

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

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|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| AGENDA TITLE: | Adoption of 2016 State Legislative Priorities | | |
| DEPARTMENT: | City Manager's Office | | |
| PRESENTED BY: | Scott MacColl, Intergovernmental Relations Manager | | |
| ACTION: | <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance | <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing | |

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

Council Legislative Priorities, once adopted, provide policy direction to guide staff in determining support or opposition to specific legislation. Staff utilizes these priorities to determine whether the City supports or opposes specific legislation and amendments in Olympia during the legislative session. Staff proposed the 2016 State Legislative Priorities for Council review and discussion at the November 23, 2015 Council meeting.

On the 23rd, staff reviewed the draft priorities with Council, who provided feedback on the priorities and added one additional legislative issue the City supports. Tonight, Council is being asked to adopt the 2016 State Legislative Priorities.

RESOURCES/FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This item has no direct financial impact.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council move to adopt the 2016 state legislative priorities to provide staff policy direction for the upcoming legislative session.

Approved By: City Manager **DT** City Attorney **MK**

BACKGROUND

Council Legislative Priorities, once adopted, provide policy direction to guide staff in determining support or opposition to specific legislation. Staff utilizes these priorities to determine whether the City supports or opposes specific legislation and amendments in Olympia during the legislative session. Staff proposed the attached 2016 State Legislative Priorities (Attachment A) for Council review and discussion at the November 23, 2015 Council meeting. The staff report and draft 2016 Legislative Priorities from that meeting can be found at the following link:
<http://cosweb.ci.shoreline.wa.us/uploads/attachments/cck/council/staffreports/2015/staffreport112315-9a.pdf>

On the 23rd, staff reviewed the draft priorities with Council, who provided feedback on the priorities and added one additional legislative issue the City supports. Based on this discussion, the proposed added priorities are added in underline in the text below and on the 2016 State Legislative Priorities themselves.

Tonight, Council is being asked to adopt the 2016 State Legislative Priorities.

DISCUSSION

At the November 23rd meeting, Council discussed adding two additional items to the 'Legislative Issues the City Supports' category of the Legislative Priorities.

The first is supporting a local option preservation option property tax exemption. This idea is connected to affordable housing and homelessness, and was identified by Councilmember Roberts from his work on the AWC Legislative Committee.

The second is regarding clarifying state statutes regarding tolling for Transportation Benefit Districts, which was on last year's Legislative Agenda. During the discussion at the November 23rd meeting, staff stated that it was their understanding that the issue had been clarified in this year's transportation omnibus bill. However, the clarification language was in earlier versions of the bill but did not make the final version that was passed by the Legislature. Therefore, the issue is still a priority to be clarified, and has been added to priority list.

In addition to these two additional priorities, below are the Council's four specific legislative priorities and the initial list of issues the City supports:

1. Local Government Financial Sustainability and Flexibility – building on the conversation started with legislators over the last couple of years, staff proposes advocating for a greater self-sufficiency model where the City can control its revenue streams. Cities need to be able to plan for funding from one year to the next; providing cities more local financial flexibility allows each jurisdiction to make their own choices of how to fund local services.

- a. 1% Property Tax Limit - this limit doesn't keep up with inflation and doesn't allow cities to maintain services. Setting a limit that is tied to a tangible number (e.g. Consumer Price Index) would allow cities to better maintain existing services.
 - b. Increased Flexibility on Existing Revenues – many available revenue options are constricted, restricted or unpredictable, which makes it hard to maintain or increase city services such as public safety, infrastructure and human services programs.
- 2. Infrastructure Funding - infrastructure programs that benefit cities have been diverted to the state general fund over the past few years. These types of accounts allow cities to utilize low interests loans or grants to complete infrastructure projects at a significantly lower cost. This item would support any funding in infrastructure spending that cities can apply for to help fund important projects (e.g. Public Works Trust Fund), which will be particularly important as the City begins providing wastewater service in 2017.
- 3. Revise Public Records Act – public records act laws have not kept up with changes in technology and they do not account for the growing number of broad, voluminous, commercially driven, or retaliatory requests that utilize a disproportionate amount of city resources. Cities need additional tools to be able to settle conflicts out of court and charge reasonable fees for electronic and commercial requests.
- 4. Support Human Services Safety Net – enhance the provision of needed human services programs to address issues that drive increased homelessness and public safety costs. At a recent Council dinner meeting with human services partners, the City heard several situations that affect our local agencies' ability to meet local needs including:
 - a. With the Affordable Care Act's passage there is a sense that everyone who signs up has full access to services. Funders are reacting by cutting support for basic agency operating costs which is taxing agencies' ability to keep their doors open. That, in turn, affects the provision of mental health and substance abuse treatment for youth and adults and youth development/Out of School Time services.
 - b. There is a broad shift away from support for services to seniors. This affects our local senior center operation as well as transportation services like the Hyde Shuttle.
 - c. The rapid increase in the cost of housing is driving the demand for housing assistance for rent, move in/out support and utility assistance.

Legislative Issues the City Supports:

- 1. Basic Education Funding - If the state utilizes the levy swap to fund basic education, it cannot come at the expense of the social safety net or by offloading state responsibilities on local government.

2. Transit Communities - advocate for city tools, such as funding and/or regulatory authority, to support communities centered around high capacity transit corridors.
3. Product Stewardship - support a paint product stewardship program for Washington to create a collection program for the reuse, recycling or proper disposal of unwanted paint.
4. Support a Local Option Preservation Property Tax Exemption – a tool that could incentivize private landlords to preserve and create affordability in existing housing stock. This tool could be targeted to properties at great risk of rent increases and/or applied in conjunction with an acquisition/renovation project.
5. Clarify the Washington State Transportation Commission's role in approving tolls imposed by a local Transportation Benefit District. State law is inconsistent as to whether the Transportation Commission has a role in setting the toll rate for a local Transportation Benefit District.

RESOURCES/FINANCIAL IMPACT

This item has no direct financial impact.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council move to adopt the 2016 state legislative priorities to provide staff policy direction for the upcoming legislative session.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Proposed 2016 State Legislative Priorities



Revised 2016 Shoreline Legislative Priorities

1. Support Local Government Financial Sustainability and Flexibility:
 - a. Revise 1% Property Tax Limitation
 - b. Increase flexibility on existing revenues
2. Restore funding infrastructure funding programs that support basic local infrastructure.
3. Revise Public Records Act to address changing technology, reduce frivolous requests, and allow for cities to charge a reasonable fee for electronic or commercial requests.
4. Support increasing state revenue from non-regressive revenue sources to support education funding, the human services safety net, and general state and local governments to maintain existing levels of services.

Legislative Issues the City Supports:

1. If the state is going to utilize a 'levy swap' to fund basic education, it cannot come at the expense of the social safety net or by offloading state responsibilities to local government.
2. Advocate for city tools, such as funding and regulatory authority, to support Transit Communities.
3. Support Paint Product Stewardship legislation.
4. Support a local option preservation property tax exemption.
5. Clarify the Washington State Transportation Commission's role in approving tolls imposed by a local Transportation Benefit District.