



Where Life is Sweet

Mayor and Members of the City Council

STAFF REPORT

For the Meeting of July 13, 2026

Title/Subject

League of Oregon Cities (LOC) Legislative Priorities Discussion and Recommendation

Summary and Background

Each even-numbered year the LOC appoints members to serve on the following seven policy committees:

- Housing, Land Use and Community Development
- General Government and Human Resources
- Energy and Environment
- Finance, Taxation and Economic Development
- Telecommunications, Cybersecurity, and Artificial Intelligence
- Transportation
- Water and Wastewater

These policy committees are the foundation of the LOC's policy development process. Composed of city officials, these committees are charged with analyzing policy and technical issues and recommending positions and strategies for the LOC.

Each committee provides a list of recommended policy positions and actions for the LOC to take in the coming two-year legislative cycle. This year, each of the seven committees identified 3 to 5 legislative policy priorities to advance to the full membership and LOC Board of Directors for a total of 27 policy priorities. Each city is now being asked to review these recommendations from the seven policy committees and provide input to the LOC Board of Directors as it prepares to adopt the LOC's 2027 legislative agenda.

Attached you will find first an LOC document with a full explanation of all 27 policy priorities listed by committee. Second, you will find a copy of the last council goal setting report. I worked to find ties to the council's adopted values and goals in the list of policy priorities that I highlight below. At the end of each summary there is a page number referring to the LOC document followed by a statement of the **applicable values** and if possible, the **applicable council goal areas**. I also asked staff to review the priorities and their input is reflected in the recommendation mentioned below.

Finally, out of the nine policy priorities that I have placed in this report, I have **highlighted** the five that I suggest might be the most important.

1. MAINTAIN LOCAL CONTROL OF A SAFE, MODERN RIGHT OF WAY

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC will oppose any legislation seeking to preempt local control of municipal rights-of-way (ROW). The LOC will also support legislation aimed at codifying home rule management of the local ROW and the revenue derived from use of the ROW, while encouraging ROW users to timely upgrade and replace their infrastructure lost to natural disaster. (Livability) (City Facilities)

2. SUPPORT MUNICIPAL CYBERSECURITY PROFICIENCY

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC opposes unfunded mandates and will advocate for technical support and funding to give all cities access to innovative technology, enhanced state programs, cybersecurity notification resources and assistance protecting critical infrastructure and data during cyber-attacks. (Fiscal Prudence) (City Facilities)

3. PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW CLARITY

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC will advocate for a comprehensive statutory reset of the Oregon Public Meetings Law to restore operational functionality and practicality for local governments while protecting public transparency. This priority includes the following provisions:

- Establishing an Intentionality Requirement: Limit serial meeting violations strictly to actions taken "knowingly and intentionally" to protect volunteer elected officials from penalties for good-faith, inadvertent errors.
- Streamlining Complaint Enforcement: Authorize the Oregon Government Ethics Commission (OGE) to immediately dismiss incomplete, trivial, or bad-faith complaints.
- Holding the Right Entity Accountable: Shift personal liability for purely administrative errors—such as delayed meeting notices—away from individual elected officials and onto the public body as an institution.
- Expanding the "Cure" Process: Provide flexible, accessible avenues for local governments to address and correct procedural complaints, including decision rescission or public acknowledgement with a corrective action plan.
- Right-Sizing Training Requirements: Reform mandatory compliance training to occur once per elected term rather than annually, while allowing incoming officials to complete the requirement prior to being sworn in. (Engagement) (Good Governance)

4. FUNDING AND COORDINATION FOR SHELTER AND HOMELESS RESPONSE

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC opposes cuts to the state shelter system funding and supports continued state investments in a comprehensive homeless response system to fund eviction prevention, shelter, and rehousing. These investments should include:

- Strengthening our coordinated regional homeless response;
- Funding a range of shelter types in cities across the state, including alternative shelter models, safe parking programs; and
- Funding eviction prevention, rapid rehousing, outreach, case management, staffing and administrative support, and other related services. (Inclusive)(Housing)

5. LAND AVAILABILITY AND LAND USE STREAMLINING

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC supports updates and streamlining statutes to better support good land use planning and land availability for all needs. This includes:

