



# CITY OF LAKEWOOD

## LEGISLATIVE POLICY MANUAL

ADOPTED BY CITY COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 24, 2016

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### **COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORTATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### **I-5 JBLM Corridor**

The I-5 JBLM corridor is fully funded in the transportation revenue package adopted by the Legislature. The City is currently working with WSDOT to ensure timely progress of the project. The City will continue to advocate for any appropriations or policy changes needed to advance the project in the best interests of our community and region.

#### **Economic Development Tools**

The City supports programs that may be developed to assist local governments in improvement of neighborhood residential and commercial area rehabilitation, through tax incentives, grants, loans and other programs. The City also supports legislation that provides economic development tools that the City may use if it so chooses. This legislation includes, but is not limited to: the multi-family housing tax incentive, tax increment financing, lodging tax, the Main Street Act (a series of small tax incentives for neighborhood business districts), complete streets grant program, community facility financing, shared state revenue for construction of convention and special event centers, additional shared state revenue for urban renewal and other public facility improvements, and innovative approaches to property tax assessment that reduces the current incentive to allow property to remain blighted.

#### **Annexation**

The City believes that annexation laws should encourage the logical development and expansion of the City to provide for a healthy and growing local economy and efficient services. The law should also facilitate and ease the annexation of unincorporated islands adjacent to City limits. The City supports legislation that will further modify state annexation laws to reduce the administrative process of annexation and further encourage and incentivize annexation of existing unincorporated islands.

#### **Boundary Review Board**

Boundary Review Boards are a quasi-judicial administrative body empowered to make decisions on such issues as incorporations, annexations, extensions of utilities, etc. by cities, towns, and special purpose districts. These Boards can approve, deny, or modify a proposal. Decisions are appealable to the Pierce County Superior Court. Because most issues are appealed to the Superior Court the City of Lakewood believes the Boundary Review Boards are duplicative and supports legislation that results in their elimination.

#### **Local Authority for Land Use & Planning**

Local governments must maintain final decision making authority on local zoning, land use, and planning, including local zoning and regulation of house-banked card rooms, homeless shelters, mobile home parks and other businesses. Specifically, the City opposes any effort by either the State Legislature or Congress to preempt local land use or taxation authority.

#### **Infrastructure Funding**

Local agencies, including the City of Lakewood, lack resources for infrastructure funding. As a result, city roads remain in disrepair; general fund dollars are taken from other important services to repair roads; or a combination thereof. Given that the Public Works Assistance Account has been discontinued, the city supports the state developing new infrastructure funding programs that are viable in the current political climate.



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### **Parks & Recreation**

The City of Lakewood is in need of state assistance to improve, maintain and expand its local park system and the open space areas of the City. The City supports ongoing funding for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) and the Youth Athletic Fund (YAF).

If the WWRP program is funded at the \$85 million level, the City will receive \$600,000 for the Harry Todd Waterfront Improvement Project. An Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA) grant for Harry Todd Park improvements in the amount of \$500,000 is also pending legislative approval.

If the YAF fund is fully funded at \$12 million, the City will have the chance to compete for these funds in a competitive grant process. The grant allows for renovation of existing facilities.

### **Limiting Additional Freight on Point Defiance Bypass (Lakeview Rail Line)**

The City opposes increased freight traffic along this corridor that is above and beyond the activity already in place and does not have a destination point within Lakewood. With the opening of the Point Defiance Bypass project in support of AMTRAK passenger rail coupled with increasing demands on freight rail, there is concern that the Point Defiance Bypass project could eventually lead to carrying increased freight traffic in addition to new passenger rail.

## **FINANCE**

### **State-Shared Revenues**

Lakewood supports maintaining funding for state-shared revenues. Additionally, the City opposes any cuts to state-funded programs that would negatively impact the city's ability to deliver services to its citizens.

### **Fiscal Home Rule (alternative to State-Shared Revenues)**

The City recognizes that it is increasingly difficult for the state to continue its historic role of providing state-shared revenues to the local level. The City will evaluate fiscal home rule proposals as they are introduced.

