

# Association of Washington Cities (AWC)

Tacoma City Council Presentation

April 4, 2023



By Deanna Dawson, AWC CEO

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## About Deanna Dawson:

- Joined AWC in June 2023
- First woman CEO in AWC's 90-year history
- Dawson's background includes:
  - 10+ years as Executive Director of Sound Cities Association (SCA)
  - Served on Edmonds City Council 2001-2008
  - Past Director of Federal Affairs and Diversity Initiatives at Justice at Stake
  - Served as Executive Director of Snohomish County
  - Attorney with extensive public and private sector experience

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## About AWC:

- Mission: Serving our members through advocacy, education, and services
- Structure: 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporation
- Membership: All 281 cities and towns in Washington are members; membership is voluntary
- Celebrating 90 years of service in 2023

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## Four separate, but related corporations

### Association of Washington Cities (AWC)

- 501(c)(4)
- Mission: Serving our members through advocacy, education, and services

### AWC Employee Benefit Trust (Trust)

- 501(c)(9)
- Voluntary employees' beneficiary association (VEBA)
- 8 Trustees (2 trustees from AWC Board)
- Employee Benefits Advisory Committee



### AWC Risk Management Service Agency (RMSA)

- RCW 49.62
- Governmental risk pool authorized by RCW and formed by interlocal agreement
- 7 Directors
- Operating Committee

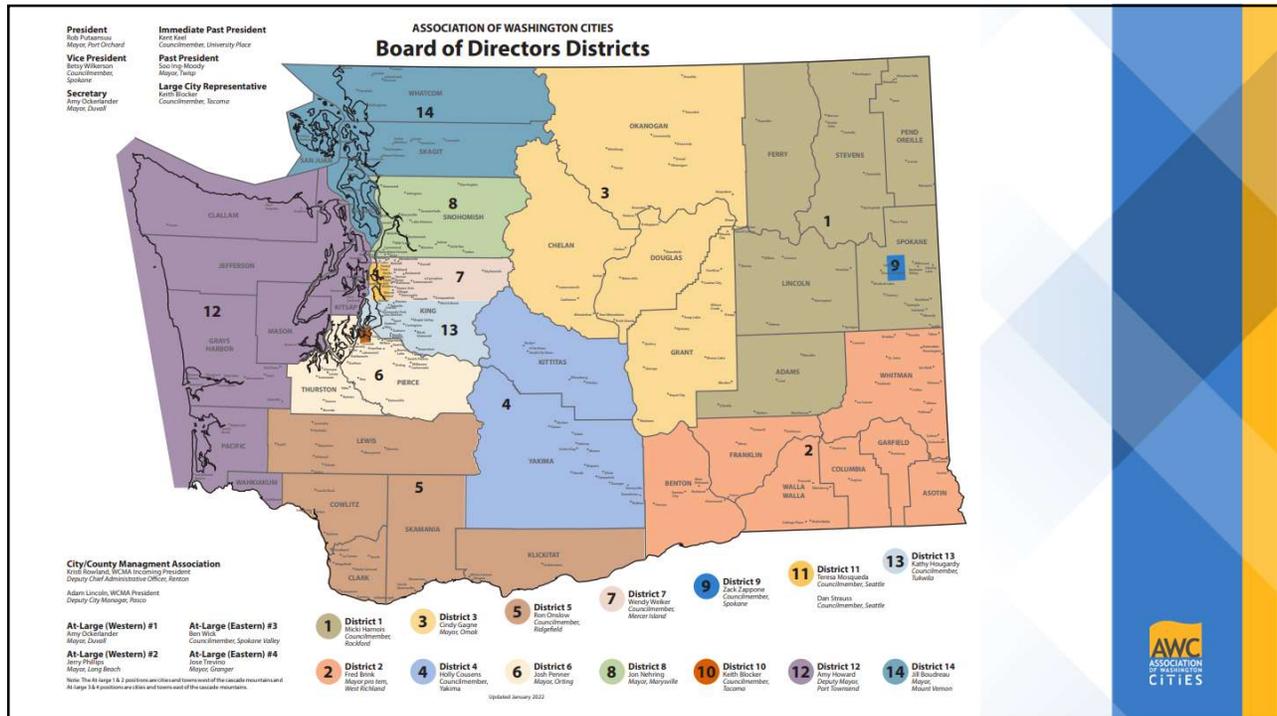


### AWC Center for Quality Communities

- 501(c)(3)
- Formed to promote municipal leadership development and civic engagement
- AWC Executive Committee serves as Board



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# AWC Board

**25 members:**

- President, Vice President, Past President, Immediate Past President
- 14 districts
  - Tacoma is its own district
  - Councilmember Keith Blocker represents Tacoma
- 2 at-large eastern
- 2 at-large western
- 2 WCMA (President and Past President)

