Climate resistance should remain independent of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, non-coastal communities are not as impacted.

**Locality:** Town of Marion.

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

Can be done in staff

**Locality:** Town of Scottsville

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$500.00

Modest impact of staff time only. The impact is non-zero.

Good regional data exists already, but the Town comp. plan does not have this chapter on resiliency.

The \$500 cost represents staff time to research from available regional data and draft the new plan content. Planning Commission would likely not require a special meeting for review.

**Locality:** Town of Victoria

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$2,000.00

The added staff time and consultant time would add to the overall costs of updating a plan. Even though it is an added expense this is a topic that should be included in the comprehensive plan to help manage growth to help minimize the impacts of climate changes.

**Professional and Other Organization**

**Analysis:**  
**Organization:** PDC

This language requires a specialty for development of a comprehensive plan that is beyond the scope of local governments' existing staff. This would invariably require local governments to contract for such services thereby increasing the cost of development of the Comprehensive Plan by as much as \$50k. The Hazard Mitigation Plans localities already develop (locally and regionally) are an alternative method for achieving this intent.