

*City of Lakewood, Washington*



# 2024 State Legislative Policy Manual

Adopted November 6, 2023

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND LANDS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy to making the history which led to this moment. The City would like to recognize that we are on the lands of the Nisqually People, and acknowledge the history of dispossession that allowed for the growth of our community. We offer respect to the Nisqually People and their Elders, past, present, and emerging. We recognize our responsibility to value all people, and are committed to equitably serving all people in our diverse community.

## A STATEMENT ON EQUITY BY THE LAKEWOOD CITY COUNCIL

The Lakewood City Council acknowledges that equity is essential to a healthy community.

We are committed to identifying and eliminating systemic racism. We intend to lead by example in the advancement of equity and the deliberate practice of inclusion.

The City Council commits to the following practices:

- Instilling equity as a priority of policy and the delivery of services.
- Enacting initiatives that support and celebrate the diversity of the community.
- Ensuring equity in municipal planning.
- Identifying and dismantling preconceived prejudices.
- Increasing sensitivity to social norms and cultural expectations.
- Pursuing justice and equity for all residents.

We recognize the critical role that city leaders have in removing barriers to opportunity. We recognize that systemic inequality has endured, but commit that it shall not persist. The City Council will not tolerate *intolerance*. It is unconscionable that some members of our community fall victim to acts of hate. Acts of hate based upon race, creed, ancestry, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or socioeconomic status are unwelcome in Lakewood, Washington. The Lakewood Police Department shall be vigilant in its investigation and prosecution of crimes of hate. These intentional practices will inform our decision-making on policing, zoning, capital investment and all other matters of the City Council. Our objective is to create a more diverse, equitable and inclusive Lakewood community for all residents and we invite all Lakewood organizations and residents to join us in this effort.



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## City Council Goals Legend

The policy goals in the County Policy Manual align with the City Council Goals 2021-2024. Each policy name is a different color to reflect the corresponding City Council Goal.

**Economic Development Goal:** The City of Lakewood promotes and supports a dynamic and robust local economy.

**Dependable Infrastructure Goal:** The City of Lakewood provides safe, clean, well-maintained, and dependable infrastructure.

**Public Safety Goal:** The City of Lakewood is one of the safest cities in Washington State.

**Fiscal Responsibility Goal:** The City of Lakewood maintains a strong fiscal position.

**Transparency Goal:** The City of Lakewood communicates its goals, successes, and challenges to the community and serves as a leader and champion for the community.

**Robust & Active Community Goal:** The City of Lakewood is a livable, resilient, and inclusive community that embraces and celebrates diversity and delivers equitable municipal services.

## **HOUSING/ HOMELESSNESS SERVICES**

### **LASA Affordable Housing Project**

Living Access Support Alliance (LASA) is a nonprofit that provides emergency housing, rapid rehousing and transitional housing in Lakewood, in addition to case management, and a range of other services to prevent homelessness. LASA is planning to construct roughly 25 affordable low and lower-income housing units on their property in Lakewood. They are pursuing funding from city, county and state sources with an anticipated groundbreaking in 2024. Pierce County has committed \$3.5 million. The City has committed \$1 million in ARPA, \$1 million in HOME funds, and \$1.175 in HOME ARP funds, for a total \$3.175 million. In partnership with LASA, the City pursued federal funding in 2023 and \$1 million has been included in the appropriations process. The City is grateful for the \$500,000 included in the 2023-25 state capital budget.

### **South Sound Housing Affordability Partners**

The City is a founding member of the South Sound Affordable Housing Partners (SSHA<sup>3</sup>P), which is a regional effort by member municipalities to address affordable housing with a coordinated approach. The City supports SSHA<sup>3</sup>P's 2024 state legislative priorities on affordable housing:

- **Facilitating Development of Affordable Housing**
  - Support capital budget funding for member government priority projects
  - Expand funding opportunities to support homeownership development for low income households
  - Expand eligibility for the Connecting Housing to Infrastructure Program
  - Support funding for the acquisition of real property for affordable housing
  
- **Support Policy and Planning Efforts**
  - Support transit-oriented development and priority considerations
  - Support construction trade industry workforce development efforts
  
