

CITY OF TACOMA 2022 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Police Transformation

The City expresses its sincere gratitude to the Legislature for demonstrating great leadership in adopting significant legislation in 2021 to transform policing throughout Washington State. In 2022, the City asks that the Legislature continue this transformation by establishing independent prosecutions for incidents involving fatal use-of-force and deaths occurring in police custody. The City supports the Legislature building on the policies enacted in 2021 to ensure community safety is maintained and statewide implementation consistency.

Transportation Investments

The City urges the Legislature to adopt a revenue package to make much needed investments in transportation. Below are the City's transportation priorities:

- On-time delivery of key regional investments, including the extension of light rail from Federal Way to Tacoma and the completion of the Puget Sound Gateway (SR 509/167).
- Local funding and/or enhanced local option tools for cities to meet local street maintenance needs. The City's street maintenance backlog for pavement alone is approximately four times the size of its annual budget.
- \$180 million to complete the replacement of Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge, a deteriorating bridge that provides access to the west side of the Port of Tacoma. The new bridge will improve safety, freight movement, bicycle and pedestrian access, and fish habitat.
- \$9 million as a state match to the Puyallup Avenue Complete Streets Project to better accommodate vehicles, freight, bicycles, pedestrian, and transit.
- Funding for HOV lanes on I-5 from 38th to Joint Base Lewis McChord to provide a completed HOV system through Tacoma.
- \$650,000 to complete phase two of an access revision report to improve access from I-5 into the Tacoma Mall subarea, envisioned to become an urban center for housing and mixed-use development.
- Funding for trail investments, including additional funding for the SR 167 Tacoma-Puyallup Trail and Schuster Parkway Promenade.

Automated Speed Enforcement

The City respectfully requests that the State authorize automated speed enforcement to facilitate safe walksheds around schools and urban centers, and in areas with a high number of vulnerable users who have been killed or seriously injured. Automated enforcement presents an unbiased and consistent method of enforcing speed limits, calming traffic, and maintaining safety.

Affordable Housing & Homelessness

The City adopted an Affordable Housing Action Strategy that has an ambitious goal of creating 6,000 new units of affordable housing by 2028. The City supports grant programs and funding tools for projects that support all income levels, including shelters, permanent supportive housing, and workforce housing. The City is grateful for the Legislature’s recent work on preventing evictions in the state, and respectfully request a continued focus on efforts to reduce barriers to accessing housing and help individuals and families stay in their homes.

Transfers to the Northwest ICE Processing Center

The City appreciates the Legislature’s bold action to ban privately operated detention centers which will lead to the eventual closure of the Northwest ICE Processing Center. In the meantime, the City supports policies that limit transfers into the ICE Processing Center.

COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The City of Tacoma recognizes that a thriving community requires strong communication, collaboration, and innovation with our partners. The Tacoma Anchor Institutions Network is comprised of organizations rooted in Tacoma that have joined together to advance common goals to build community wealth, resilience, and improve opportunities for all. The collective priorities of the Anchors are aligned with the community-crafted Tacoma 2025 Strategic Plan. We are pleased to join community organizations in asking for your assistance with the following:

Pierce County:

Pierce Transit:

- Identify a new, sustainable, statewide public transportation funding solution. An effective revenue tool will protect existing sources of public transportation revenue while incorporating new and innovative funding models to ensure the stability and reliability of equitable public transportation in Washington State.

Tacoma Housing Authority:

Metro Parks Tacoma:

Port of Tacoma:

- The City supports the Port of Tacoma in advocacy efforts to streamline the awarding of Remedial Action Grants through the Department of Ecology, and securing funding for key regional transportation projects such as State Route 167, the I-5/Port of Tacoma Interchanges, and Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge.

South Sound Housing Affordability Partners:

- The City will coordinate efforts on attainable housing with the South Sound Housing Affordability Partners, a coalition of elected officials representing Pierce County, various South Sound cities, and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians who are committed to fostering housing stability

and attainability in our communities.

Higher Education

- University of Washington-Tacoma
- Preserve funding for community and technical colleges, including Tacoma Community College and Bates Technical College.