**Meets 4x/year as governing body of AWC  
Sets strategic goals for organization**

**Officers**

**President**  
Rob Putansau  
Mayor, Port Orchard

**Vice President**  
Betsy Wilkerson  
Councilmember, Spokane

**Secretary & At-Large #1**  
(Western >5,000 population)  
Amy Clark  
Mayor, Duvall

**Large City Representative & District 10**  
Keith Blocker  
Councilmember, Tacoma

**Immediate Past President**  
Kent Kael  
Councilmember, University Place

**Past President**  
Soo Ing-Moody  
Mayor, Topso

**Directors**

**District 1**  
Miki Harms  
Councilmember, Rockford

**District 2**  
Fred Bink  
Mayor pro tem, West Richland

**District 3**  
Cindy Gagne  
Mayor, Omak

**District 4**  
Holly Cousens, Councilmember, Yakima

**District 5**  
Ron Onalow  
Councilmember, Ridgefield

**District 6**  
Josh Penner  
Mayor, Orting

**District 7**  
Wendy Walker  
Councilmember, Mercer Island

**District 8**  
Jon Nehring  
Mayor, Marysville

**District 9**  
Zack Zappone  
Councilmember, Spokane

**District 11**  
Dan Straus, Councilmember, Seattle

**District 11**  
Teresa Mosqueda  
Councilmember, Seattle

**District 12**  
Amy Howard  
Deputy Mayor, Port Townsend

**District 13**  
Kathy Hougary  
Councilmember, Tukwila

**District 14**  
Jill Boudreau  
Mayor, Mount Vernon

**At-Large #2 (Western <5,000 population)**  
Jerry Phillips  
Mayor, Long Beach

**At-Large #4 (Eastern <5,000 population)**  
Jose Trevino  
Mayor, Granger

**City/County Management Association**

**Kristi Rowland**  
Deputy Chief Administrator  
Office: Renton  
WCMA Incoming President

**Adam Lincoln**  
Deputy City Manager, Pasco  
WCMA President

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**Strategic goals**

- GOAL #1 Lead**  
Boldly and proactively drive policy on behalf of Washington's cities and towns.
- GOAL #2 Promote**  
Raise visibility for cities and towns and the pivotal role of local government.
- GOAL #3 Educate**  
Inspire excellent and effective city and town leadership.
- GOAL #4 Empower**  
Champion innovative, high-quality solutions and resources to help cities and towns thrive.
- GOAL #5 Engage**  
Model inclusiveness and provide meaningful engagement opportunities to all members.
- GOAL #6 Deliver**  
Maximize our organizational effectiveness.

**Rising to Excellence**  
OUR THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN  
2019-2022  
AWC ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON CITIES

AWC ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON CITIES

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**Officers**

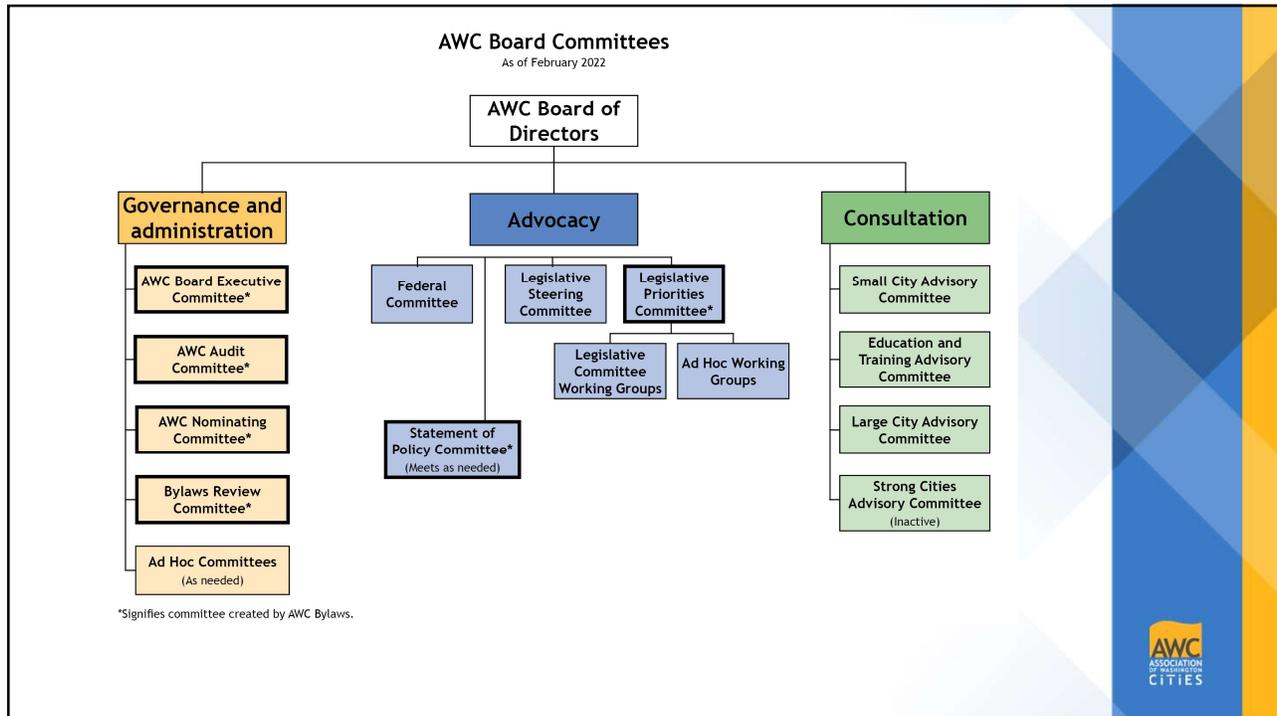
 <b>President</b> Rob Putaansuu Mayor, Port Orchard	 <b>Vice President</b> Betsy Wilkerson Councilmember, Spokane	 <b>Secretary &amp; At-Large #1 (Western &gt;5,000 population)</b> Amy Ockerlander Mayor, Duvall
 <b>Immediate Past President</b> Kent Keel Councilmember, University Place	 <b>Past President</b> Soo Ing-Moody Mayor, Twisp	 <b>Large City Representative &amp; District 10</b> Keith Blocker Councilmember, Tacoma

