

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE:	Discussing the 2023 State Legislative Priorities
DEPARTMENT:	City Manager's Office
PRESENTED BY:	Jim Hammond, Intergovernmental Program Manager
ACTION:	<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 2023 Legislative Session and the City's proposed 2023 Legislative Priorities ("Priorities"). For 2023, staff proposes to seek and support state funding for key investments in Shoreline's neighborhood park system; capital and other costs to stand up a Crisis Receiving Center in north King County; as well as increased funding and legislative guidance needed to enable Shoreline and other cities to effectively comply with the *Blake* decision.

In terms of additional policy goals, staff proposes to engage our legislature in order to:

- Support legislation that advances efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector and across all other sectors.
- Effectively direct state and federal resources toward effective on-the-ground implementation of key climate action steps, such and electrification of buildings and vehicles.
- Advocate for state/local collaboration on a watershed-based approach to improving fish-blocking culverts, including improved coordination and funding.
- Improve local government financial sustainability and flexibility, with secure funding sources that rely less on regressive revenue options.
- Support efforts to continue to address homelessness and affordable housing, including enhanced protection for tenants, equitable access to housing, and support for local efforts to accommodate additional housing development, including affordable housing.

The proposed 2023 State Legislative Priorities (Attachment A) will be considered by Council tonight. Council is scheduled to take action on these proposed Legislative Priorities on November 28, 2022.

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 2023 State Legislative Priorities when this item is brought back to Council for adoption on November 28, 2022.

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

BACKGROUND

The upcoming 2023 legislative session is the first year of the State's 2023-2024 biennium, or "long" legislative session, which is scheduled to last 105 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), each of which provides a consistent voice and a strong presence for cities in Olympia.

DISCUSSION

The proposed 2023 State Legislative Priorities (Attachment A) are attached Council review tonight. Some of the Shoreline legislative agenda is influenced by and/or in line with the priorities adopted through AWC's statewide process. This memo outlines AWC-identified priorities first and Shoreline-specific priorities second.

AWC Priorities/Concerns

With the engagement of city officials from across the state, AWC arrived at a legislative agenda for the 2023 session that includes a strong focus on public safety, infrastructure, housing, and behavioral health. Key elements include:

- Responding to the *Blake* decision: clarification of drug possession laws, as well as additional funding for cities necessary to fully comply with *Blake*.
- Clarification of vehicle pursuit laws that direct law enforcement.
- Funding for basic infrastructure, particularly through full funding of the Public Works Assistance Account.
- Provisions of tools and incentives, not mandates, that allow cities to better increase housing supply and address housing affordability.
- Additional funding and support for community-based behavioral health services.

Additional concerns, identified by AWC as "significant issues," include revisions to the property tax cap; additional transportation funding, particularly for local jurisdictions; funding for work related to police reform; and appropriate reform to the Growth Management Act. For additional information on AWC's priorities, you can view its agenda here: <https://wacities.org/advocacy/City-Legislative-Priorities>.

Many of the AWC priorities are reflected in the City's draft legislative priorities in Attachment A.

Shoreline Priorities/Concerns

Below are the proposed Shoreline-specific legislative priorities and a list of issues the City supports.

Shoreline-Specific Interests:

1. *Funding key improvements in Shoreline neighborhood parks.* During each budget cycle, Shoreline's state legislators provide leadership and advocacy during the session in support of important local needs. This year, the City will partner with our delegation to review and advocate for three potential investment opportunities in our neighborhood park system—(1) restroom renovations at three City Parks (Shoreview, upper and lower; Richmond Highlands; and Kayu Kayu Ac); (2) Park design, including community engagement, for three new neighborhood parks (Westminster, Edwin Pratt, and 192nd/Aurora); and (3) accessibility improvements to Richmond Beach Community Park.
2. *Potential state funding for a regional crisis receiving center.* Shoreline's partnership with the cities of Lake Forest Park, Kenmore, Bothell and Kirkland on the North Sound RADAR program has rapidly evolved into a burgeoning partnership with a crisis care provider who is committed to siting a crisis receiving center in north King County. The project is evolving rapidly and has had significant successes in its initial phases. It is unclear how much, if any, state financial support will be sought during this session or if any other state support will be required. Shoreline staff are working closely with the RADAR cities, King County, and the crisis service provider throughout this process.

