



# **AB 6635:** 2025 Legislative Session Update

March 18, 2025



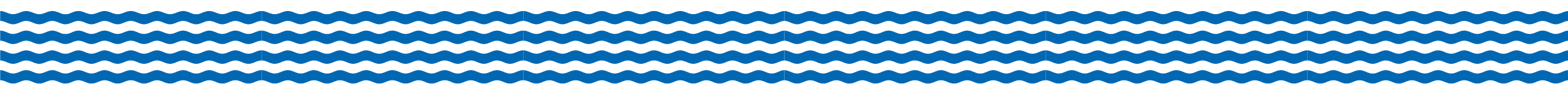
# 2025 Session

- 120-day session began January 13 and is expected to end on Sunday, April 27
- Housing and public safety funding a focus this session
- Challenges of addressing state budget deficit



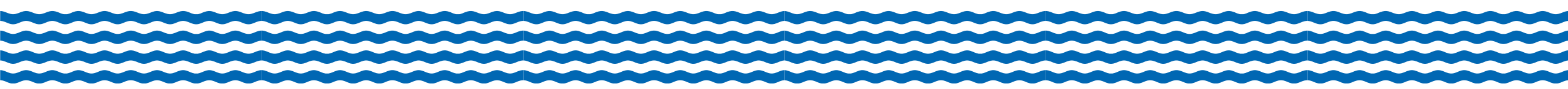
# City Legislative Priorities

- Capital Funding for Emergency Replacement of City's Sole Water Source
- Support for Public Safety
- Increase Resources for Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Prevention
- Support for Affordable Housing
- Sustainable Funding Preservation and Maintenance of Critical Transportation Infrastructure
- Preserving and Protecting the Environment



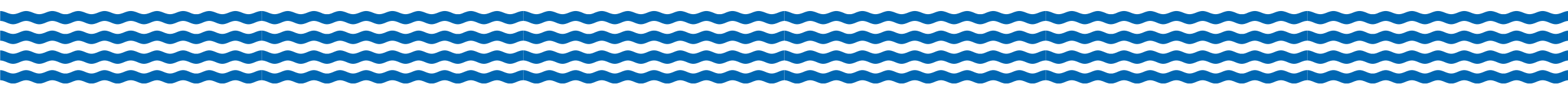
# City Engagement

- The 2025 State Legislative Session is continuing a recent trend of an intense volume of bills introduced and considered, especially on issues of public safety, and housing and land use.
- City staff, lobbyists, and City Council leadership are dedicating 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.
- As of this meeting Mayor Nice and the City have given testimony 27 times in committee.



# New 41<sup>st</sup> LD Representative

- Former Mercer Island Representative Tana Senn appointed Secretary for the Department of Children, Youth, and Families.
- Bellevue City Councilmember Janice Zahn appointed as new 41<sup>st</sup> LD Representative.
- Staff met virtually Rep Zahn soon after her appointment to discuss issues affecting Mercer Island and our priorities for the session.
- Deputy Mayor Rosenbaum has been engaging with Rep. Zahn throughout the session.



# Washington State Budget

- \$12 – \$15 billion-dollar four-year projected deficit. Operations and Transportation budget especially strained.
- The City signed on in support of an Association of Washington Cities letter opposing a sweep of the Public Works Assistance Account (PWAA)
- The PWAA is at risk of losing over \$100 million to the state's general fund. Diverting funds from the PWAA erodes a city's ability to fund basic local infrastructure and goes back on agreements made with city leaders

# Capital Funding for Emergency Replacement of City's Sole Water Source

- City's sole funding ask is for \$3 million to support construction costs for the emergency replacement of City's sole water source. This level of funding would cover 15% of the cost to construct the water supply pipeline.
- City applied to state Capitol Budget with the assistance of Representative Zahn's office.

# Capital Funding for Emergency Replacement of City's Sole Water Source

- The state budget is under considerable strain, although the capital budget is in better condition than the operations or transportation budget.
- The state budget is likely to be adopted at the very end of the session in late April.





# Key Bills City is tracking

- City staff are tracking dozens of bills making their way through the legislature.
- Only going to highlight a few key bills in this presentation.



# Support for Public Safety

- The City is closely monitoring HB 2015, which expands City's ability to raise revenue for police and other criminal justice programs while providing a state grant program. The City has not yet taken a position on this bill.
- HB 1380 regarding limiting City regulations on management of homeless encampments did not make it past the March 12 cutoff. This bill was a top priority of the City and we strongly opposed this bill throughout the process.

# Support for Public Safety

- SB 5066 would have created new broad authority for the Attorney General (AG) to investigate police departments. The AG's office already has authority to bring lawsuits when they believe there is a pattern or wrongdoing in a department.
- The bill was a key bill the City testified against due to the liability it placed on cities and undermining local control of police departments.
- This bill did not make it past a key deadline and is dead for this session.

# Housing & Land Use

- Housing and land use are significant themes again this year's legislative session.
- The City tracked and testified on bills related to transit-oriented development (HB 1491), parking regulation bills (SB 5184), lot-splitting (HB 1096), mobile dwelling units (HB 1443), development regulations (HB 1183), GMA compliance (SB 5148), and STEP housing siting (HB 1195).
- The City identified the mobile dwelling units and STEP housing siting bills as key proposal to oppose, and neither advanced past the floor cutoff.

# Housing & Land Use

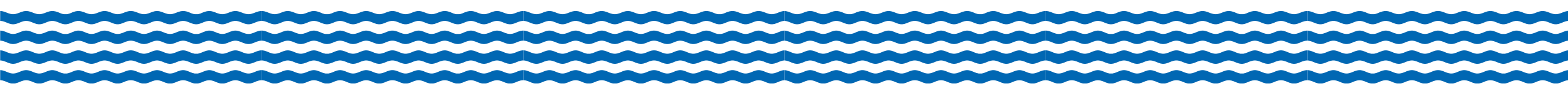
- The City legislative team continues to engage with the remaining housing bills.
- We anticipate many of these bills to pass in some form and are focusing our engagement on amendments that will improve the bills or reduce their negative impact on Mercer Island.

# Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Prevention

- As a direct provider of behavioral health services through Youth and Family Services, the City is tracking bills related to prevention and intervention resources targeting substances of abuse and funding and other support for behavioral health services.
- City testified in support of updating the endangerment with a controlled substance statute to include fentanyl (SB 5071) and expanding the crime of sexual exploitation of a minor to be inclusive of digitally created or altered images (SB 5105).

# Next Steps

- Final impacts of the bills passed this session will continue to be discussed and shared with City Council as direction and implementation requirements become clearer.
- Staff will provide a final recap of the 2025 Session and its impacts to the City's work plan after it ends.



# Questions & Discussion