**AWC Executive Committee**

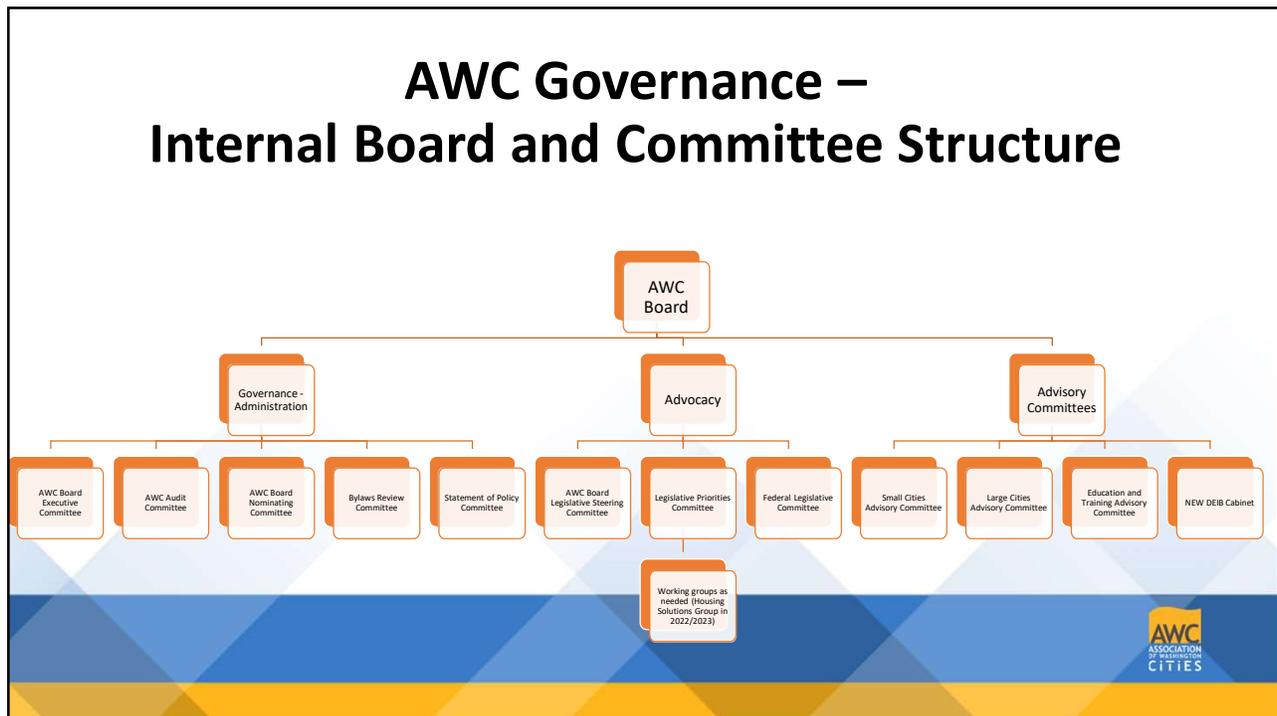
- Meets monthly to provide direction between quarterly board meetings
- Also serves as board of:
  - AWC Center for Quality Communities
  - AWC Workers' Comp Retro Program
  - Budget committee of the AWC Board

