



## Public Records

**Modernize the Public Records Act (PRA) so that cities can continue to provide open and transparent government services to our residents**

Every day, local government officials ensure transparency in government and serve as stewards of public resources by effectively implementing the PRA. However, advances in technology and the increased volume and complexity of records requests are undermining the PRA. This act must be updated to reflect 21st century realities in order to fulfill its original purpose, provide government transparency, and make wise use of taxpayer dollars.

**Cities ask the Legislature to:**

- Permit cities to charge for providing complex digital data and electronic copies of public records, similar to charges for making a paper copy.
- Develop an alternative dispute resolution system that serves government agencies and requestors to quickly resolve disagreements without costly litigation.
- Designate technical and funding assistance by restoring funding to grant programs that help local governments.



## Homelessness, Housing & Human Services

**Enhance efforts to increase affordable housing, decrease homelessness, and improve a strained behavioral health system**

Urban and rural cities throughout the state are grappling with increasing homeless populations, lack of affordable housing, and a poorly-funded mental health and substance abuse system. Cities are struggling to solve these issues with limited resources. Together with the state, counties, and nonprofit partners, we support efforts to develop new strategies that address the issues plaguing our human service, homeless, and affordable housing systems.

**Cities ask the Legislature to:**

- Make the document recording fee permanent and increase the fee to expand investments in homelessness assistance.
- Invest another \$200 million in the Housing Trust Fund, the preeminent tool in the state to fund affordable housing construction.
- Create new local options to generate revenue for homelessness services and for affordable housing construction.
- Ensure full authority to allow the state to maximize federal Medicaid resources and provide additional resources for mental health and chemical dependency services.

**In order for Washington State to be its best and attract the best, our 281 cities and towns must be strong.**

- Cities are where more than 4.6 million people call home, and this number is growing quickly.
- Cities are where the majority of the state's revenues are generated, including \$1.3 billion in property taxes, and \$7.5 billion in sales tax.
- Cities contain the state's economic engines, where 69% of job-generating businesses are located.

more priorities on back

Contact:

**Dave Williams**  
Director of Government Relations  
davew@awcnet.org • 360.753.4137





## Local Infrastructure

**Revitalize key infrastructure assistance programs that support job creation, community health and safety, and quality of life**

City infrastructure systems are a critical part of a larger network that serves and benefits the entire state. Diversion from programs that support basic local infrastructure means that communities cannot affordably maintain and secure new infrastructure.

**Cities ask the Legislature to:**

- Provide stable and reliable infrastructure assistance to help cities overcome the financial challenges of building and repairing local systems that support economic development and benefit the entire state.
- Commit to a proactive state partnership in key programs like the Public Works Trust Fund. If current programs are not sustainable, they need to be reformed.



## Local Authority

**Respect city authority to respond to local needs**

With the Great Recession behind us, cities are looking for stable revenue to provide essential services to our growing population, such as public safety and infrastructure. City officials are elected and must have the authority to solve local challenges.

**Cities ask the Legislature to:**

- Respect cities' local authority for revenue, taxes, licensing, and regulation.
- Allow cities to increase the property tax to an extent that accounts for inflation and population growth.



## City-State Partnership

**Preserve the city-state budget partnership**

Over the last few biennium, the state has balanced its budget at the expense of cities. While we understand the fiscal challenges the Legislature faces, we cannot accept that sweeping critical funds from their intended uses is in the best interest of our state. AWC supports the Legislature in securing sufficient revenue to fund state programs and obligations, and therefore unilaterally eliminating or significantly reducing state funding to cities is not acceptable.

**Cities ask the Legislature to:**

- Maintain the city-state shared revenue partnership for funding key services.
- Provide adequate and sustainable funding for the Criminal Justice Training Commission to maintain high-quality statewide training for law enforcement personnel.
- Continue the current funding from local liquor revenue distributions to the Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC), which provides vital support for local government performance.

For more detailed information on each of these priorities, issue briefs are available on our website.

[www.awcnet.org/advocacy](http://www.awcnet.org/advocacy)

Contact:

**Dave Williams**

Director of Government Relations  
davew@awcnet.org • 360.753.4137