Tacoma Public Schools

Allow flexibility in the student enrollment county process so that districts can maintain adequate instructional and support staffing throughout the year. Revise the student transportation funding statute by providing flexibility during emergencies and compensate districts for the actual costs of providing this service. Allow for priority grantmaking for community partner agencies to provide supports and enhanced learning opportunities for youth. Provide funding flexibility in the prototypical school model allowing districts to increase the funding for school support staff, such as homeless liaisons/social workers, psychologists, and other needed supports—at least for high-poverty school districts.

Additional Support/Oppose/Monitor Legislative Issues for General Government

Climate Justice

Clean Transportation: The City supports policies that encourage more fuel-efficient and alternative-fuel vehicles and fuels.

Clean Buildings: The City supports policies and investments that reduce the carbon intensity of new and existing buildings, including expanding energy efficiency, green building standards, upgrades to public buildings, and other measures.

Culvert and Stormwater Funding: The City supports state investments in local culvert and stormwater projects to improve fish passage and water quality.

Producer Responsibility: The City supports legislation that helps prevent waste and creates opportunities for reuse and recycling markets, including producer responsibility and product stewardship models.

Community & Economic Development

Economic Development Tools: The City supports expanded and new economic development tools, including expanding commercial office space development tools and other proposals.

Green Economy and Growth: The City supports legislation that will develop green jobs including in urban forestry growth, renewable energy growth, natural storm water infrastructure, urban farming, and green technology development, making sure that these jobs are promoted within highly vulnerable communities.

Social Equity in the Cannabis Industry: The City supports the recommendations of the Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force to foster a more equitable cannabis industry in Washington state and better support business owners of color. These include technical and financial assistance to

social equity applicants to reduce barriers to entry in the industry and help these new businesses thrive.

Liquor License Expanded Authority: The City supports the Liquor and Cannabis Board's efforts to collaborate with licensees on the provision of alcoholic beverages via curbside pick-up, take-out, and delivery throughout the remainder of the pandemic and encourages further consideration on making the temporary rules permanent to support the hospitality industry.

City Attorney's Office

Open Public Meetings Act: The City supports revisions to the OPMA that provide flexibility for local governments to hold meetings of their governing bodies remotely or with limited in-person attendance during declared emergencies.

Public Works

Transportation Grant Programs: The City supports ongoing and increased funding for transportation and freight mobility grant opportunities that have historically been offered through the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB), the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB), WSDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, and the Safe Routes to Schools Program.

Transportation Benefit Districts: The City supports expanded local authority for transportation benefit districts to allow for continued use of the sales tax funding tool beyond the current time limitations.

Interstate-5 Corridor: The Washington State Department of Transportation is leading the I-5 System Partnership to identify improvements along I-5 from Marysville to Tumwater. The City supports advancing the work of the I-5 System Partnership, and asks that I-5 crossings, especially pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, be prioritized as part of the partnership.

Automated License Plate Reader Technology: The City supports legislation that regulates automated license plate reader technology but will oppose provisions that would negatively impact the City's parking enforcement program.

Bicycle Signals: The City supports proposals to allow the use of bicycle signals in state law. The federal government has allowed use of signals which use a bicycle symbol instead of a circular ball or arrow. However, Washington defines a signal as being a circular ball or arrow, which means other shapes (i.e. a bicycle symbol) cannot be used.

Passenger-Only Ferry Service: The City supports initiatives that help bring passenger-only ferry service to Tacoma. Puget Sound Regional Council completed a study on passenger-only ferry services, and the Seattle-Tacoma route was highly ranked as a potential route. The report indicates that prior to route implementation, additional stakeholder and public outreach, environmental analysis, and business planning would need to be funded and completed.

Transfer of State Routes to Local Jurisdictions: The City supports policies and funding that would assist WSDOT in improving state routes to current standards prior to transferring them to local agencies.

Public Safety/Criminal Justice

Hate Crimes: The City of Tacoma supports the efforts of the State LGBTQ Commission to address and minimize hate crimes statewide, including supporting efforts that build upon the report due to the 2021 Legislature on restorative justice and required data collection. .