AWC ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON CITIES

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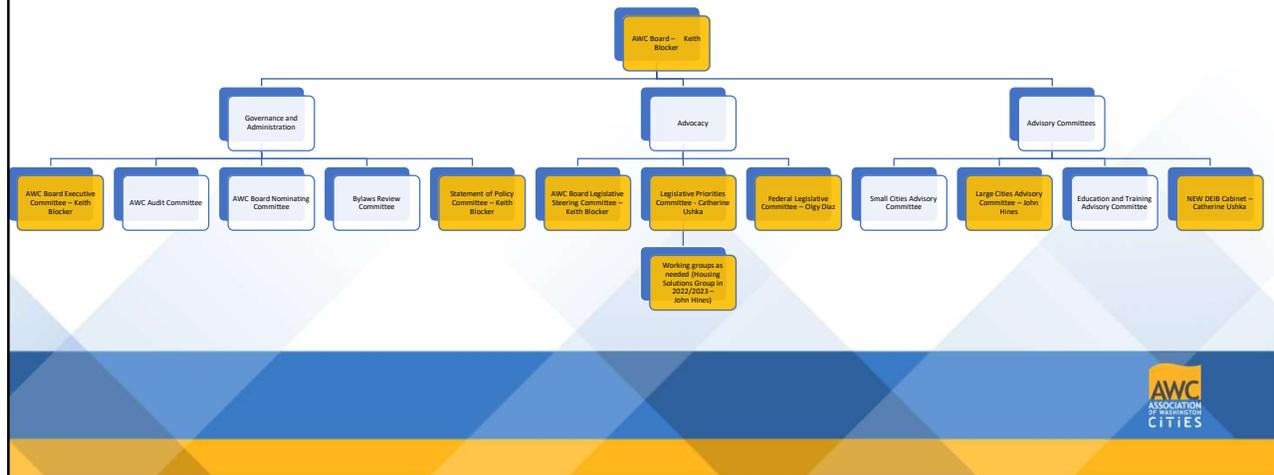


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## Tacoma is well represented in AWC governance ...



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## AWC Executive Committee

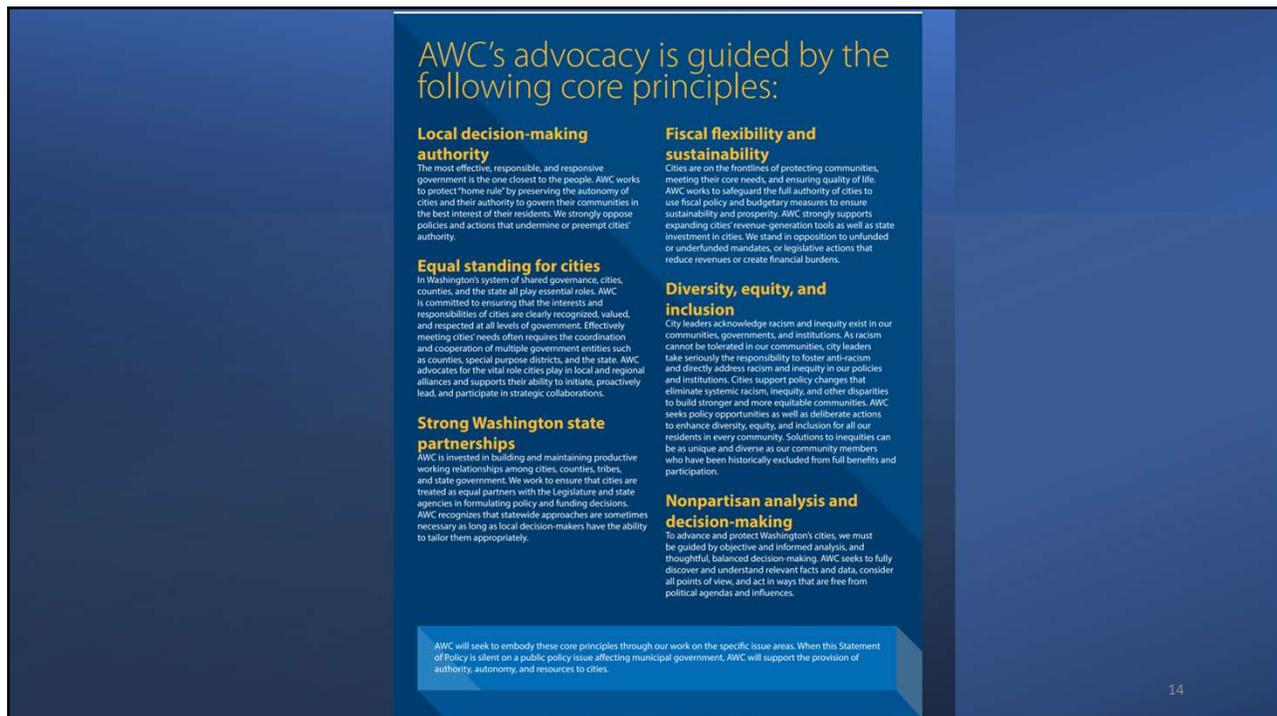
AWC President	• Mayor Rob Putaansuu, Port Orchard
AWC Vice President	• Councilmember Betsy Wilkerson, Spokane
AWC Secretary	• Mayor Amy Ockerlander, Duvall
AWC Immediate Past President	• Councilmember Kent Keel, University Place
AWC Past President	• Mayor Soo Ing-Moody, Twisp
Large City Representative (Seattle, Spokane, or Tacoma)	• Councilmember Keith Blocker, Tacoma

