

2024 Federal Legislative Priorities

LACEY CITY COUNCIL

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Adopted by Lacey City Council on December X, 2023

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are on the ancestral land of the Tribal People of the Treaty of Medicine Creek, including the Nisqually Indian Tribe and Squaxin Island Tribe. We acknowledge, and remember those Tribal People not recognized today who were absorbed or relocated into other tribes for survival. We recognize the ancestors and their descendants who are still here. We recognize and respect the Tribal People of the Treaty of Medicine Creek as the traditional stewards of this land since time immemorial and their role today in taking care of these lands in perpetuity. We recognize and have the responsibility to call attention to the histories of dispossession, forced removal, and abridged treaty rights that allowed our nation, state, and city to develop as it has today. We recommend that community members read the Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

1. Emergency Coordination Center
2. College Street Corridor Safety Improvements
3. I-5 Corridor from Tumwater to Mounts Road and the Nisqually River Delta

FUTURE: Lacey Museum and Cultural Center in Depot District

FUTURE: Joint Animal Services: Regional Animal Facility

FUTURE: Childcare and Early Learning Access: Young Child and Family Center

POLICY POSITIONS

4. Support Build America, Buy America
5. Support Septic-to-Sewer Conversion Program
6. Support a National Housing and Homeless Outreach Strategy to Help Communities Address an Ongoing and Growing Crisis of Unsheltered Populations
7. Support the Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) and Encourage the Department of Defense to Fund Projects that Enhance Military Family Quality of Life
8. Continued Support of Community Programs, such as Community Development Block Grant Program, COPS Grant, and more.
9. Support the Homes for Every Local Protector, Educator, and Responder (HELPER) Act

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

1. EMERGENCY COORDINATION CENTER

The City is planning for a new police station that will include an Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) to replace the current makeshift 300-square-foot meeting room serving this role. Like many local jurisdictions around the country, the City was underprepared for the global pandemic and remains inadequately prepared to handle other major emergency incidents. The ECC will support the community by providing resources, coordinating communications and advance warnings, prioritizing response during an emergency, and implementing recovery programs. The ECC is anticipated to include over 1,440 square feet of mission-critical equipment, including: radios, an emergency generator, state-of-the-art technologies, and systems, and more.

The City is seeking federal funding for equipment to develop a new ECC that better serves the community in times of crisis.

2. COLLEGE STREET CORRIDOR SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

The College Street corridor carries an estimated 32,000 vehicles each day and is the primary north south link connecting the City, as well as other Thurston County communities. The corridor serves as a vital access point to local schools, services, and multimodal transportation options for many, including several low-

income communities. College Street has over 130 driveways, many T-sections and inefficient four-way intersections that result in serious vehicle safety hazards. Other users of the corridor (including elementary school children traveling to school) face narrow sidewalks, the absence of bike infrastructure, and a scarcity of welcoming infrastructure that compounds these safety challenges.

The City intends to apply for a RAISE grant again and is evaluating other federal funding opportunities such as a Safe Streets for All implementation grant.

3. I-5 CORRIDOR FROM TUMWATER TO MOUNTS ROAD AND THE NISQUALLY RIVER DELTA

Interstate 5 (I-5) is the lifeline of commerce, transportation, and Joint Base Lewis McChord's (JBLM) mission readiness in the Puget Sound Region. However, the current design of I-5 impedes critical ecological functions of the Nisqually River Delta critical to salmon survival, is at risk of being flooded by the Nisqually River resulting in national security concerns, and is inadequate to meet the growing commerce and transportation demands of our state.

In 2022, the Washington State Legislature recognized the need to address the challenges of this corridor and allocated \$75 million in the Move Ahead Washington package specifically for planning of the Nisqually River delta (Mounts Road to Marvin Road) portion of the corridor.

The City remains committed to long-term solutions along this corridor, which is essential to the state's environmental, commerce, and transportation priorities, as well JBLM's mission readiness. The City is continuing to work with local partners to advocate for advancement of this project as a unified voice and recognizes the need for federal investments.

FUTURE PROJECTS

1. LACEY MUSEUM AND CULTURAL CENTER IN THE DEPOT DISTRICT

For over a decade, the City has worked on creating a new museum and cultural center in the Depot District where community members can meet-up, learn, connect with Lacey's rich history, and experience Lacey amenities and community events. The City has already made considerable investments to establish the Depot District, including constructing a replica of the historic train depot with a train-themed playground, as well as adding picnic tables and public restrooms. The museum and cultural center will serve as the east anchor of the Depot District and will add significant civic value and enhance community identity in the area. To date, the City has leveraged multiple funding sources to complete the facility's design and in 2022 focused on bringing the site to a pre-development state. In the future, the City anticipates requesting federal funding to leverage its local and state investments for construction of the museum and cultural center.

2. Joint Animal Services: Regional Animal Facility

Joint Animal Services (JAS) is the animal shelter and control agency for the cities of Lacey, Tumwater, and Olympia, and unincorporated Thurston County and serves over 303,976 community members in 774 square miles of urban and rural terrain. JAS provides critical community services such as humane law enforcement, sheltering and medical care of strays (intake of over 2,600 animals in 2022), impounded and surrendered animals, adoptions, licensing, temporary emergency housing, and more. JAS moved into their existing facility in 1996 which was formerly a warehouse and wasn't built to meet industry standards of care or to grow with the community. A recent study of the facility found that it is failing and requires significant investment to maintain. JAS partners, Lacey, Tumwater, and Olympia, and Thurston County, are starting efforts to construct a new JAS shelter facility that will allow them to continue to provide this critical community need. Preliminary cost estimates are approximately \$20 million.