Sentencing Reform: The City of Tacoma supports revisions to criminal sentencing that reduce that state prison population, especially the disproportionate number of people of color, maintain community safety, and decrease recidivism. The City encourages the state to prioritize funding for education around substance use disorders and treatment so that impacted individuals can receive necessary services as an alternative to incarceration.

Firearms: The City will monitor legislation regulating firearms or other proposals to curb gun violence.

Jail Standards: The City supports revising the state's standardized requirements of care to ensure the health and safety of individuals in custody of the criminal justice system. The City will monitor the Joint Legislative Task Force on Jail Standards that is anticipated to make recommendation by June 30, 2023.

Finance

State-shared Revenues: The City supports efforts to protect and enhance state-shared revenues, including liquor taxes, marijuana taxes, and the criminal justice assistance account.

Local Tax and Licensing Authority: The City opposes legislative proposals that restrict the City's authority to impose a local business and occupation (B&O) tax and business license requirements.

Transportation Network Companies: The City supports statewide regulation of transportation network companies that establishes a regulatory structure that is similar to or more stringent than the City's existing regulations, but retaining City authority to continue collecting trip fees from TNC's to contribute to a wheelchair accessible vehicle program in Tacoma.

Comprehensive Property Tax Levy Reform: The City supports comprehensive property tax levy reform that aligns with growth and inflation to allow the city and other local agencies to provide adequate services to the community. For example, in 1982, Tacoma residents approved a permanent property tax levy for fire/EMS at \$0.50 per \$1,000. However, the 1% cap calculation continually diminishes the rate the approved rate, requiring the City to ask voters to re-approve the levy several times. This causes confusion amongst voters as they struggle to understand why the same levy needs to be approved repeatedly. The City would ask that the levy calculation be changed so that it could maintain its levy rate of \$0.50 per \$1,000 assessed valuation.

Tacoma Employees Retirement System

Retirement Investments: The City operates its own retirement program for city employees, as well as the city's LEOFF 1 retirement program, and will oppose any proposals that requires the City to cede these operations to the Washington State Investment Board, or that transfers reserves out of the programs.

Planning

Local Control over Zoning: The City opposes any proposal that preempts local land use authority, including proposals mandating zoning or regulations changes regarding single-family homes, duplexes, triplexes, or accessory dwelling units.

Growth Management Act (GMA) Reform: The City supports reforms to the GMA that further facilitate growth within urban centers, integrates planning for climate change, and provides dedicated planning funding to local jurisdictions to implement any new policies or responsibilities.

Fee-In-Lieu of Construction: The City supports legislation clarifying that local programs that establish a fee-in-lieu of constructing off-site requirements are allowed under state law.

Neighborhood & Community Services

Homeless Encampments: The City will monitor any legislation to change or enforce policies addressing homeless encampments on public right-of-way. Additionally, the City will continue to implement the budget proviso language directing WSDOT/City of Tacoma to conduct a pilot program to address homeless encampments.

Programs Supporting Vulnerable Populations: The City supports funding for programs that serve our most vulnerable populations, including the Housing & Essential Needs (HEN) and Aged, Blind, and Disabled (ABD).

Aging- friendly Policies: The City supports proposals that seek to improve quality of life for seniors in our communities, such as providing opportunities for aging residents to age in place, rather than being placed in a long-term care facility.

Housing Justice Act: The City supports legislation that would ban discrimination against renters based on a prior criminal record.

Fire

Removal of Derelict Vessels: The City supports increased funding for the state's Derelict Vessel Removal Program. Tacoma Fire utilizes this program to remove derelict and abandoned vessels in Commencement Bay and surrounding waters.

Tacoma Public Libraries

Firearms in Public Spaces: Tacoma Public Libraries opposes legislation that would require library employees to enforce regulations prohibiting firearms in public spaces.

Challenges to Intellectual Freedom: Tacoma Public Libraries opposes legislation that restricts intellectual freedom.

Protecting Library Workers: Tacoma Public Libraries supports protecting library employees in the same manner as all public sector employees (RCW 9A.36.031).