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AWC  
Mission:

Serving our members through advocacy, education, and services



**AWC's advocacy is guided by the following core principles:**

- Local decision-making authority**  
The most effective, responsible, and responsive government is the one closest to the people. AWC works to protect "home rule" by preserving the autonomy of cities and their authority to govern their communities in the best interest of their residents. We strongly oppose policies and actions that undermine or preempt cities' authority.
- Equal standing for cities**  
In Washington's system of shared governance, cities, counties, and the state all play essential roles. AWC is committed to ensuring that the interests and responsibilities of cities are clearly recognized, valued, and respected at all levels of government. Effectively meeting cities' needs often requires the coordination and cooperation of multiple government entities such as counties, special purpose districts, and the state. AWC advocates for the vital role cities play in local and regional alliances and supports their ability to initiate, proactively lead, and participate in strategic collaborations.
- Strong Washington state partnerships**  
AWC is invested in building and maintaining productive working relationships among cities, counties, tribes, and state governments. We work to ensure that cities are treated as equal partners with the Legislature and state agencies in formulating policy and funding decisions. AWC recognizes that statewide approaches are sometimes necessary as long as local decision-makers have the ability to tailor them appropriately.
- Fiscal flexibility and sustainability**  
Cities are on the frontlines of protecting communities, meeting their core needs, and ensuring quality of life. AWC works to safeguard the full authority of cities to use fiscal policy and budgetary measures to ensure sustainability and prosperity. AWC strongly supports expanding cities' revenue-generation tools as well as state investment in cities. We stand in opposition to unfunded or underfunded mandates, or legislative actions that reduce revenues or create financial burdens.
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion**  
City leaders acknowledge racism and inequity exist in our communities, governments, and institutions. As racism cannot be tolerated in our communities, city leaders take seriously the responsibility to foster anti-racism and directly address racism and inequity in our policies and institutions. Cities support policy changes that eliminate systemic racism, inequity, and other disparities to build stronger and more equitable communities. AWC seeks policy opportunities as well as deliberate actions to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion for all our residents in every community. Solutions to inequities can be as unique and diverse as our community members who have been historically excluded from full benefits and participation.
- Nonpartisan analysis and decision-making**  
To advance and protect Washington's cities, we must be guided by objective and informed analysis, and thoughtful, balanced decision-making. AWC seeks to fully discover and understand relevant facts and data, consider all points of view, and act in ways that are free from political agendas and influences.

AWC will seek to embody these core principles through our work on the specific issue areas. When this Statement of Policy is silent on a public policy issue affecting municipal government, AWC will support the provision of authority, autonomy, and resources to cities.

# 2023 City Legislative Priorities

Strong cities make a great state. Cities are home to 65% of the state's residents, drive the economy, and provide the most accessible government. The continued success of cities depends on adequate resources and local decision-making to best meet the needs of our residents.

Washington's 281 cities ask the Legislature to partner with cities and act on the following priorities:

### Respond to the *Blake* decision

Support clarification around the crime of possessing a controlled substance so that individuals, law enforcement, and treatment providers can respond appropriately. Revise the current system of two referrals prior to criminal charges, so it can be more effectively administered across the state.

Support additional investments to help cities with the costs stemming from the *Blake* decision on how possession of controlled substances is handled by the criminal justice system. This includes:

- Funding to help offset the costs of vacating criminal convictions, repaying legal financial obligations, administering diversion programs, and mitigating municipal court impacts.
- Investment in alternative response teams; treatment facilities for adults and juveniles; treatment in jails; and social workers, treatment providers, and system navigators to help direct people to treatment.

### Ensure basic infrastructure funding

Fully fund the Public Works Assistance Account (PWAA), allow the current revenue diversions to sunset at the end of fiscal year 2023, and refrain from further fund transfers or diversions to other infrastructure programs or non-infrastructure accounts. Expand state funding opportunities to assist with maintenance and operations of local infrastructure.

### Increase housing availability & affordability

Support a proactive approach that creates new tools, incentives, and revenues that cities can use to help increase housing supply and address affordability. Cities need resources to encourage development of housing at all income levels—especially for our lowest-income residents.