- Refining land use statutes to provide more clarity and legal certainty for cities;
- Clarifying wetland statutes and inventories to allow efficient and orderly urbanization of land within urban growth boundaries (UGBs);
- Streamlining UGB expansion and swap processes for residential, commercial, and industrial land;
- Improving urban reserves process and land prioritization; and
- Funding for technical assistance for code audits and updates to comply with new state statutes. (Livability) (Housing)

6. TARGETED PREVAILING WAGE CHANGES

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC will advocate for targeted changes to prevailing wage requirements that:

- recognize urgent needs for Oregon communities;
- consider the impact of inflation; and maintain the original intent of Oregon's prevailing wage law.
 - This includes supporting reoccurring legislation to exempt publicly financed facilities aimed at addressing the housing crisis (affordable housing, shelters, day centers) and the lack of childcare,
 - as well as efforts to address mounting infrastructure needs impacting housing and economic development.

The LOC will support additional clarity around split determination issues that are impacting growth, ensuring cities can proactively prepare for growth without impacting future, private developments. (Fiscal Prudence) (Fiscal)

7. ALCOHOL REVENUE MODERNIZATION

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC will advocate for alcohol tax revenue modernization that generates increased shared revenues for cities. This includes support for recommendations from the HB 3610 Task Force on Alcohol Pricing to increase beer and wine taxes while preserving the existing 34% revenue-sharing distribution to cities. This may also include legislation removing the preemption on local alcohol taxes. (Fiscal Prudence) (Fiscal)

8. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION SYSTEM RESOURCES

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC will support legislation enhancing the effectiveness of the state's emergency communications system through an increase in the 9-1-1 tax. Inflationary factors have lessened the impact of the emergency communications tax. State estimates indicate that this revenue covered 40% of dispatch center costs, but that figure is inaccurate, with some communities receiving as little as 20-25%. (Fiscal Prudence) (Fiscal/Public Safety)

9. STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC will support efforts to modernize and strengthen Oregon's existing economic development programs while advocating to maintain local

flexibility and autonomy over local revenues. The LOC's advocacy includes strengthening and increasing funding for current state programs like Enterprise Zones (EZ), Long Term Rural Enterprise Zone (LTREZ), the Strategic Investment Program (SIP), the Industrial Site Loan Fund, Brownfield programs, and infrastructure programs, as well as new efforts to support a healthy economy.

The LOC will also support efforts to strengthen Oregon's workforce development initiatives that help to meet critical workforce shortages experienced by public and private employers throughout the state. The LOC will advocate for policies and investments that strengthen local talent pipelines, expand access to workforce education and training, and help communities recruit and retain the skilled workforce needed to support and grow a healthy economy. (Livability) (Fiscal)

10. INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC will advocate for increased and sustained investments in drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, and water reuse infrastructure needed to support housing production, economic development, public health, and environmental protection. This includes: expanding flexible, low-cost financing tools that reduce ratepayer burden; supporting infrastructure capacity needed for housing and economic development; investing in aquifer storage and recovery projects; protecting system development charge authority; and sustaining infrastructure financing programs, including the Special Public Works Fund, which help communities address critical infrastructure needs.

The LOC will advocate for policies that recognize the increasing costs associated with regulatory compliance, environmental protection, and workforce needs. (Fiscal Prudence) (Fiscal)

11. WATER REUSE

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC will advocate for policies and investments that support the development and expansion of water reuse projects throughout Oregon. This includes: funding for planning, design, and construction; clear and predictable regulatory pathways; and technical assistance for local governments. The LOC will support maintaining local flexibility to implement community-specific reuse solutions that protect public health and environmental quality. (Livability) (City Facilities)

12. WATER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATION: The LOC will advocate for investments in workforce development programs that support the recruitment, training, certification, and retention of drinking water and wastewater professionals. This includes: support for operator-in-training and apprenticeship programs; certification and reciprocity improvements; regional training opportunities; and funding that helps communities develop and maintain a qualified water workforce. (Fiscal Prudence) (Fiscal)

Tie-In to Council Goals

See the above list.

Fiscal Information

N/A

Alternatives and Recommendation

Alternatives

1. Adopt City of Hermiston recommended policy priorities as presented.
2. Amend and adopt City of Hermiston recommended policy priorities.
3. Request additional information and delay action.

Recommended Action/Motion

Adopt City of Hermiston recommended policy priorities as presented.

Submitted By: Byron D. Smith