



CITY OF MERCER ISLAND – REVISED 11-09-21

2022 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

1. PRESERVE LOCAL DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY

Cities possess strong local knowledge and authority to keep communities safe and healthy, and to improve their communities' quality of life. Therefore, it is critical that cities maintain the authority to provide these necessary services and retain local control over land use planning. If the state legislature passes new legislation in these areas, then reasonable implementation timelines and resources must be provided.

2. ECONOMIC SUPPORT

The City encourages legislation to continue supporting the economic recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic including funding for local businesses, mental health counseling, and emergency assistance to address food and housing insecurity.

3. CLARIFICATIONS TO 2021 POLICE REFORMS

The City supports and strongly urges the state legislature to clarify the 2021 police reform legislation (see attached – Association of Washington Cities 2022 Police Reform Statement). City officials and law enforcement officers need clarity and a better understanding of what is expected of them. Cities also need time and resources to provide appropriate training on the new statute and regulations.

4. SUSTAINABLE AND FLEXIBLE LOCAL FUNDING

As the region continues to recover from the COVID-19 Pandemic, stable funding for local government is essential for providing quality, predictable services to the communities we serve. The City supports legislation that preserves city fiscal health through secure and flexible funding by:

- a. Providing State and Federal funds to help cities finance basic infrastructure, such as water, sewer, transportation, and green infrastructure projects.
- b. Fully funding the Public Works Trust Fund.
- c. Removing restrictions on REET revenues.
- d. Replacing the annual 1% cap on property tax revenues with a growth limit whose maximum is inflation plus the rate of population growth.
- e. Maintaining State shared revenue distributions to cities and seeking opportunities to expand revenue sharing, particularly during this time of economic recovery.

5. TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

The Puget Sound Region needs funding for transportation projects to ensure economic vitality, reduce congestion, enhance traffic safety, replace aging infrastructure, and increase mobility. The City supports a comprehensive transportation bill that provides new resources for local government transportation projects and legislation that delivers solutions to relieve congestion along I-90 and I-405.

6. 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 and partnerships that incentivize and support clean energy, carbon reduction and climate protection, and other environmental health measures.

7. PERMANENT MODERNIZATION OF OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT (OPMA)

The City supports a permanent policy that provides greater flexibility for local governments to hold virtual meetings without the requirement for a physical meeting location.