Shoreline-Supported Legislative Issues:

1. *Continued follow-up from the Blake decision.* In the wake of the Supreme Court's *Blake* decision, where drug possession became a misdemeanor instead of a felony and individuals are to be offered opportunities for diversion prior to criminal prosecution, both the State and cities have worked steadily to comply with the Court's direction. While much progress has been made, more remains. Shoreline, along with cities statewide, need additional support from the State, including funding support for the many changes that need to be made to criminal justice operations, such as vacating convictions, refunding fines and other payments, standing up diversion programs, and modifying municipal court operations.
2. *Support legislation that addresses climate change impacts, across all sectors, and promotes sustainable practices.* While the transportation sector is one of the greatest generators of greenhouse gases, the City recognizes that opportunities for policy and operational improvements exist throughout the state. The City strongly supports all efforts to tackle this tremendous challenge.

The City also supports measures that improve sustainable practices, such as encouraging producer responsibility for packaging and other related measures.

3. *Ensure that state and federal resources dedicated to climate action are used effectively.* The state Climate Commitment Act and the federal Inflation Reduction Act will direct significant resources to Washington State, and those resources must be used effectively to advance on-the-ground implementation, such as building electrification and furthering the adoption of electric vehicles.
4. *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 focused solely on state culverts creates risk that the work will not yield the intended results. A shared strategic vision and funding to address local culverts are both essential to making progress that helps our threatened fish runs.
5. *Local Government Financial Sustainability and Flexibility.* Over the past several years, the City has engaged with legislators on how to achieve 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 and revenue sources.* There has been a growing awareness of the need to create less regressive revenue options at both the State and local levels, as well as local options for transportation funding. Recently, Road Usage Charges have emerged as a significant topic of debate. The City supports efforts to make these changes without negatively impacting local revenue authority.
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 light rail station areas, as well as tools to promote housing choice and "missing middle" housing throughout the City. Such tools include improvements to permitting and SEPA review, and modifications to zoning that retain appropriate development standards. The City also recognizes the importance of helping families to maintain current housing, and this supports efforts to add both protections and related enforcement mechanisms that are intended to protect tenants.

7. *Support ongoing state funding for local park operations and maintenance needs.* In prior sessions, the Legislature recognized the deficit in maintenance and basic infrastructure that is being faced by state parks due to heavy use occasioned by the State's significant population growth. Local parks see the same impact, particularly in areas with the highest rates of growth. Welcoming, usable recreation space is a fundamental element of Growth Management Act concurrency, and additional State funding would help cities address this vital need.

RESOURCES/FINANCIAL IMPACT

This item has no direct financial impact.

RECOMMENDATION

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Draft 2023 State Legislative Priorities



City of Shoreline 2023 State Legislative Priorities

Shoreline-Specific Priorities:

- Seek Local/Community Project funding in the Capital Budget for important improvements in Shoreline parks, including renovation of outdated public restrooms at key park facilities, design of three new neighborhood parks, and improved accessibility to Richmond Beach Community Park.
- Seek funding, as part of a five-city coalition, for capital and start-up costs for the North King County Crisis Receiving Center that will provide comprehensive behavioral health crisis care and support the efforts of first responders and crisis response staff.

Legislative Issues the City Supports:

- Support legislation that better enables the City to comply with the *Blake* decision, including:
 - Funding support for required changes to criminal justice operations, such as conviction vacations, financial repayments, diversion programs and municipal court changes;
 - Funding for behavioral health-oriented community responders, as well as associated facilities that support treatment and crisis response;
 - Clarification of the crime of possession and modification of the current referral requirement system.
- Support legislation that reduces greenhouse gas emissions addresses climate change impacts, across all sectors, and promotes sustainable practices.
- Support efforts to direct state and federal climate action resources, including funding from the state Climate Commitment Act and federal Inflation Reduction Act, toward on-the-ground implementation of local climate action in key sectors, such as building electrification and electric vehicle adoption.
- 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 support legislation that addresses homelessness and increase equitable access to housing through such actions as measures that strengthen and better enforce statewide renter protections, as well as incentives and support for local efforts to accommodate additional housing development, including affordable housing.
- Identify sustainable, ongoing transportation funding options for local jurisdictions, including Road Usage Charge with flexibility to use the funding that meets each community's specific needs.
- Preserve City fiscal health with secure funding sources, including:
 - 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.
 - Removal of the existing 1% property tax limitation, or revision that indexes it to inflation, population growth, or some related indicator.
- Support ongoing state funding for local park maintenance and operations needs.

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