### **General Fund Revenue**

The City supports legislation that will increase, expand, or favorably restructure its revenue-raising ability. In consideration of the continued growth in demand for services that exceed revenue growth and inflation, the City supports the following revenue options:

- Give local governments increased local option flexibility in all areas of taxing authority.
- Eliminate remaining non-supplanting language and restrictions on use of certain revenues in local option tax authority. This language excessively limits City Council discretion regarding funding priorities.

### **City Financial Liability for Indigent Defense**

The City supports state funding for Indigent Defense in order to ensure consistent and adequate funding throughout the State. Requiring cities to bear the cost of this state mandate is inequitable.

### **Unfunded Mandates & Other State & Federal Budget Impacts**

Mandates from the Federal and State governments are rarely accompanied with adequate new revenues or taxing authority, but instead force the City to reduce funding levels for other services. The City opposes efforts by the State Legislature to balance budgets by shifting responsibilities to cities.



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### **PUBLIC SAFETY**

#### **Authority to Appoint Municipal Court Judges**

The City supports cities' ability to appoint a municipal court judge and to maintain courts and supports further technical and financial assistance for the administration of municipal courts.

#### **Traffic Enforcement Cameras**

The Legislature has authorized local government to use traffic enforcement cameras in limited situations, including red light enforcement at certain intersections and speed control in school zones. Traffic enforcement cameras have proven to be a success in reducing instances of speeding and violation of traffic signals. The City supports the use of traffic enforcement cameras. The City also supports legislation allowing images from traffic enforcement cameras to be used by law enforcement in criminal cases if there is probable cause.

#### **Police Body Cameras**

Advancements in technology now enable law enforcement agencies to equip their police officers with body-worn cameras. However, current state laws around public disclosure impede the use of this technology. The City supports legislation that removes barriers to the use of police body cameras.

#### **Increased & Permanent Funding for the Western State Hospital Community Policing Program**

Since 2007 the City has operated a highly effective neighborhood policing team to respond to hundreds of calls for police service at Western State Hospital. The City of Lakewood requests permanent funding for this program at a level that covers the full cost of the program.

#### **City Financial Liability for Offender Medical Costs**

The City supports proposals to change the current practice of charging cities for inmate medical costs. The concern is that private insurance companies are refusing to cover treatment for an injury that occurred during the commission of a crime. The practice of charging cities for the medical cost of inmates is a subsidy for jails, hospitals, Medicaid and insurers using tax money intended for local revenue.

#### **Full Funding of the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA)**

The City supports full funding of the Basic Law Enforcement Academy which is the sole training program for police departments across the state. With an increasing number of law enforcement officers retiring, it is imperative this program receive adequate funding to provide ample training slots for new hires. The current wait for a training class is more than six months, which results in jurisdictions paying the salaries of officers who cannot begin work.

#### **Jail & Court Costs**

The City supports legislative proposals that reduce jail and court costs, and maintain the City's flexibility in providing jail and court services. The City supports additional funding for local grants through the Office of Public Defense, and clarifying local authority to set standards for public defenders. The City also supports maintaining the flexibility to select the most appropriate manner in which to provide jail services.

#### **Release of Offenders to County of Origin**

The City supports full implementation of legislation that expanded Department of Correction's "county of origin" policy that sends offenders back to their county of origin upon release, to also include offenders released from the Special Commitment Center operated by the Department of Social and Health Services.



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### **Mental Illness**

The City supports state action to increase mental health services throughout the state. Increased mental health funding is needed to address the requirements of Trueblood v. Washington State DSHS, and meet a growing demand across the state.

## **GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

### **McCleary Decision**

The City encourages the state to satisfy the McCleary Supreme Court decision, and develop a plan on how to fully fund education by 2018. In doing so, the City requests that the Legislature recognize quality schools also need to be located in quality communities. As such, fully funding education should not be done at the expense of funding allocated to local governments.