- **Information and Engagement**
  - Expand eligibility for the disabled veteran property tax exemption program

- Support:
  - Funding for municipal Planned Actions
  - Technical fixes and clarifications to recent land use and housing legislation
  - Legislation to provide Fair Housing Training for ownership associations
  - Funding for the Affordable Workforce Housing Accelerator pilot program
  - Funding to assist in the implementation of state required land use actions
  - Operating funding for service-supported housing
  
- Oppose:
  - Preemption of local land use authority
  - Legislation that would increase the cost to produce publicly funded affordable housing

### **Quality Affordable Housing**

The City supports legislation that incentivizes developers to build affordable housing, such as the multifamily housing tax exemption, and funding allocated for public and nonprofit affordable housing, including the Housing Trust Fund.

### **Support for Homelessness Services**

Every year since incorporation, the City has allocated 1% of its general fund to support low-income and vulnerable residents by partnering with and funding community-based organizations to provide access to: housing, food, youth programs, behavioral health services, and other human services. The City requests the state's partnership in supporting programs and services that help prevent temporary and recurrent homelessness.

### **Predatory Lending**

The City supports legislation to stop all predatory home lending practices and supports enforcement of state laws to ensure all home renting practices are in compliance with existing regulations.

### **Foreclosure of Homes**

The City supports legislation that assists local jurisdictions in managing

vacant, abandoned, and tax-delinquent properties. Without responsible management, these properties can cause problems throughout an entire community. The properties can become fire hazards, home to squatters, location of crime, and result in general decline in property values. In the upcoming session, the City also supports evaluating the effectiveness of legislation passed in this area.

## **COMMUNITY& ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Economic Development Tools**

The City supports robust and sustainable funding for the Economic Development Strategic Reserve Fund, Community Economic Revitalization Board, Public Works Assistance Account, Public Facility Districts, and other programs that assist local governments in neighborhood residential and commercial area rehabilitation.

The City also supports legislation that provides optional economic development tools for cities, such as the multi-family housing tax incentive, lodging tax, the Main Street Act (a series of small tax incentives for neighborhood business districts), creative 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 provision of urban services. The City supports legislation that would modify state annexation laws to reduce the administrative process and the overall cost of annexation, both of which would help encourage and incentivize the annexation of existing unincorporated islands.



## Middle Housing

The City supports local zoning authority and discretion for middle housing types and accessory dwelling units. Before the adoption of HB 1110 and HB 1337 in 2023, the City allowed middle housing types including duplexes, triplexes, ADUs and multifamily housing on 55% of the City's residential lots, and cottage housing was allowed wherever single family detached housing was allowed, or on 78% of the lots. The City had a variety of policy tools for supporting the development of middle housing types, such as the City's Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) program, a housing incentives regulatory code chapter, and inclusionary density bonuses for landowners interested in providing units for very low-income persons. Under HB 1110 and HB 1337, the City's programs and efforts at the local level to support middle housing development have been preempted by the State. The City opposes state legislation that dictates land use and zoning without consideration for unintended consequences such as displacement and gentrification.

- **Accessory Dwelling Units:** The City supports Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to augment Lakewood's affordable housing stock. ADUs are a viable, equitable, and increasingly popular affordable housing option. Before HB 1337 (2023) was adopted, Lakewood had ADU policies and development code requirements providing for the easier creation of more attached and detached ADUs associated with housing types, such as single-family homes and townhomes, found in multiple city zones (R1-R4, MR1 & MR2, etc.) These regulations and zoning decision will now have to be updated due to the preemption under HB 1337.

However, utility and side sewer connections to accommodate ADUs on current lots can be prohibitively expensive, especially for lower-income households. HB 1337's requirements to allow ADUs on historically single family lots will require not just construction of the building, but also connection to utilities that the City does not own nor plan infrastructure expansions

### **Transit Oriented Development**

The City supports legislation that provides continued authority and expanded tools to local governments to best plan for transit oriented development. The City adopted the 2021 Lakewood Station District Subarea Plan to prompt development near the Lakewood Sound Transit Station and took into consideration displacement risks and other unique factors such as proximity to a major military installation. The City is conducting updates to its Downtown, Station District, and Tillicum Subarea Plans in 2024, anticipating future transit service. The City opposes state mandates on TOD that do not address displacement and other local characteristics.

