

CITY OF SEATTLE

2015 State Legislative Agenda

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The City of Seattle is committed to being a safe, vibrant, interconnected, and affordable city. To achieve these goals, Seattle has identified the following priorities for the 2015 legislative session:

A Safe City – one that ensures all residents can live safe and secure

We support commonsense, responsible solutions to reduce gun violence in our communities and we believe that local governments should have the ability to regulate firearms or weapons in public places to ensure the safety of their communities in accordance with local circumstances.

We support a coordinated state-regulated marijuana system that includes specific provisions to ensure legitimate medical cannabis patients have access to the products they need.

We support strengthening laws prohibiting the manufacture or processing of 'hash oil' and other marijuana extracts and concentrates outside of a regulated, state-licensed process, and we support clarifying the definition of 'marijuana concentrates' to encompass all products commonly used and marketed as 'hash oil.'

We support harmonizing laws prohibiting underage marijuana use with laws prohibiting underage alcohol use. We also support legislation to address youth access to e-vaping and tobacco products.

We support funding programs, and policy changes that help women and men previously incarcerated successfully transition back into society, including providing increased employment and housing opportunities for ex-offenders to reduce recidivism and increase public safety.

We support legislation to clarify the process for evaluating and considering civil commitment petitions for defendants charged with misdemeanors in Seattle whose cases are dismissed for incompetency to stand trial. We also support funding to ensure that there are sufficient facilities to care for individuals in need of mental health evaluations and care, and funding for the recruitment and retention of high quality mental health care providers.

We support strengthening criminal consequences for patronizing a prostitute.

We support legislation that clarifies and strengthens state DUI laws, including clarifying the law regarding the number of violations that would trigger mandatory probation revocation, strengthening laws regarding alcohol breath tests, and clarifying elements of lane-weaving violations.

We believe every person has the right to live, work, and learn free from discrimination. We support efforts to achieve equity and advance opportunity, including actions that promote racial equity in education, community development, criminal justice, health, housing, jobs and the environment. We support strong civil rights protections for all and efforts to protect the rights of and services provided to immigrants. In addition, we support tools that strengthen government policies, programs and procedures by removing barriers and creating opportunities for greater civic engagement, including voting, and that assess for impacts on racial and gender equity.

The City supports state legislation that would eliminate or at least significantly reduce the involvement of county and city law enforcement officials in immigration law enforcement. In particular, the City supports legislation that would restrict local jurisdictions from honoring U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainers unless they are supported by a federal judicial criminal warrant. We support the state setting a clear statewide standard for these restrictions.

We support gender equity and family-friendly workplace policies, such as paycheck fairness, parental leave and affordable childcare, so that all people across gender lines thrive economically and are safe and healthy. We support local governments' ability to adopt standards to protect the health, safety, and well-being of their residents, to adopt tax measures that do not unfairly burden those in need, and oppose preemption of local regulations related to retaining housing affordability.

We support the continued use of automated traffic safety cameras and other devices that improve safety and efficiency. We support legislation to remove barriers that currently limit the City's ability to release law enforcement footage to the public. We also support modifying state law to clarify the use of body cameras by law enforcement. We support legislation to define what an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) or drone is, and to regulate their use by law enforcement or other state agencies, commercial businesses, and the general public.

We support reforms to the Public Records Act that maintain transparency, protect vulnerable and protected groups, and promote government efficiency and effectiveness.

We support funding for WIN 211, which helps the public access important information and government programs and services after disasters.

A Vibrant City – one that supports innovation, education, economic development and the environment

We support maximum funding for early learning, K-12, and higher education. We support complying with the McCleary decision by fully funding basic education through new revenue and closing tax preferences---without cutting funding for human services or other important state services and programs.

We support increasing school construction capacity to ensure we have the proper facilities to educate future generations.

We support programs providing support to students, including nutrition support, to ensure they are ready and able to learn.

Building on the foundation of high-quality preschool in Seattle that is consistent with the State's Department of Early Learning, we support expansion funding from the state and federal governments to continue to move closer toward preschool for all.

We support community colleges, apprenticeship programs, technical colleges, and state universities as they provide access to training and workforce development opportunities that keep our economy thriving.

We support tax increment financing, including new value capture concepts, as a tool to encourage economic development and community improvement projects, and also support a set aside for low-income housing. We support investments in thriving local industries, including motion pictures, marine tourism, and global health and life sciences research. In addition, Seattle supports the ability for municipalities to sustain international diplomacy through the maintenance of a bank account for nonpublic funds. We also support investments and policies that enhance access and promote affordability of technology and technological infrastructure.

We support capital funding for infrastructure and public works projects, including increased capital funding for Seattle's cultural institutions. The City also supports considering the creation of a state investment trust or other funding mechanisms to provide financing for housing development, public works infrastructure, educational infrastructure, student loans, environmental infrastructure and design, and community quality of life projects.

We support clarifying and strengthening legislation that fosters the development of Business Investment Areas. We support promoting and incentivizing historic preservation, building safety, and energy efficiency through direct or indirect assistance to property owners.

We also support legislation that allows for increased flexibility for cities to manage public works and other projects.

The City of Seattle will work to protect existing state and local shared revenues, including the restoration of liquor revenues; to preserve all existing local revenue authorities; and to support new local revenue opportunities, including local revenue from the sale of marijuana.

We support comprehensive tax reform that leads to a more equitable and progressive tax structure and decreases reliance on flat tax sources like sale and property taxes.

