

**CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**  
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

<b>AGENDA TITLE:</b>	Discussing the 2022 State Legislative Priorities		
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	City Manager's Office		
<b>PRESENTED BY:</b>	Jim Hammond, Intergovernmental Program Manager		
<b>ACTION:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance	<input type="checkbox"/> Resolution	<input type="checkbox"/> Motion
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing	

**PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:**

Tonight, Council will discuss the upcoming 2022 Legislative Session and the City's proposed 2022 Legislative Priorities ("Priorities"). For 2022, staff proposes the continuation of efforts to secure funding and/or other legislative support for: a bike/pedestrian bridge at N 148<sup>th</sup> Street that would connect neighborhoods to the Shoreline South/148<sup>th</sup> Street light rail station; planning support, in collaboration with partner cities, for a regional crisis triage center; and increased investment in behavioral health and misdemeanor court diversion.

In terms of policy, staff proposes to seek passage of legislation that would:

- Support legislation, including a statewide transportation package, that promotes sustainable investments and addresses climate change impacts, particularly in the transportation sector;
- Provide direct funding to cities to administer diversion programs related to misdemeanor drug possession cases that are now adjudicated in district and municipal courts;
- Advocate for state/local collaboration, on a watershed-based approach to tackling fish-blocking culverts, including state funding for locally-owned culverts;
- Improve local government financial sustainability and flexibility, with secure funding sources that rely less on regressive revenue options; and
- Support efforts to continue to address homelessness and affordable housing, including additional funding for rapid acquisition of housing, development of policies that provide more equitable access to housing, without preemption of local control.

The proposed 2022 State Legislative Priorities (Attachment A) will be considered by Council tonight. Council is scheduled to take action on these proposed Legislative Priorities on November 22, 2021.

**RESOURCES/FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

This item has no direct financial impact.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

No action is required tonight; this item is for discussion purposes only. Staff recommends that the City Council move to adopt the 2022 State Legislative Priorities when this item is brought back to Council for adoption on November 22, 2021.

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

## **BACKGROUND**

2022 is the second year of the State's 2021-2022 biennium, or "short" legislative session, which is scheduled to last 60 days. The City's legislative priorities provide policy direction in a highly fluid and dynamic legislative environment. They guide staff in determining whether the City supports or opposes specific legislation and amendments in Olympia during the legislative session. The City actively monitors legislative proposals at the state level, as success in advancing the City's position in Olympia depends on providing accurate and timely information to Legislators and their staff that illustrates the impacts of pending legislation on Shoreline.

The legislative priorities are the general policy positions that provide staff and Council representatives the flexibility to respond to requests for information and input. Key topics of legislation that do not fall under the adopted Legislative Priorities will be presented to the Council in regular briefings. The City also continues to partner with the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) and Sound Cities Association (SCA), which provides a consistent voice and a strong presence for cities in Olympia.

## **DISCUSSION**

The proposed 2022 State Legislative Priorities (Attachment A) are attached to this staff report for Council for review tonight. Some of the Shoreline legislative agenda is influenced by and/or in line with the priorities adopted through a statewide process by AWC. For background information, this memo will review AWC-identified priorities first.

### **AWC Priorities/Concerns**

With the engagement of city officials from across the state, AWC arrived at a legislative agenda for the 2022 session that narrows the focus to three priority issues. AWC's Legislative Priorities body made this intentional decision in recognition that session is likely to be virtual, similar to last year's session, and that the compressed timeline of the short session requires clear prioritization. Additional information on AWC's legislative priorities can be found at the following link: <https://wacities.org/advocacy/City-Legislative-Priorities>.

- 1. Transportation package.** Support a new transportation package, with an emphasis on maintenance/preservation funding, that provides an equitable level of local funding while seeking additional long-term, sustainable revenue options for cities.
- 2. Basic infrastructure funding.** Seek enhanced appropriation of flexible state and federal dollars in programs like the Public Works Assistance Account that help cities finance basic infrastructure like drinking and wastewater.
- 3. Transportation Benefit Districts (TBD) funding authority.** Support expanded local authority for TBDs to allow for continued use of the sales tax funding tool beyond the current time limitations.

In addition, AWC identified a range of significant issues that they will monitor during the session and weigh in on as circumstances dictate during the legislative session. These include funding related to the *Blake* decision, culverts, the Growth Management Act, the property tax cap and other local revenue issues, law enforcement, housing and homelessness, and more. Many of these are reflected in the City's draft legislative priorities in Attachment A.

### **Shoreline Priorities/Concerns**

Below are the proposed specific legislative priorities and a list of issues the City supports:

#### **Shoreline-specific interests:**

1. *N 148<sup>th</sup> Street Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge*. Last session, this project made it onto both the House and Senate project lists for a possible statewide transportation package. While it is still unknown if/when a package might come together, the City will continue to pursue funding support for a non-motorized pedestrian/bike bridge to integrate connections to the Shoreline South/148<sup>th</sup> Street light rail station. This project will be promoted as a strong example of a green transportation project that also facilitates the delivery of affordable housing and equitable access to a new urban neighborhood.
2. *Partnership support for a regional crisis triage center*. Shoreline's partnership with the cities of Lake Forest Park, Kenmore, Bothell and Kirkland on the North Sound RADAR program has demonstrated the value and importance of including behavioral health intervention in the public safety response toolkit. This partnership will jointly pursue State support for an effort to undertake a planning effort for a crisis triage center in north King County.