### **Boundary Review Board**

The City supports the elimination of Boundary Review Boards' (BRB) role in reviewing items that are governed by the GMA (RCW 36.70A) while authorizing counties to determine whether to retain their BRB to review non-GMA-governed issues (e.g., special purpose district expansions).

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

The City supports preserving the authority of local governments regarding local taxation, as well as land use planning, zoning and regulation consistent with the GMA (RCW 36.70A) and SEPA (RCW 43.21C.) and opposes preemption of local authority by the state legislature. For example, the City is concerned with the potential negative consequences of HB 1110 and HB 1337 at the local level. The City supports state level efforts to bolster military installations' sustainability and operational readiness and address land use compatibility issues, so long as local jurisdictional control over land use and infrastructure planning is not eroded.

### **Need for Unique Restrictions in Air Corridors**

The City believes that unique restrictions on land use density is necessary for land proximate to military installations. Such restrictions must be recognized within buildable lands reports, growth targets, and comprehensive planning. The North Clear Zone, Air Corridor 1 and Air Corridor 2 zones in Lakewood's case are zones that reflect the FAA and DoD guidance regarding safe densities and types of uses. Cities should not be forced to choose between GMA compliance and guidance from Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) and Air Installation Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) reports.

## **PARKS, RECREATION, & COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **Historic Fort Steilacoom**

The City requests that the State work with City and the Historic Fort Steilacoom Association to explore how to best preserve Historic Fort Steilacoom for future generations to use and enjoy. Historic Fort Steilacoom is one of the best preserved pre-civil war forts west of the Mississippi comprised of parade ground, two remaining junior officer's quarters, the headquarters building with the commanding officer's residence, and the post chapel and chaplain's quarters that presently serve as an interpretive center and offices. Currently, the fort is located on land and in buildings owned by DSHS and the facilities are in critical need of maintenance and repair. The City has begun a joint exploration with the state and the Historic Fort Steilacoom Association to determine how to best preserve this historic amenity in perpetuity. The City, with support of the Historic Fort Steilacoom Association, along with interest from DSHS, has begun to explore the process of assuming the historic buildings and land footprint, as well as determining how to best maintain the historic site moving forward. The final goal is to preserve the historic site, with possible site capital improvements funded by lodging tax dollars and state funding requests in the future.

### **H Barn Renovation at Fort Steilacoom Park**

The City has made major investments at Fort Steilacoom Park. As a continuation of these efforts and in coordination with the Partners for Parks and the Town of Steilacoom, the City is planning to restore the historic H Barn. A capital fundraising effort, led by Partners for Parks, is underway. The City anticipates seeking the state's financial support in the coming years to renovate and preserve this important historic structure.

### **South Puget Sound Wildlife Area**

The South Puget Sound Wildlife Area is a 100-acre open space area located in Lakewood. The site includes hiking and bike trails, picnic area with views of prairie habitat, native plant garden with information on indigenous plants, as well as an active fish hatchery and turtle ponds. This area is owned by the

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife but maintained by local volunteers. Over 2,000 volunteer hours and \$100,000 has been donated towards site improvements, by local service clubs and residents. The City requests that the state legislature ensure WDFW has appropriate funding for state funded maintenance at this site along with implementation of master plan capital site improvements.

### **State Funding**

The City supports programs administered by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) and opposes diversion from RCO programs. Specifically, the City supports ongoing funding for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP), Aquatic Land Enhancement Account (ALEA), and the Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) grant programs.

### **Camp Murray Boat Launch Improvements**

In 2020 the City and Camp Murray leadership evaluated the installation for potential annexation. After jointly completing the Camp Murray Annexation Analysis Report, Camp Murray leadership is not supportive of annexation because it would result in increased costs for Camp Murray. However, the City and Camp Murray are exploring options to make improvements at the Camp Murray Boat Launch for the benefit of the public. The City and Camp Murray have agreed to complete a Master Plan for the area, which would identify the options for improvements and allow Camp Murray input into the process. The boat launch provides public access to American Lake and is currently managed by the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW). The City could invest in infrastructure development to increase accessibility to American Lake. This may be accomplished through annexation of the boat launch property from Camp Murray or assuming the property lease from the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife.

