

Olympia's 2021 Legislative Agenda



Investing in the Capital City

- Olympia is the front door of Washington's State government.
- As the Capital City, Olympia embraces its role as host to the state.
- We value State employees and visitors who work, shop, and dine in our downtown.



Olympia City Council

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Administration

Jay Burney, City Manager
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2021 Legislative Priorities:

Additional state resources and support to address homelessness, affordable housing, mental health and chemical dependency services

- Olympia has the highest percentage of rent-burdened households and highest concentration unhoused individuals in Thurston County.
- State leadership and support is needed for renter/tenant protections, including rent control.
- Support is needed for use of state property for the homeless and for the state to manage encampments on their properties without the use of local jurisdiction resources.
- State leadership and support is needed for mental health and chemical dependency resources.
- The City supports a legislative amendment to the Residential Landlord-Tenant Act, specifically section RCW 59.18.040(1) exempting facilities established and operated by religious organizations and government entities.

\$6 Million for design and right-of-way acquisition for new US 101 Interchange ramps in West Olympia

- The Cooper Point Road/Black Lake Boulevard intersection is failing, hindering access to Capital Medical Center and other emergency medical facilities.
- Addressing congestion in this critical area requires more access from US 101 to West Olympia.
- The interchange ramps are Olympia's highest priority for capital transportation funds. The City has already spent \$2 million on this project.

Further legislative action related to Climate Change.

- Further state leadership is needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the built environment, transportation and other sectors.
- Olympia supports state building and energy code amendments, increases in renewable energy, and electric vehicle infrastructure.
- State funding support is needed to help advance local climate mitigation and adaptation efforts identified in the Regional Climate Mitigation Plan.

Change in Statute Regarding Militias

- The City supports a change in state law that provides severe penalties for persons who organize and form private armed militias.
- Currently, RCW 38.40.120 is only a misdemeanor punishable by up to ninety days in jail or a fine up to \$1,000 or fine and imprisonment.
- The Washington Constitution in Article 1, Sec. 24 provides that "The right of the individual citizen to bear arms in defense of himself, or the state, shall not be impaired, but nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing individuals or corporations to organize, maintain or employ an armed body of men."

OTHER PRIORITIES IMPORTANT TO OLYMPIA

Changes to the Property Tax Levy Lid Lift

The current 1% levy lid restricts revenue growth when costs are increasing more than 1% per year.

- The City Supports raising the levy lid lift more than 1% for specific projects or initiatives.
- The City Supports raising the levy lid lift based on the rate of inflation or 1% annually, whichever is higher.

Tax Increment Financing

- The City supports Tax Increment Financing (TIF), to help fund infrastructure, accelerate economic development and job growth.
- Washington is one of only two states that does not have TIF authority for local communities.
- TIF uses anticipated future increases in tax revenues to generate incremental tax revenues from a specific development project or projects across a designated district to help pay for current costs associated with development.

Funding for Key Parks Grant Programs

The City supports the Washington Recreation and Parks Association's request for robust investments in grant programs in the 2021-23 Capital Budget that are critical for the vitality of local parks and recreation and the great outdoors. This biennium includes four City of Olympia applications representing over \$2 million in funding requests from Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program and the Youth Athletic Facilities program.

Solid Waste Reduction

The City is interested in legislation that reduces packaging and plastics, as well as improves recycling markets in Washington State.

Future purchase of National Guard Armory

The City would like financial support for the future purchase of the Armory in Olympia, located at 515 Eastside St. SE.



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