



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 6817
November 18, 2025
Regular Business

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6817: Adoption of 2026 Legislative Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Adopt the City of Mercer Island 2026 State Legislative Priorities, substantially in the form attached as Exhibit 1 to AB 6817.	

DEPARTMENT:	City Manager
STAFF:	Jessi Bon, City Manager Robbie Cunningham Adams, Sr. Management Analyst
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 2026 State Legislative Priorities2. City of Mercer Island 2025 State Legislative Priorities3. 2026 Association of Washington Cities Legislative Priorities4. 2026 ARCH Legislative Priorities
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	4. Focus efforts and actions to be an environmentally and fiscally sustainable, connected, and diverse community.

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is for the City Council to adopt the City's 2026 State Legislative Priorities (Exhibit 1).

- The 2026 regular session begins on Monday, January 12, 2026. It is a short session, lasting up to 60 days, with an expected end date of Thursday, March 12, 2026.
- The proposed 2026 Legislative Priorities (Exhibit 1) are presented in text format only. Upon receiving City Council approval, staff will proceed with final design and layout of the document, similar to the look and feel of the 2025 Legislative Priorities (Exhibit 2).
- The approved legislative priorities will be shared with the City's legislative delegation and used by City Council leadership and staff when engaging with the state legislative session.

BACKGROUND

Each year the City develops legislative priorities to guide advocacy and support for issues important to the Mercer Island community. Attached for reference are the City of Mercer Island's 2025 State Legislative

Priorities (Exhibit 2), the Association of Washington Cities' (AWC's) City Legislative Priorities for 2026 (Exhibit 3), and the A Regional Coalition for Housing 2026 Legislative Priorities (Exhibit 4).

2025 Legislative Session

The 2025 State Legislative Session continued a recent trend of an intense volume of bills introduced and considered, especially on issues of housing and land use. City staff and City Council leadership dedicated a significant amount of time to tracking bills, connecting with representatives and elected officials in neighboring communities, and advocating for legislation that aligns with Mercer Island's priorities.

The City Council received a mid-session update on the 2025 Legislative Session at the March 18, 2025 City Council meeting ([AB 6635](#)) and a final recap of the 2025 Legislative Session's impact on the CPD work plan at the May 20, 2025 City Council meeting ([AB 6688](#)).

The adopted state capital budget included \$1.2 million for the new Mercer Island Water Supply Pipeline Project. This funding will be applied to project construction costs and will reduce the financial impact to the City's water utility customers. The City Council approved letters thanking members of the 41st legislative district, Senator Wellman, Representative Zahn, and Representative Thai, for supporting this funding request ([AB 6739](#)).

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

For the 2026 State Legislative Session, the City Council and City staff will work directly with state legislators using the priorities approved by City Council to advocate for Mercer Island priorities. Establishing priorities allows the City to engage in issues with legislators directly, quickly, and efficiently.

2026 Legislative Session

The City's draft 2026 State Legislative Priorities are included as Exhibit 1 and the proposed priorities are categorized as follows:

- Support for Safe Use of E-Bikes and E-Motorcycles/E-Dirt Bikes
- Support for Public Safety
- Increase Resources for Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Prevention
- Support for Affordable Housing
- Balanced and Collaborative Approach to Wastewater Management
- Preserving and Protecting the Environment

The 2026 legislative session will be a "short session," meaning a 60-day session rather than the "long" 105-day session that occurs in odd years. Short sessions do not include the adoption of a bi-annual budget, have a faster pace, focus on a smaller number of bills and mid-budget adjustments. While the exact dates of the session are not finalized, staff anticipate the session lasting from January 12, 2026 to March 12, 2026.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval of the text version of the 2026 Legislative Priorities (Exhibit 1), staff will proceed with final design and layout of the document, similar to the look and feel of the 2025 Legislative Priorities (see Exhibit 2).

The 2026 State Legislative Priorities will be published on the City's website, shared with the community and the City's legislative delegation, and used by City Council and staff during the state legislative session to guide the City's advocacy work. The Legislative Priorities will also be sent to the Association of Washington Cities, the Sound Cities Association, ARCH, the Governor's Office, and other entities and associations.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Adopt the City of Mercer Island 2026 State Legislative Priorities, substantially in the form attached as Exhibit 1 to AB 6817.