## **TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Clover Creek Flood Plain**

The City completed an engineering report to generate and evaluate project alternatives to mitigate 100-year flood risk along Clover Creek within the City

limits. The City developed a flood model that was updated in 2019 for Clover Creek, which revealed a significant increase to the area impacted by floodwater when compared to the previous FEMA effective map of inundation for the 100-year event. The updated model suggests a significant portion of the City of Lakewood could be impacted by the floodwaters, including I-5. The flooding to I-5 could potentially result in significant new regulatory constraints placed on I-5 and would directly affect Joint Base Lewis-McChord mission readiness. The City began to explore flood mitigation alternatives to reduce these potential impacts to the City and I-5, and after collaborating with various state, local, and tribal agencies, four solutions were developed:

- 1) Do nothing
- 2) Stream and channel enhancements
- 3) Levee specific to I-5
- 4) Levee in general flooding area

The City has chosen to further explore Option 4, a levee in the general flooding area, as this option consists of a flood blocking structure along or setback from Clover Creek that would block nearly all flood water from the city and the I-5 corridor within city limits. This option provides the most comprehensive flood mitigation benefit. At an estimated cost of around \$20 million, the City will need outside resources, as well as continued collaboration with state agencies, such as WSDOT, to ensure Lakewood residents and the I-5 corridor are safe from this potentially devastating flood event.

### **City Right-of-Way**

There have been several proposals in the last few years that would limit city authority over right-of-way and utility franchise agreements. The City opposes legislation that preempts and erodes local control over city right-of-way.

### **I-5 South Sound Corridor Improvements**

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has indicated a preference to take a holistic approach to transportation improvements along the I-5 corridor. The City supports this position and WSDOT's efforts to ensure that future investments in the I-5 south sound corridor resolve, rather than shift traffic congestion points. Below are specific issues that require the Legislature's attention:

- 1) **I-5 JBLM Corridor Improvements:** The 2015 Connecting Washington package invested \$495 million to widen the I-5 corridor through Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), reconfigure three interchanges and build



a connector road from Gravelly Lake Drive to Thorne Lane. Construction of this Connector should prioritize road safety and mitigate impacts to neighbors. A primary goal of this investment was to eliminate the bottleneck at Thorne Road by expanding the corridor from three to four lanes. Although this work is still underway, the congestion at Thorne Lane is significantly reduced due to the additional lane and interchange reconfiguration. Future investments along the I-5 corridor, particularly expanding I-5 north of Thorne Lane from four to five lanes to accommodate HOV lanes, should consider the impact it would have on this and other congestion points.

- 2) I-5 High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes:** The City supports the I-5 Tacoma/Pierce County High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes Program and appreciates that the 2022 Move Ahead WA package allocated \$244 million to extend the program along I-5 between 38th and Gravelly Lake Drive. The City requests an extension of this program to include a dedicated HOV 5<sup>th</sup> lane (one each direction) from Tacoma to Mounts Road in DuPont which requires a reconfigured interchange at the Main Gate (Exit 120). If additional HOV lanes are not extended throughout the entire south sound corridor, the previous bottleneck that began at Thorne Lane will return, despite significant state investments to alleviate this congestion. The timing of this extension should align with the expansion of I-5 south of Mounts Road, to mitigate additional congestion at that chokepoint.
- 3) Main Gate Interchange (Exit 120):** As part of the current I-5 JBLM Corridor Improvements, WSDOT identified the Main Gate Interchange (Exit 120) reconfiguration as a necessary future improvement to expand I-5 from four to five lanes and address systemic congestion through the corridor. This Interchange serves as the primary access to Lewis Main on the east side of I-5 and to Lewis North on the west side. The proximity of the at-grade rail crossing to the Lewis North gate is a safety concern and creates backups on I-5 during peak periods. Reconfiguring the interchange to include a grade separated crossing would eliminate this risk for service members and Clover Park School District buses that use this at-grade crossing to access the installation.