Seattle supports policies that aim to fight climate change. The City's climate protection goals are economy wide; therefore, we support policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including investments in clean energy, transit, and energy efficiency, carbon taxes, cap-and-trade, and electrification of transportation. We look forward to working with the Executive and State Legislature to create policies that will reduce climate polluting emissions and to craft socially equitable policies that provide opportunities for lower-income communities to share in the economic opportunities presented by solutions to climate change.

Seattle values the Clean Water Act mission of making our waterways safe for fishing and recreation. We support a new, long-term state funding source for local storm water management programs to help improve water quality, and to ensure cleanup of local toxic sites. We support full funding for the Local Toxics Account and use of the funds for their statutory purpose.

We support legislation that will reduce toxic chemicals in the environment, including regulating lead paint and toxins in children's toys. We support development of common industry standards for recycled products, funding for recycling facilities, and legislative initiatives to reduce waste and increase recycling. We support product stewardship for surplus pharmaceuticals, carpet, paint, and additions to the products covered by E-Cycle Washington.

Seattle supports local authority to impose fees for public safety, affordable housing, and necessary facilities and services related to the impacts of development, and to require appropriate infrastructure such as open space and sidewalks associated with new development. We support the expansion of incentive zoning to include provisions that encourage new open space, preserving current open space, creating multi-modal transportation infrastructure, and preserving landmark structures. Seattle also supports efforts to update state planning regulations so that they work most efficiently and best promote growth within urban areas, while still affording the same levels of environmental protection.

We support maintaining Washington's strong payday lending protections for consumers and oppose the creation of new, high- interest lending products.

An Interconnected City – one supported by a cohesive and multimodal transportation network

We support transportation policies and multimodal funding proposals that: include a significant share of funding for cities to help pay for local maintenance backlogs and other local needs; include sustainable funding for transit operations and result in expanded transit service in the highest demand areas; significantly improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility; prioritize safety and maintenance projects; and meet both the City's and the State's greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets.

In addition, Seattle supports new local and regional options for transportation funding that could be used to help expand transit, including light rail; modifying the City's parking tax authority to allow for more equitable application of the tax; and a more progressive Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET) option. Further, to ensure practicality and efficiency in implementation, we support changing the income eligibility guidelines for the low-income vehicle license fee rebate for transportation benefit districts to provide greater consistency of eligibility among low-income programs.

We support authorization for Sound Transit 3.

We support a safe and modern rail infrastructure, which includes recognizing the hazards posed by oil and coal shipments through our rail corridor and our waterways. We support regulation of train speeds, capacity and car infrastructure, and support legislation to allow enhanced inspections by UTC inspectors. We support provisions for a continuous supply of oil-spill-response equipment and local first responder firefighting equipment.

We support the development of a full funding package for the SR 520 Replacement Project that improves safety and the movement of transit, bikes, and pedestrians throughout the corridor, and is consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding between WSDOT and the City of Seattle. We urge the State Legislature to fund continuing efforts to advance the design of the West Side of the SR 520 Project and build upon the successful outreach and engagement efforts completed as part of the Seattle Community Design Process in 2012. Continued funding in 2015 is necessary to maintain momentum, build upon the progress being made with the community, and implement recommendations identified in the community design process. We also support the completion of analysis and authorization of tolling I-90.

We support freight mobility and value the importance of rail to both the City and State economy.

We support clarification of the current State insurance law applicable to TNCs, taxis, and for hire vehicles, to account for recent changes in the industry and business models of all market participants; including changes intended to expand the range of insurance options available to the industry. In addition, we support modifications to rental car regulations.

We support clarifying regulations related to trucks and other commercial vehicles and additional resources for commercial vehicle safety enforcement; we also support policies that equitably share the burden of responsibility for safety violations between drivers and equipment owners.

An Affordable City – one where housing and services remain affordable and accessible to everyone

The City of Seattle will work to protect funding for affordable housing, human services, public health, and other critical programs, and we support raising new state revenue and increased flexibility for local tools to help preserve and expand these essential services. Our interest encompasses moving providers toward a living wage as well as being able to help more people meet their basic human needs.

We support additional mental health funding to ensure those in crisis receive the ongoing care, housing, and services they need. We support the state ensuring that there is parity of services for all people seeking medical treatment through the Affordable Care Act. In addition, in order to meet new and existing federal requirements and ensure quality of care, we support fully funding caseload ratios and staffing levels for Medicaid case management.

We support continued and expanded funding for essential safety net programs, including: Maternity Support Services, public health, Community Health Clinics, mental health treatment services, Apple Health for Kids, Housing and Essential Needs, the Aged Blind and Disabled (ABD) Program, the Senior Services Act programs, immigrant services, State Food Assistance, the WIC Farmer's Market Nutrition Program, Working Connections Childcare, family planning, Nurse Family Partnerships, and the Kinship Navigator Program.

Seattle supports creating and preserving financing tools and other policies to expand affordable housing and help ensure affordability and stability for tenants. We support incentivizing affordable housing, supporting homeowners facing foreclosure, creating local funding options for housing and providing for increased funding for the Housing Trust Fund. We support state efforts to assist with the implementation of the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness, and support utilizing health care reform opportunities to prevent and end homelessness. In addition, we support implementation of the Homeless Youth Act and funding for Adolescent Services.

We support changes to the Fair Tenant Screening Act and reducing the costs of tenant screening reports for prospective tenants and providing for fairness in eviction reporting. We also support expanding protections based on a renter's source of income and aligning state and federal law to ensure housing access for disabled residents with service animals.