

2023 State Legislative Priorities (Text Version – Revised 2/7/23)

Funding for Operations, Basic Infrastructure, and Capital Projects

The City supports legislation that provides funding to support city operations and to help cities finance basic infrastructure such as water, sewer, stormwater, parks, transportation, and green infrastructure projects. Priorities include:

- a. Fully funding the **Public Works Assistance Account** and refraining from fund transfers or diversions.
- b. Supporting the once in a generation **\$7.5 million Luther Burbank Park Waterfront and Dock Replacement Project** by fully funding the following grant programs:
 - *Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Water Access grant*: \$1.5 million funding request, project is ranked 7 out of 10.
 - *Boating Facilities Program (BFP)*: \$1 million funding request, application is in process.
 - *Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA) grant*: \$500,000, project is ranked 2 out of 4.
- c. Supporting the **\$2 million Luther Burbank Park Boiler Building Renovation Project** by fully funding the Heritage Capital Grant Program: \$500,000 funding request, project ranked 22 out of 30.

Support for Mental and Behavioral Health Services

The City is committed to providing access to quality mental and behavioral health services through the Youth & Family Services Department. Continued state funding is needed to help communities provide options for individuals suffering from behavioral health issues. Priorities include:

- **Funding to expand and enhance community-based behavioral health services**, including mental health, substance use disorder, and dual diagnosis treatment facilities.
- Supporting resources for **certification and training to increase the number of behavioral health professionals** available to the community.

Policing for a Safe Mercer Island

The City encourages legislation and resources to ensure a safe community for residents, businesses, and visitors. Priorities include:

- Supporting **clarification around the ability for law enforcement to conduct effective and safe vehicle pursuits** using a reasonable suspicion standard in specific circumstances when there is an immediate threat to public safety.
- Requesting **clarification around the crime of possessing a controlled substance** so that individuals, law enforcement, and treatment providers can respond appropriately.
- The City of Mercer Island State-certified Marine Patrol Unit was founded in 1982 and

provides marine patrol services to Medina, Bellevue, Renton, Yarrow Point, and Hunts Point for their water-based services with just three vessels. Two of the vessels are near the end of their useful life and the City is **seeking funding for the \$1.1 million in estimated replacement costs.**

Support for Housing Availability

The City supports a proactive, collaborative, and flexible approach that creates new tools, incentives, and revenues that cities can use to help increase housing supply and address affordability. Priorities include:

- The City supports **solutions that enhance already successful state and regional programs** such as *A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH)*, serving cities in east King County since 1992.
- The City encourages the legislature to **review the impacts of E2SHB 1220 in collaboration with local jurisdictions** to ensure the legislation will produce housing for all income levels.

Preserving and Protecting the Environment

It is essential to preserve and protect the environment today and for future generations with equity in mind. The City encourages legislation, partnerships, and funding that incentivizes and supports clean energy, carbon reduction and the implementation of potential climate action plan programs, including but not limited to heat pump adoption and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.