### Provide behavioral health resources

Create greater access to community-based behavioral health services to include substance use disorder treatment and dual diagnosis treatment facilities. Support continued state funding to help communities establish alternative response programs like co-responder programs, diversion programs, and others that provide options beyond law enforcement for responding to situations that involve individuals suffering from behavioral health issues.

### Address vehicle pursuits for public safety

Clarify the ability for law enforcement to conduct vehicle pursuits using a reasonable suspicion standard in specific circumstances. This is essential to allow for effective and safe pursuit of suspects when there is an immediate threat to public safety. Cities will continue to support safety standards and training for officers who engage in vehicle pursuits.

**Contact:** Candice Beck  
Government Relations Director  
candiceb@awcnet.org



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# AWC 2023 Federal Legislative Priorities

### Protect & maintain flexibility in COVID-19 response

- Ensure that funding remains available and that **Local Fiscal Recovery Funds are not swept** for other purposes. Additionally, support proposals to enhance flexibility with previously appropriated COVID-19 response funding. This will **maximize local impacts and benefits** and minimize administrative burdens and costs.

### Continue investing in local public infrastructure

- Pursue policy solutions that **support cities' basic infrastructure needs**. Protect and ensure access to federal funding identified in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) for cities of all sizes. Ensure funding is available, while **minimizing costly grant application and other administrative burdens** that may create a barrier to funding crucial projects.
- Seek sustainable revenue sources to address the existing backlog of city infrastructure projects in Washington. While the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) has provided a much-needed infusion of funding to Washington state, **cities need ongoing and sustainable investments** to meet basic city infrastructure needs.
- Support policies that will **build resilient infrastructure** capacity and invest in sustainable technologies that will serve cities into the future.
- Support **digital equity for our communities**. Continue federal investment in universal and synchronous broadband access—universal availability,

affordability, and world-class quality. **Expand broadband access** in unserved, under-served, and hard-to-serve areas. Affordable, reliable, accessible broadband is essential to communities, small and large, to support basic services like healthcare and education and to drive economic growth.

### Invest in safe communities

- Support **community-centered, equitable programs that improve our behavioral health system** and local response to the opioid addiction crisis. Efforts to reduce the number of opioid and heroin overdoses in our cities require a strong partnership between local, state, and federal health and law enforcement programs. Support efforts to stop illegal trafficking of fentanyl. We must ensure that funds appropriated for substance abuse, treatment, prevention, and recovery programs are accessible to cities. Provide financial assistance to help recruit and retain behavioral health professionals.
- **Provide financial assistance to help recruit and retain first responders**. Support continued federal funding for programs such as Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER), and Justice Assistance Grants (JAG).
- Support passage of the HELPER Act. This act creates a home-loan program to help **make home ownership more affordable for first responders and teachers**.
- Provide direct **funding to cities to support violence prevention programs**.

**Contact:** Candice Beck  
Government Relations Director  
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### Invest in transportation

- Support a more **sustainable revenue model to fund the Highway Trust Fund**—one that provides adequate resources to maintain and improve our aging transportation infrastructure.
- Support federal policies that **enhance municipal efforts to provide essential transportation systems**, including but not limited to transit and multimodal investments, with a focus on communities of color and other underserved populations.
- Ensure that **funding for fish passage improvements** is available to both local and state governments.

### Invest in affordable housing

81% of Washington cities report a lack of access to affordable housing, particularly housing affordable to those with lower incomes. Without substantial federal investment and technical assistance, Washington's cities will not be able to solve this crisis.

Support a **comprehensive federal housing policy** that preserves local decision-making while making substantial enhancements to **federal investments in affordable housing to benefit cities**. These enhancements include, but are not limited to:

- Expansions of the low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC);
- Direct capital investments;
- Expanded access to rental assistance;
- Enhancements to the housing choice voucher program; and
- Other efforts to build more housing supply in cities.

### Protect public control over public rights-of-way

**Uphold local control over local public rights-of-way** in order to balance community interests with the need for new telecommunications infrastructure. This includes the:

- Ability to regulate access to municipally owned poles and other public facilities;
- Authority for permitting and siting processes that consider community safety, aesthetics, and other concerns; and
- Ability for cities to negotiate our own franchise agreements with cable companies.

### Protect local fiscal sustainability and regulatory efforts

Washington cities oppose federal policies that undermine local governments' regulatory authority, impose unfunded mandates, or preempt local government revenues and revenue authorities.

- Preserve the tax exemption on all municipal bonds, including Private Activity Bonds (PABs);
- Eliminate the \$10,000 cap on the State and Local Tax (SALT) deduction; and
- Restore the tax exemption for advance refunding bonds. By restoring this essential tax exemption, cities would be able to refinance their debts to achieve lower interest rates, saving local taxpayer dollars and freeing up capital for additional infrastructure investments.