#### **Shoreline-supported legislative issues:**

1. *Transportation policies, funding and local control*. The challenges of expanding transportation funding beyond road investments have converged with the need to address the critical threats of climate change. The projected impacts of a changing climate represent one of the most serious threats to Shoreline, the region, and the world. The Governor and Legislature share the City's commitment to this issue, and the City will advocate for legislation that advances toward this goal. Given its contribution to greenhouse gases, the transportation sector is a high priority focus area. Accordingly, it is recommended that Shoreline continue to advocate for a statewide funding package and related transportation policies that help the state achieve this convergence, including increased funding for local government, as well as transit and non-motorized transportation.
2. *Follow-up from the Blake decision*. In the wake of the Supreme Court's *Blake* decision, drug possession became a misdemeanor, instead of a felony, and individuals are to be offered opportunities for diversion prior to criminal prosecution. With that change, district and municipal courts became the venue

for an increased number of drug-related crimes. Along with AWC, the City would support direct funding for cities to administer diversion programs, provide Medication-Assisted Treatment services, establish or expand therapeutic courts, and create a database to track the now-required diversion.

3. *Local Government Financial Sustainability and Flexibility.* Building on the conversation started with legislators over the past several years, staff proposes advocating for a more self-sufficient 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. Examples include:
  - a. *1% Property tax limit.* This existing limit does not keep pace with inflation and restricts cities' ability to maintain services. Setting a limit tied to a tangible number (e.g. Consumer Price Index) would allow cities to better maintain existing services.
  - b. *Maintain shared revenues.* While the state will need to tackle its own funding challenges, this cannot come at the expense of revenues that cities rely upon for basic operations. However, to the extent the state chooses to increase marijuana or liquor taxes, the City should support a corresponding increase in distribution of those funds.
  - c. *Support efforts to change state and local tax structures.* There has been a growing awareness of the need to create less regressive revenue options at both the state and local levels. Support efforts to make these changes, without negatively impacting local revenue authority.
4. *Support legislation that addresses climate change impacts, across all sectors.* While the transportation sector is one of the greatest generators of greenhouse gases, the City of Shoreline recognizes that opportunities for policy and operational improvements exist throughout the state. The City strongly supports all efforts to tackle this tremendous challenge.
5. *Advocate for a watershed-based approach and statewide strategic plan to address fish-blocking culverts in an efficient and effective manner.* Many critical fish runs are blocked by a series of fish-blocking culverts that are both State and locally owned. Funding that is focused solely on state culverts creates risk that the work won't yield results. A shared strategic vision and local funding are both essential to making progress that helps our threatened fish runs.
6. *Support ongoing efforts to address homelessness and increase equitable access to affordable housing.* The City has strongly supported increased density and mandatory affordable housing requirements in its station areas. Last year, the Legislature selected Shoreline as a pilot jurisdiction for a 20-year Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) program. The City will continue to work with both cities and housing advocates to identify measures that will effectively improve access to affordable housing in communities across the state, while seeking to avoid the implementation of mandates. New tools, such as a Housing Benefit District, will

be explored by the Legislature during the session, and staff will seek to shape these tools so that they would work effectively at the local level.

7. *Support clarification of recent police reforms, including those identified by the Association of Washington Cities, to ensure their clarity and effectiveness.* During the 2021 session, the State Legislature made significant changes to the practices of law enforcement. Of specific interest locally, the City would support efforts to clarify the civil standards for use of force requirements, so law enforcement can better understand requirements and know when they can intervene in a non-criminal situation, such as a mental health crisis.

### **RESOURCES/FINANCIAL IMPACT**

This item has no direct financial impact.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

No action is required tonight; this item is for discussion purposes only. Staff recommends that the City Council move to adopt the 2022 State Legislative Priorities when this item is brought back to Council for adoption on November 22, 2021.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Draft 2022 State Legislative Priorities



## ***DRAFT* City of Shoreline 2022 State Legislative Priorities**

### **Shoreline-Specific Priorities:**

- Maintain project visibility for the N 148<sup>th</sup> Street non-motorized pedestrian/bicycle bridge as a strong candidate for any state transportation package.
- Support capital budget funding flexibility for feasibility studies and site acquisition for a Regional Crisis Triage Center in north King County to support the ability of the five-city North Sound RADAR program to engage in acute behavioral health interventions.

### **Legislative Issues the City Supports:**

- Adopt a new transportation revenue package that increases emphasis on transit and non-motorized travel, prioritizes maintenance, and provides an equitable level of local funding and additional long-term, sustainable revenue options for cities to support and maintain local transportation infrastructure.
- Support direct funding for cities to administer diversion programs related to misdemeanor drug possession cases handled by city law enforcement and now adjudicated in municipal courts, as well as Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) services, therapeutic courts, and a diversion tracking database.
- Preserve City fiscal health with secure funding sources.
  - Remove the existing 1% property tax limitation or revise by indexing it to inflation, population growth, or some related indicator.
  - Support efforts to review and revise both state and local tax structures so they rely less on regressive revenue options, without negatively impacting local revenue authority.
  - Maintain existing shared revenues.
- Support legislation that addresses climate change impacts, across all sectors.
- Continue to advance a watershed-based approach and strategic plan to address local fish-blocking culverts along with state culverts; seek state resources to correct locally owned

culverts as a part of the state's overall resolution to the culvert injunction.

- Continue to address homelessness and increase equitable access to housing through incentives and support for local efforts, without use of mandates; seek development of new tools to accomplish this goal, such as establishment of Housing Benefit Districts.
- Realize the full resource impacts of legislative changes to law enforcement and behavioral health policies through increased funding for behavioral health treatment and response services and facilities.
- Support clarification of the civil standards for use of force requirements so law enforcement can better understand the state requirements and know when they can intervene in a situation, including a mental health crisis, where a crime is not being committed.

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