



**City of Toppenish**  
**2025 End of Session Legislative Report**  
**May 29th, 2025**

Dear City of Toppenish Council,

It was a pleasure to advocate for the City of Toppenish throughout the 2025 legislative session. It was a long, 105-day session. I am pleased to report that the City was successful in accomplishing several of the objectives outlined on the City's 2025 Legislative Agenda.

At a high level, the 2025 legislative session was driven by debate over the state's budget shortfall and other Democrat-led priorities such as rent control, recycling reform, and tax reform. Democrats held the majority in the House of Representatives (59-39) and the Senate (30-19). Legislators had the challenging task of balancing the state's biennial operating, capital, and transportation budgets. A total of 2,387 pieces of legislation were introduced this session, and the Legislature approved 433 bills. Additionally, Governor Bob Ferguson was inaugurated as the 24<sup>th</sup> Governor of Washington State. The first months of his tenure were marked by tensions between the Governor and the Legislature, with the Governor finding himself aligned with Republicans and moderate Democrats as opposed to progressive Democrats.

Specific to the City of Toppenish, the City Council adopted a 2025 legislative agenda that anticipated a challenging budget and political environment. The City worked closely with the 14<sup>th</sup> District Legislators- Senator Curtis King, Representative Gloria Mendoza, and Representative Deb Manjarrez- all of whom worked to advance the City's priorities. Through a collective effort, the city was allocated \$2.05 million for the Wastewater Treatment Plant and \$515,000 for the Police Station and City Services. The \$2.05 million for the Wastewater Treatment Plant is in addition to them \$8 million Public Works Assistance Account grant that we assisted the City is submitting in 2024.

The ever-changing political climate requires adaptive and consistent advocacy. We encourage you to consider the City's legislative agenda as direction through the legislative biennium (the two-year cycle). I look forward to working with the City throughout the interim months to continue advancing City of Toppenish's priorities and preparing for the 2026 legislative session.

Thank you,

Emily Shay  
State Lobbyist  
Gordon Thomas Honeywell Government Relations

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## A. Legislative Agenda Items

### Waste Water Treatment Plant

Our efforts were successful in securing funding for the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant project. The enacted Capital budget includes \$2.05 million to pay for the sludge dryer installation.

Several months prior to the start of the legislative session, GTH-Gov and the city began meeting with legislators and budget leaders, to emphasize the importance of this project to the community and surrounding areas that rely on the water supply. Of the state's three budgets, the Capital Budget was anticipated to be the most stable as it is funded with bond revenues. While the most stable, there was a high demand for the Capital Budget. Budget writers received 10 requests for every 1 that was funded. By meeting with key leaders, giving tours of the wastewater treatment plant facility well in advance of session, and facilitating in-person meetings with Adam Vaughn, the Budget and Finance Director, during session to update the delegation on the city's progress, the city significantly bolstered its likelihood of receiving state support for the project.

GTH-Gov and city staff prepared the necessary budget request forms for the House and Senate. Representative Manjarrez sponsored the project request in the House with Representative Mendoza's strong support, and Senator King sponsored the project in the Senate.

GTH-Gov met with the 14th Legislative Delegation before and throughout the session to ensure their support for the project. In February, GTH-Gov and the city met with the delegation to highlight a city resolution declaring a state of emergency at the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). The resolution was regarding a critical failure that occurred at the facility, causing partially treated sludge to leak onto the ground surface, which led to significant structural damage. City staff swiftly identified immediate repairs as essential to maintaining wastewater processing. These included replacing damaged sludge piping, addressing key component failures, and installing a bypass system to prevent further disruptions.

After working with Senator King, the capital request for the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) project was updated. These updates included the purchase of the dryer and two

additional requests for phase 2-4 totaling \$1 million and \$2 million for the remaining project phases, as recommended by Senator King.

The House budget did not include funding for the project however, the Senate capital budget included \$2.05 million for the project. GTH-Gov checked in with the 14th Legislative Delegation as final budget negotiations between the House and Senate approached, encouraging a final push for the project to be included in the budget.

The final budget includes \$2.05 million for the City of Toppenish Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility! The delegation deserves commendation for their unwavering support and advocacy throughout the legislative session for the city's project.

### **Police Station and City Services**

The City requested \$500,000 to renovate a new building to become the Toppenish Police Station. The final 2025-27 Capital Budget includes \$515,000 for this project.

We coordinated with the City's legislators – Sen. Curtis King, Rep. Gloria Mendoza, and Rep. Debra Manjarrez – to submit a request to capital budget writers for \$500,000.

GTH-Gov and city staff prepared the necessary budget request forms for the House and Senate. Representative Mendoza sponsored the project request in the House with Representative Manjarrez's strong support, and Senator King sponsored the project in the Senate.

The House and Senate each released a Capital Budget proposal. The House and Senate proposal both included \$515,000 for the Police Station and City Services Building in the Local and Community Project Account. When the House and Senate reconciled the differences between the two proposed Capital Budgets, \$515,000 for the project was retained in the final 2025-27 Capital Budget submitted to the Governor to be signed into law.

### **Public Works Assistance Account Funding**

The City of Toppenish supports increased funding to state grant programs for local infrastructure, including the Public Works Assistance Account.

The primary source of infrastructure funding for local governments is the Public Works Assistance Account (PWAA), also referred to as the Public Works Trust Fund. The City of Toppenish was recently awarded a PWAA grant/loan of \$X million. The account is funded through a combination of revenue sources, including a statutory allocation of a percentage of certain taxes, repayments from local government loans, and interest earned. The PWAA is a stable account that is often raided when the state is facing a challenging budget shortfall. The 2025 session was no exception. Both the House and Senate budget proposals included sweeps of funds from the PWAA. The Senate proposal took it one step further by proposing to divert the revenue that is otherwise dedicated to the account and using it to pay for fish culverts. This proposal may have impacted already awarded grants and loans, such as the \$8,125,491 award that Toppenish received in 2024. Due to the advocacy of local governments around the state, this concept did not advance.

In the 2025-27 budget, the Legislature transferred \$288 million from the PWAA to the state's general fund. However, \$100 million in state construction bonds were allocated to the account for a total of \$365 million. The \$365 million is adequate to protect existing commitments and allow the Public Works Board to offer a new loan round in 2025-27.

### Additional Areas of Policy Interests

Each legislative session, there are a variety of issues raised unexpectedly that would impact the City of Toppenish. Below are some of the additional unanticipated issues that the City paid closer attention to:

**DID NOT PASS: Safe Drinking Water:** [House Bill 2010](#), sponsored by Rep. Deb Manjarrez (R-14th LD), establishes a grant program to assist economically distressed communities in improving drinking water infrastructure. Public water systems in eligible communities may use grants for infrastructure improvements, such as building, repairing, consolidating, or redesigning systems, as well as for planning activities to ensure compliance with drinking water regulations. Priority for funding will be based on water quality and financial need, with the Department of Health required to develop application criteria by January 1, 2026, and submit a prioritized list of projects to the legislature starting with the 2027-2029 fiscal biennium.