### Support National League of Cities' National Municipal Policy and Resolutions & U.S. Conference of Mayors' priorities

AWC and many individual cities are members and supporters of the NLC agenda. Unless otherwise noted, AWC supports the recommendations of NLC and the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

**Contact:** Candice Beck  
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AWC offers a host of training and networking opportunities for elected officials-

- Conferences like the Annual Conference (June in Spokane) and City Action Days
- Elected Officials Essentials, giving newly elected officials resources they need to succeed
- Online training programs
- Certificate of Municipal Leadership (CML) Program
- Mayors Exchanges
- And More!

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**cml** Certificate of Municipal Leadership

AWC's Certificate of Municipal Leadership (CML) program recognizes mayors and councilmembers for accomplishing training in five core areas. The trainings offered by AWC provide city elected officials with the knowledge they need to effectively operate within the law, plan for the future, secure and manage funds, foster strong relationships and work to build more equitable communities.

Elected officials are automatically enrolled in the CML program, earning credits as they attend AWC workshops and conferences. AWC tracks credits, which can be viewed on AWC's website.

When you meet the CML or Advanced CML requirements, you will receive your certificate and be recognized in our CityVoice newsletter and at AWC's Annual Conference. You may also request a CML logo for use on your business cards, website, and social media.

**Certificate of Municipal Leadership**

To receive the Certificate of Municipal Leadership, you must earn 30 CML credits and complete at least one training in each of the five areas below. A minimum of 5 credits in each competency area is recommended.

AWC offers many ways to earn CML credits throughout the year. You can attend live events or webinars, learn on your own schedule through eLearnings, or explore sessions across all competency areas at AWC's Annual Conference. Here are just a few examples:

**Roles, responsibilities, and legal requirements**

- Elected Officials Essentials
- Open Government Trainings Act (eLearning)

**Effective local leadership**

- City Action Days
- Mayors Exchange

**Community planning and development**

- Short Course on Local Planning - Department of Commerce
- Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council (IACC) Conference

**Public sector resource management**

- Municipal Budgeting & Fiscal Management Workshop
- Federal Broadband Funding for cities (eLearning)

**Diversity, equity, and inclusion**

- Social Justice in action: Addressing race relations in the 21st century (eLearning)
- Options available at all major AWC conferences

**Advanced Certificate of Municipal Leadership**

The Advanced Certificate of Municipal Leadership recognizes mayors and councilmembers who continue to strive for excellence by attending conferences and trainings, serving their community, and further developing their leadership skills.

City elected officials receive the Advanced Certificate of Municipal Leadership after they earn an additional 30 CML credits (including at least one in the DC competency area) and demonstrate a minimum of 64 months of community service completed within the last five years. Advanced CML credits can be earned by participating in:

- AWC CML workshops and conferences
- National League of Cities conferences
- Non-AWC workshops - Up to 15 credits can be earned from non-AWC workshops with a direct city focus

Examples of accepted community service include:

- Board or committee positions with AWC, National League of Cities, or community organizations
- Service on statewide commissions, committees, councils, and task forces
- Leadership on projects such as fundraising efforts, campaigns, and major events

**Check AWC's website for more trainings and workshops offered throughout the year.**

**Contact:**  
360.753.4137 | [CML@awcnet.org](mailto:CML@awcnet.org)

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[cmlflyer.pdf \(wacities.org\)](#)

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## What is the Certificate of Municipal Leadership (CML)? And how do you get it?

Earn at least 30 CML credits and attend at least one workshop in five competency areas:

- Roles, responsibilities, and legal requirements
- Public sector resource management
- Community planning and development
- Effective local leadership
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion

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AWC offers training and education in five core competencies:

<p><b>Roles, responsibilities, and legal requirements (R)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elected official roles and responsibilities, legal issues, meeting management, and records management</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public sector resource management (P)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiscal, finance, and forecasting</li> </ul>	<p><b>Community planning and development (C)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land use, infrastructure, zoning, annexation, strategic planning, and economic development</li> </ul>	<p><b>Effective local leadership (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soft skills, human resource development, and community outreach</li> </ul>	<p><b>Diversity, equity, and inclusion (D)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ways to build more equitable communities</li> </ul>
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Please join us for the 2023 AWC Conference June 20-23, 2023



AWC  
ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE

June 20-23, 2023 | Spokane



90 YEARS OF BUILDING BRIDGES



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AWC is your best resource for data and publications about Washington cities-

- [AWC Salary and Benefit Survey](#)
- [Municipal taxes and fees survey](#)
- [City conditions survey](#)
- [The state of transportation in cities](#)
- [Mayor & Councilmember Handbook](#)
- [State of the Cities: Housing report](#)
- [Home rule in Washington](#)
- [Equity Resource Guide: Tools and case studies](#)
- [Homelessness and housing toolkit for cities](#)
- [AWC Data Story Portal](#)
- [And more!](#)