4) **I-5 Mounts Road to Tumwater & Nisqually River Delta:** I-5 is the lifeline of commerce, transportation, and JBLM's mission readiness in the Puget Sound Region. However, the current design of I-5 impedes critical ecological functions of the Nisqually River Delta, is at risk of being overtopped by the Nisqually River resulting in national security concerns and is inadequate to meet the growing commerce and transportation demands of our state.

- The current I-5 design obstructs natural ecological functions of the Nisqually River Delta that are critical to **salmon survival**. The decrease in salmon population negatively impacts the Nisqually Indian Tribe's treaty rights and way of life. The environmental impacts of I-5 on the delta may compound into costly environmental remediation efforts in the future if left unaddressed.
- According to a US Geological Survey, there is a high risk that I-5 will be overtopped by a major flooding event in the next 15 years. This would be devastating locally and regionally and it would impact **national security** since 30% of the JBLM workforce live south of the Nisqually River and would be unable to report to duty.
- The current design of **I-5 has limited capacity** to handle the growing South Sound economy and population. Traffic models show lengthy delays through this corridor with no change to existing infrastructure.

Lakewood, in partnership with SSMCP and the Nisqually Indian Tribe, support a redesign of I-5 south of Mounts Road through the Nisqually River Delta to improve salmon survival, eliminate the flood risk and address congestion in the region. The \$75 million allocated to this project in the Move Ahead Washington package is an important step but more work will be needed.

## **Infrastructure Funding**

Local agencies, including the City of Lakewood, lack resources for infrastructure funding. As a result, city roads remain in disrepair or general fund dollars are taken from other important services to repair roads; or a combination thereof. The City requests expansion of state funding to assist with maintenance and preservation of local infrastructure. The City continues to support the state's ongoing and increased investment in infrastructure funding programs such as the Public Works Assistance Account.

## **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 within Lakewood or Joint Base Lewis-McChord. 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 increased freight traffic in addition to new passenger rail.

## **Future Commercial Airfields - JBLM**

The City opposes the use of Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) as a commercial airfield and as well as the identification of any location for a new commercial airfield, that would impede the operations of JBLM. In regards to considering JBLM as a potential site, there is strong opposition from the Lakewood congressional delegation, significant concerns raised by the military, high congestion issues, no transit service, and was rated "unlikely" by WSDOT and "unable to accommodate commercial air service" by the Puget Sound Regional Council. House Bill 1791 rebranded the Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission (CACC) to be the Commercial Aviation Work Group and calls for annual reports on siting progress rather than identification of a single location by date certain. The Governor's veto of four sections resulted in removal of the legislature's guidance to eliminate any site that would be incompatible with the operations of a military installation.

### **Stormwater & Culvert Funding**

Cities have significant stormwater and culvert funding needs. The City of Lakewood requests secure, ongoing and sufficient funding for city culvert repair and replacement. The City supports funding for current and new grant programs for local stormwater and culvert projects.

### **Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations**

The City supports both Federal and State legislation for strategically implementing electric vehicle charging stations. The City requests that as EV charging station programs begin implementation, that regional and state public entities, such as Pierce Transit, Sound Transit, WSDOT and relevant utility companies, lead the implementation effort through both funding and administration

## **FINANCES**

### **Insurance Costs**

Recent legislation and subsequent court decisions have increased the legal liability of public entities, resulting in higher rates for liability coverage. The City's liability rates increased by 37% from 2022 to 2023 and by another 41.2% from 2023 to 2024. The City joins AWC in requesting that the Legislature protect against liability expansion and new policies that would drive additional claims and litigation increasing costs, especially in the area of law enforcement and public safety, and human resources.

### **State-Shared Revenues**

Cities rely on state-shared revenues to provide critical funding for essential public services. The City request continued appropriation of committed state shared funds, such as Liquor Excise Taxes and Profits, City-County Assistance Account, Municipal Criminal Justice Account, Annexation Sales Tax Credit, and public health funding. These funds are used to support city activities, including police, infrastructure development, public defenders, municipal court, etc. In total, state-shared revenues constitute a significant portion of the City's operating revenue at around 6% eachbiennium.

