

City of Longview 2019 Legislative Priorities

Beech Street Extension

The City respectfully requests \$1,080,000 in funding for the extension and improvement of Beech St. from Oregon Way to California Way. The project will include 2,000 lineal feet of three-lane roadway, curb, gutter, sidewalk, bike lanes, street trees, street lights, and drainage features. Construction of Beech Street will open 76 acres of vacant and inaccessible industrial land and provide arterial congestion relief to the heavily traveled SR 432 freight corridor. Development interest is strong in the area, as indicated by a majority of property owners that have agreed to participate in a Local Improvement District (LID) to help fund this project. Utilizing LID funding and a grant from Cowlitz County leaves a funding gap of approximately \$1,080,000.

Lake Sacajawea Renovation Project

Lake Sacajawea is the most heavily used park in Longview. This renovation project promotes quality of place and tourism attraction by allowing the City to continue its commitment to safety, host large scale events, and restore its historic asset. The City respectfully requests **\$1,000,000 in capital budget** funding for replacement of two restroom facilities, reconstruction of damaged sidewalks, and restoration of Martin's Dock.

During the City's community wide survey for the Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, upgrade to park restrooms was the number one listed park improvement citizens requested. The current restroom buildings have been vandalized and deteriorated past the point of repair. Design of the new restrooms will reduce the amount of damage that is currently occurring, and the installation of additional lighting to the outside of the facility will also increase safety and security – currently the City contracts with a local security company to monitor the restrooms.

Martin's Dock/Hemlock Plaza at Lake Sacajawea is the highest and heaviest used area for community events such as the City's summer concert series, movies at the park, and the Go 4th Festival that brings in over 40,000 people for the 4th of July holiday. The dock has been deteriorating over time creating cracks in the concrete producing a slope towards the water that no longer meets ADA grade. Further, the sidewalks in the park have been badly damaged over the years and have become a safety hazard for tripping and do not meet ADA standards.

State Environmental Permitting Process

The State of Washington must streamline its environmental permitting processes so that permit decisions are made in a more timely and efficient manner. The communities of southwest Washington, including the City of Longview, have been on the front line as state agencies have turned local projects into extenuated ideological battles. The City supports appropriate environmental review that is balanced with the need for economic development in the region. The state must ensure that its permitting processes do a better job of striking this balance.

Economic Development

The City of Longview supports legislation providing more tools to cities to support economic development in downtown centers, including for commercial and industrial development such as the Beech Street industrial area. The City joins the Association of Washington of Cities in advocating for increment financing tools.

The City supports the efforts of the Association of Washington Cities.

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In addition to the City's 2019 adopted legislative priorities, the city has adopted the following policies. The policy document provides direction to city staff and the city lobbyists. These are issues that the city will monitor and support along with AWC and other stakeholders, but are secondary to the 2019 legislative priorities of the City.

Affordable Housing & Homeownership Tools: The City of Longview joins housing advocates in requesting funding tools for affordable housing, funding for the Housing Trust Fund, reforms to the Condominium Liability Act, and other creative solutions to funding or incentivizing affordable housing.

Criminal Justice Training Commission /Basic Law Enforcement Academy Funding: The City of Longview supports increased funding and other solutions to ensure newly hired officers are able complete training through the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) at the Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) in a timely manner. At current funding levels, the Criminal Justice Training Commission has a backlog of officers awaiting training. State law requires that officers are trained within 6 months of hire, and the current backlog exceeds this statutory timeline. The City also supports equal prioritization by the CJTC when selecting officers to be trained in a timely manner.

Abandoned and Vacant Properties: The City of Longview supports efforts to address nuisance abatement challenges associated with vacant and abandoned foreclosed properties, including efforts to address the health, safety and other problems associated with abandoned and vacant properties.

Carbon tax: The City of Longview opposes taxes on carbon that will disadvantage industrial and manufacturing activity in the City. Industrial and manufacturing activity are both key economic drivers to the local economy, and a carbon tax would likely impede the City's local economy. Furthermore, the City does not believe that a single-state approaches are the appropriate avenue forward on certain environmental issues.

EV Charging Stations: The City supports electronic vehicle charging stations in the City. With the emergence of more electric vehicles – both within the City's fleet and privately owned – the City lacks adequate charging stations, especially for travelers along the I-5 corridor. The City supports efforts to build more of these stations in the City, including state funding for these stations.

Mental Health Field Responders: The City of Longview supports efforts and funding for the City's police department to hire mental health professionals to work with police officers to connect at-risk individuals with support services. House Bill 2892 from 2018 established the mental health field response grant program that accomplishes this goal. The City supports full funding for this grant program.

Lower Columbia College: The City supports the efforts of Lower Columbia College, including Capital Budget asks for buildings on campus.

Preemptions and Unfunded Mandates: The City opposes any preemption of local control or the imposition of unfunded or underfunded state mandates.