

2011

City of Tacoma State Legislative Agenda

Adopted by the City Council December 7, 2010

Environment:

- The City supports proposals to create a sustainable funding source to assist local governments with obligations under Federal storm water regulations. The City also supports the efforts of the Puget Sound Partnership where its goals are consistent with climate change and growth management policies of the State.
- The City supports continued funding for programs such as the successful wood stove buyback initiative to reduce particulate pollution that has caused the region to be in a non-attainment status under the Clean Air Act.

Fiscal:

- The City acknowledges the State's financial challenge, but the City will oppose efforts that capture or divert local revenue or which shift responsibility for State services or programs to local government without commensurate revenue.
- The City opposes efforts to restrict or otherwise regulate its tax authority.
- The City will assist the Metropolitan Park District in securing authority for a new general revenue source.
- The City supports changes to the leasehold excise tax so that minor league baseball is treated equally with major league sports franchises.

Health, education, housing and neighborhoods:

- The City supports new and innovative tools, including tax increment financing and transfer of development rights programs, to improve housing alternatives, including affordable and workforce housing.
- People's Pool is an important community facility in the Hilltop neighborhood. The pool has been closed since 2008. The City has committed \$3 million to re-open the pool. The City and Metro Parks Tacoma support a State appropriation of \$1 million to assist with modification of the pool for greater accessibility for children, the disabled and elderly.
- The City supports the voter approved right for those with certain terminal or debilitating chronic conditions to obtain medical cannabis for personal use. The law and regulations are vague and confusing for patients, providers and law enforcement. The City supports changes to the law and regulations which add clarity and certainty to protect qualifying patient's safe and legal access to medical cannabis.

- Although charter schools are not allowed in Washington, the City supports legislation for Innovation Schools that allow flexibility for staffing, incentives for high performing teachers and private sector support for schools. The City also supports greater community engagement in local schools and encourages the State to provide grants and waivers which encourage such involvement.
- Neighborhood business districts are vital to the health of the city. The City supports extension of the Main Street business tax credit program to the state's largest cities.
- The City supports full State funding of local public health jurisdictions.

Public Safety:

- The City supports proactive measures to address the problem of gang violence in Washington cities. While law enforcement is a key component, the problem of gangs will not be solved simply through tougher enforcement and prosecution efforts. Prevention and intervention programs are far more cost effective and must be the focus of any omnibus gang legislation. The City supports such legislation only if it includes balanced prevention and intervention programs and funding.
- The use of automated traffic cameras in Tacoma has reduced traffic fatalities and injury accidents. The City supports the use of these cameras and seeks to remove some of the restrictions that have been placed on their use. The City also supports changes to the authorization for use of the cameras to bring greater clarity and uniformity in how the devices are implemented by local government.

Transportation and infrastructure:

- Infrastructure funding remains a central concern of cities throughout Washington. This is particularly true with transportation infrastructure, especially city arterials and residential streets. The City supports adoption of fee based street maintenance utility legislation. Similar funding mechanisms are in use in other states and the result is a much higher level of citizen satisfaction with the maintenance of their local streets and arterials.
- The City supports adoption of a new transportation revenue package, which may include tolling on new highways. This package must include funding for SR 167 from Puyallup to Tacoma and completion of the current I-5 Tacoma HOV lane project to SR-16. The City also supports extension of HOV lanes south on I-5 to begin to address congestion in the Joint Base Lewis-McChord area and improve mobility between Tacoma and Olympia. The revenue package must also provide shared revenue to local government, including local transit agencies.
- The City has made a significant investment in the Thea Foss Waterway. The Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account of the Department of Natural Resources is a key source for funding of the next phase of public improvements. ALEA is supported from a dedicated revenue source and the City supports its funding in the 2011-13 budget.
- The City supports new REET (Real Estate Excise Tax) authority for infrastructure purposes and alignment for uses of the revenue under existing REET authority.