### **Public Records & Open Meetings**

The City respects the right of the public to have access to legitimate public records and documents. The City believes its ability to recover the costs of searching for, gathering and reviewing requested documents is also in the public's interest. The City supports reasonable reforms to the public records act. The City opposes requiring the recording of executive sessions or other restrictions on legitimate uses of executive sessions.

## **HOUSING**

### **Adult Family Homes (AFHs)**

The City supports legislation that harmonizes Adult Family Homes to the degree possible with the residential zoning which currently allows them. These facilities should maintain numbers of occupants consistent with their residential setting and these facilities should be dispersed to prevent unintended de facto "social services zones" when it is in the best interest of both the service provider and the City to preserve the residential nature of the City's neighborhoods. The City supports density limitations to this use in residential zones with regard to both numbers of occupants per facility and number of facilities per zone.

### **Regulating Enhanced Service Facilities (ESFs)**

The City encourages the state to recognize ESFs as an institutional use and remove language which allows an Adult Family Home (AFH) to convert to this use. The population that qualifies for residence in an ESF would otherwise be institutionalized and is not appropriate for residential zones. Language that allows AFH to convert to ESF suggests that these distinctly different types of housing are comparable when they serve contradictory populations, AFH serving predominantly vulnerable individuals and ESF serving almost exclusively individuals who present a threat. The City supports legislation that keeps institutional populations in zones which accommodate commercial or industrial uses.

### **Quality Affordable Housing**

The City supports enhancement of the provision of much needed human service programs to address issues that drive increased homelessness and public safety costs. The City supports legislation that incentivizes developers to build affordable housing. The City supports a \$200M investment in the Housing Trust Fund. The Homelessness Housing and Assistance Act provides funding to homeless services (shelters, rapid rehousing, move-in assistance etc.) through a document recording fee. Thirty dollars of the fifty-eight dollar fee collected is scheduled to sunset in 2019. The City supports retaining the document recording fee.



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Additionally, the City supports legislation to stop all predatory home lending practices with particular attention to the common predatory lending practices in mobile home ownership. The City supports enforcement of state law to ensure all home renting practices are in compliance with existing regulations.

### **MILITARY AFFAIRS**

#### **South Sound Military & Communities Partnership (SSMCP) & Joint Base Lewis McChord**

The City is a strong partner with Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM) and a founding member of the South Sound Military Communities Partnership (SSMCP). JBLM is an employment hub for the City of Lakewood, and Lakewood has the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest city population of active duty service members in the greater Pierce and Thurston Counties region.

SSMCP's mission is to foster communication, understanding and mutual benefit by serving as the most effective point of coordination for resolution of those issues which transcend the specific interests of the military and civilian communities of the South Sound region. Its membership includes Pierce and Thurston County local governments, JBLM and the WA Military Department, and economic development, social services, health care, educational, transportation, and military support organizations. Current SSMCP priorities include expanding missions at JBLM and thus spurring local economic development off base; workforce transition; active duty, military family and veteran awareness of health care and social service availability; and increasing state level support of military presence in Washington.

The City of Lakewood supports the ongoing efforts of SSMCP and policy decisions that assist JBLM and its mission. The City also believes in a strong commitment from the State in support of military affairs, such as maintaining the Governor's Subcabinet on Military Downsizing; strengthening financial, legislative and political support for the military presence in Washington in anticipation of future force restructuring or defense contract reductions due to sequestration, Department of Defense budget reductions, and/or base realignment and closure (BRAC) rounds; continuing to support the Washington Military Alliance (WMA), and providing financial assistance for local military advocacy agencies such as Forward Fairchild, the Puget Sound Naval Bases Association, Rally Point 6, and SSMCP.

#### **SSMCP Legislative Agenda**

- Resolve Encroachment in the JBLM North Clear Zone (NCZ)
- Fund Transportation Blueprint for South Puget Sound
- Strengthen State Involvement in Military Affairs
- Direct Compliance with the REAL ID Act