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## CEO goals for 2022-2023

- Complete onboarding process, get up to speed on all AWC operations
- Review, analyze, and implement current AWC Strategic Plan
- Develop and begin implementation of CEO outreach/relationship development plan
- Develop initial recommendations on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) strategy
- Begin development of strategy on bridging divides
- Support city resiliency efforts as they transition to a “new normal”
- Develop plan to ensure successful tenure for Mayor Victoria Woodards as President of NLC
- Support AWC Board, RMSA Board, and Trust Board in their goals for the year



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## AWC Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Cabinet:

### Goals for Cabinet:

- Ensuring that AWC is meeting needs of cities on DEIB education and training
- Ensuring that AWC is welcoming and inclusive to all our members

### Membership from across Washington State:

- 18 members representing cities large and small, urban and rural, at various points on their equity journey
- Councilmember Catherine Ushka serves on behalf of Tacoma

### In addition to Cabinet:

- Forums for all AWC members:
  - Equity officers forum
  - New forum for elected officials – will kick off in April

**Cabinet one of various new AWC DEIB resources, including dedicated AWC DEIB Consultant**

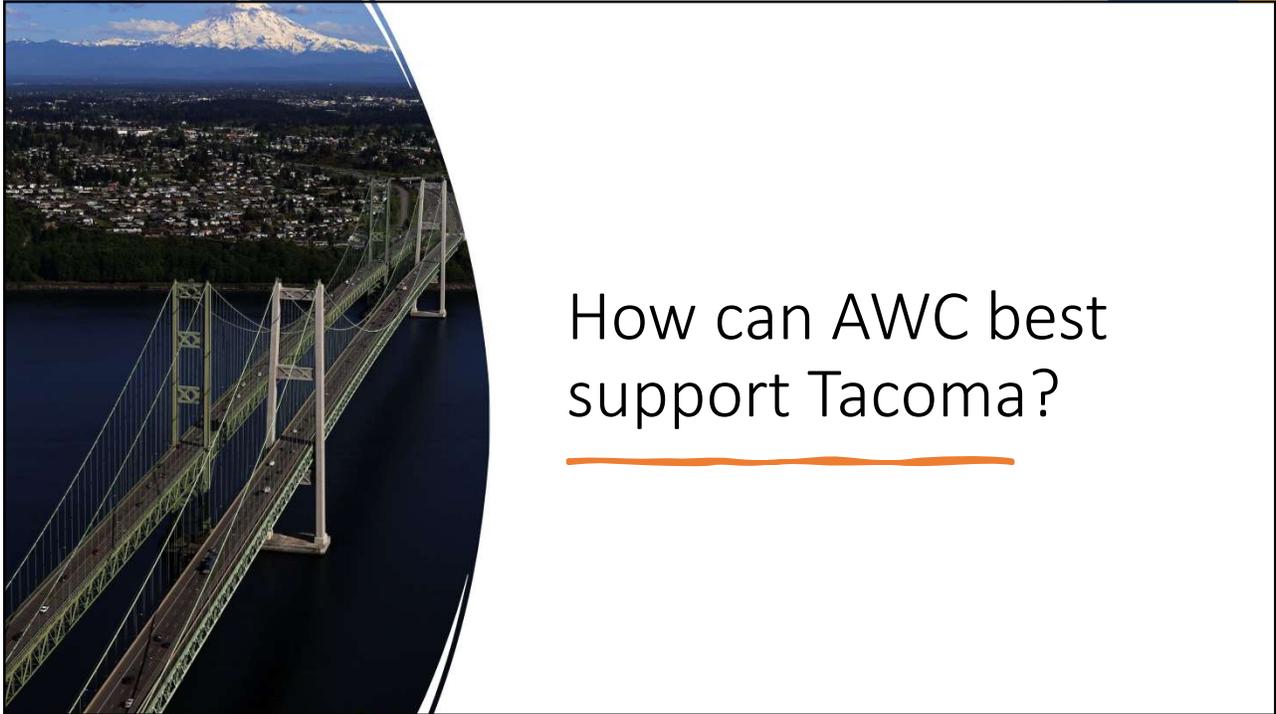
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## Ensuring a successful tenure for Mayor Woodards as NLC President -

- Regular communication and coordination with Mayor Woodards in advance of and during tenure as President
- Planned and executed inaugural gala at NLC conference in November 2022
- Communication on value of NLC membership to all 281 AWC cities
- Encouragement of AWC members to attend NLC conferences
- Working with Mayor Woodards on NLC board and committee appointments
- Partnering with NLC and Tacoma to host leadership conference in July 2023
- Increased partnership with NLC throughout year

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How can AWC best support Tacoma?

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