3. CHILDCARE AND EARLY LEARNING ACCESS: YOUNG CHILD AND FAMILY CENTER

Research consistently shows high-quality, early-learning programs have a real, sustained impact on the life outcomes of children and families. At the same time, demand for high-quality childcare programs has outpaced industry growth for several years. COVID-related operating restrictions and

decreased enrollment have caused over 30% of childcare centers to close. North Thurston Public Schools service area falls within an “extreme childcare access desert.” This area is in dire need of additional recreation facilities. In a recent City study, community members clearly communicated this need. Specifically, residents ranked the addition of a public aquatic facility and more indoor recreation opportunities as two of the highest local needs. This center will combine a state-of-the-art, early-learning center with a family recreation facility focused on providing developmentally appropriate recreation activities for youth ages 3 to 5 and their families. The City, North Thurston Public Schools, and South Sound YMCA are partnering to see the feasibility of a Young Child and Families Center, estimated to cost around \$50 to \$70 million.

POLICY POSITIONS

1. SUPPORT BUILD AMERICA, BUY AMERICA

While the City supports the underlining goals of the Build America, Buy America Act, it presents significant challenges for communities like Lacey that are eager to put federal investments from the Infrastructure and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act to use. Inflexibility and ongoing global supply chain disruptions are leaving many projects out of consideration or unable to move forward as procuring eligible components is time consuming and can become cost prohibitive.

The City has significant concerns about meeting daunting BABA requirements. The City urges efforts to provide increased BABA flexibility for infrastructure projects. A few examples of how BABA impacts the City’s infrastructure programs:

- For a recent electric vehicle charger project, the City could not acquire equipment that met the City’s needs and BABA requirements. This resulted in removing Type II chargers from the federal project with the City assuming the cost of this infrastructure.
- The City estimates that BABA requirements could double the cost of materials for the upcoming Lacey Police Station. This effectively makes federal funding that requires BABA impractical.

2. SEPTIC-TO-SEWER CONVERSION PROGRAM

The City is committed to finding collaborative ways to convert aging, and in many cases failing, septic systems to the City's wastewater system. The City estimates there are 1,981 septic systems within Lacey and 7,852 within the Urban Growth Area. Eliminating these septic systems protects the environment and benefits community health by reducing effluent from entering into groundwater. Recently, the City Council approved over \$5 million for water and wastewater improvements, including septic to sewer conversions, in a neighborhood where contaminants from septic systems were impacting groundwater and aquifers in the area. The City is looking to continue investing in these types of conversions in future years. The City urges Congress to appropriate funding to the Connections to Publicly Owned Treatment Works grant program, which was authorized in the IJA but not funded. This program is an ideal funding stream for the City's Septic-to-Sewer Conversion Program.

3. SUPPORT THE DEFENSE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (DCIP) AND ENCOURAGE THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TO FUND PROJECTS THAT ENHANCE MILITARY FAMILY QUALITY OF LIFE

The Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) is designed to address deficiencies in infrastructure for communities that support military installations in order to enhance military value, installation resilience, and military family quality of life. An estimated 70% of the active-duty members serving at Joint-Base Lewis-McChord live off base and in communities across the South Sound. Approximately, 10% of off-base, active-duty members call Lacey home. The City urges continuing support for the DCIP program and that the program remain eligible for needed capital investments on and off military installations that improve the mission readiness of the base and the quality of life of military families.

4. SUPPORT A NATIONAL HOUSING AND HOMELESS OUTREACH STRATEGY TO HELP COMMUNITIES ADDRESS AN ONGOING, GROWING CRISIS OF UNSHELTERED POPULATIONS

The nation is confronted with a homeless crisis on a scale not seen since the Great Depression that has deepened with the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic. The lack of affordable housing plays a substantial role in the rise of homelessness. For many others, behavioral health issues, such as mental illness or an addiction to drugs and alcohol, is the entry into homelessness. The lack of a consistent, coordinated strategy means the impact of

homelessness is disproportionately borne by local communities and jurisdictions across the nation. Direct participation by the federal government is needed, due to the magnitude and the complexity of the problem, requiring new federal programs and solutions to affectively address homelessness. The City strongly supports legislation like the Ending Homeless Act to provide resources programs need to effectively address the housing and homeless crisis in America, in addition to increasing the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, a critical tool to encourage private investment in the production and preservation of affordable housing. The City also believes investments in our nation's mental health systems are critical to combating the homeless crisis and supports efforts such as the Bipartisan Addiction and Mental Health Task Force.

5. CONTINUED SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY PROGRAMS — COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM, COPS GRANT, AND MORE LIFE
The City urges continuing support to provide and enhance funding for community programs such as CDBG and COPS, critical funding streams for communities like Lacey seeking to enhance public safety and the community's quality of life.

6. SUPPORT THE HOMES FOR EVERY LOCAL PROTECTOR, EDUCATOR, AND RESPONDER (HELPER) ACT
The City strongly supports the HELPER Act which would create a home loan program within the Federal Housing Administration allowing first responders across the country to obtain a low-interest, fully insured home loan with no down payment and no monthly mortgage insurance costs. This program would make homeownership more affordable for our community's law enforcement officers, fire fighters, EMTs, paramedics, and pre-K-12 teachers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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