



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6360  
October 17, 2023  
Regular Business**

**AGENDA BILL INFORMATION**

<b>TITLE:</b>	AB 6360: Review 2024 Draft Legislative Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Receive report. No action necessary.	

<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	City Manager
<b>STAFF:</b>	Jessi Bon, City Manager Robbie Cunningham Adams, Management Analyst Merrill Thomas-Schadt, Sr. Management Analyst
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	n/a
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Draft 2024 State Legislative Priorities</li> <li>2. City of Mercer Island 2023 State Legislative Priorities</li> <li>3. 2024 Association of Washington Cities Legislative Priorities</li> <li>4. 2024 ARCH Legislative Priorities</li> <li>5. 2024 Washington Cities Insurance Authority Legislative Priorities</li> </ol>
<b>CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:</b>	4. Focus efforts and actions to be an environmentally and fiscally sustainable, connected, and diverse community.

<b>AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE</b>	\$ n/a
<b>AMOUNT BUDGETED</b>	\$ n/a
<b>APPROPRIATION REQUIRED</b>	\$ n/a

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this agenda bill is to introduce the draft 2024 State Legislative Priorities (Exhibit 1) to the City Council for discussion and feedback.

- The 2024 State Legislative Session is expected to run from January 8 to March 8, 2024.
- The session is anticipated to revisit topics around housing, public safety, mental and behavioral health services, and the environment.
- The draft 2024 Legislative Priorities were prepared based on input from recent meetings with legislators, the City’s lobbyists, staff members, City Council leadership, and other partners including the Association of Washington Cities (AWC), A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH), and the Washington Cities Insurance Authority (WCIA).
- City Council feedback will be used to finalize the 2024 Legislative Priorities for review and adoption at the November 21, 2023 Council meeting.

## BACKGROUND

Each year the City develops legislative priorities to guide advocacy and support for issues important to the Mercer Island community.

### 2023 Legislative Session

The 2023 State Legislative Session was unprecedented in terms of the volume of bills introduced for consideration. City staff, lobbyists, and City Council members 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.

Housing was the prominent focus of the last legislative session, resulting in several bills related to housing, land-use, and permitting. As part of the budget process, the City was successful in securing \$3.5 million in grant funding for waterfront improvements at Luther Burbank Park. A special session was called by the Governor on May 16 where legislators passed a new drug possession law ("Blake Fix"), which the legislature was not successful in enacting during the regular session.

City Council received a full recap of the 2023 Legislative Session at the May 23, 2023 City Council meeting (see [AB 6257](#)).

Attached for reference are the City of Mercer Island's 2023 Legislative Priorities (Exhibit 2), the Association of Washington Cities' (AWC's) City Legislative Priorities for 2024 (Exhibit 3), A Regional Coalition for Housing 2024 Legislative Priorities (Exhibit 4), and the Washington Cities Insurance Authority's Legislative Priorities for 2024 (Exhibit 5).

## ISSUE/DISCUSSION

For the 2024 State Legislative Session, the City Council, City staff, and the City's lobbying team 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 on issues with legislators directly, quickly, and efficiently.

### 2024 Legislative Session

The City's draft 2024 State Legislative Priorities are included as Exhibit 1 and the proposed priorities are categorized as follows:

- Maximize Resources for Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Prevention
- Support for Affordable Housing
- Capital and Grant Support for Essential Public Services
- Preserving and Protecting the Environment
- Support Public Safety Measures on Auto Theft and Property Crime
- Support for WCIA Municipal Tort Law Liability Reform
- Revising the Arbitrary Property Tax Cap

The 2024 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 occur during the mid-biennium of the State's two-year budget cycle. While the exact dates of the session are not finalized, staff anticipate the session lasting from

January 8 to March 8.

## **NEXT STEPS**

City Council feedback will be used to finalize the 2024 Legislative Priorities for review and adoption at the November 21, 2023 Council meeting.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Receive presentation and provide input on the 2023 State Legislative Priorities.