### **General Fund Revenue**

The City supports legislation that will increase, expand, or favorably restructure its revenue-raising ability. In consideration of 1) the continued growth in demand for services that exceed revenue growth and inflation, and 2) intimate knowledge of individual community needs, the City supports unrestricted uses of all general government tax revenue. For example, restrictions on the use of real estate excise tax (REET), gambling taxes, etc.

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

Indigent defense is a constitutional right that should be funded by the state. From 2012-21 county costs grew by more than 65%, from \$105M to \$174M. State funding during that same period grew only by 5.4%. Since 2018, the City



has paid on average \$483,000 per year toward indigent defense, with a budgeted amount exceeding half a million dollars in coming years. This compensation has been trending upwards in recent years due to economic pressures, such as pandemic impacts and historic inflation. The City supports state funding for indigent defense that is standardized and non-competitive in order to ensure more equitable funding and uniform application of justice.

### **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.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **Public Safety**

The City supports a commonsense and meaningful approach to public safety policies that protect lives and property and foster trust in government. During the 2023 session, progress was made in this area but there is still more work to be done. In collaboration with other Pierce County municipalities, the City requests the Legislature:

- 1) Provide tools to address auto theft and property crime, including increased state funding to grant programs to support regional enforcement and prosecution efforts;
- 2) Make refinements to the restrictions on vehicular pursuits to curb motor vehicle thefts;
- 3) Commit ongoing state funding for therapeutic courts to satisfy the new state drug possession law;
- 4) Supply stable state funding for co-responder programs, such as the City's Behavioral Health Contact Team; and
- 5) Amend state law to allow for a parent or guardian to provide consent for a juvenile to be interviewed by law enforcement to include consent to search property to resolve unsolved crimes and prevent future incidents.

## **Blake Response**

The City is grateful the state has provided funding to help offset city costs created by the Blake Decision on how possession of controlled substances is handled by the criminal justice system. City costs include processing criminal conviction vacations and repaying legal financial obligations as well as support for ongoing costs for diversion programs and municipal court impacts. The City requests long-term state investment in alternative response teams, treatment facilities for adults and juveniles, treatment in jails, and to provide support to social workers, treatment providers and system navigators to help direct people to treatment.

## **Hiring and Retention**

Public safety agencies nationwide are experiencing officers leaving the profession at an unprecedented rate, either through early retirement or leaving the field. The City supports state policies including funding to local law enforcement agencies that promote recruitment and retention of law enforcement officers and expedite opportunities for newly hired officers to receive training.

## **Vehicular Pursuits**

The City thanks the legislature for making progress on clarifying the ability for law enforcement to conduct vehicular pursuits for the benefit of public safety. Since the probable cause threshold was established in 2021, there have been several occasions where the high standard prevented pursuit of a vehicle, jeopardizing public safety. The City will continue to support safety measures and training for officers who engage in vehicular pursuits as well as further refinements to the state's vehicular pursuit law, to include making additional crimes eligible for police pursuits including stolen vehicles.

## **Juvenile Crime**

Compared to the five-year average (2017-2022), in the first half of 2023, juvenile robbery in Lakewood is up 400%, motor vehicle theft is up 500% and assaults are up 45%. For all crimes, known juvenile suspects have increased 67%. The City requests the state amend state law to allow for a parent or guardian to provide consent for a juvenile to be interviewed by law enforcement to include consent to search property to resolve unsolved crimes and prevent future incidents.

Youth education is also critical component to ensuring criminal behavior is addressed at a young age to prevent the uptick in youth crime experienced by the Lakewood community. The City supports educational efforts to teach youth about the consequences of criminal behavior. Youth education that prevents criminal activity upstream should also include intervention of at-risk youth and their families by connections to social services at an early age, such as Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department's Family Support Partnership. The City supports any state funding that would support youth education about social services, such as the County's Family Support Partnership.

By both educating at-risk youth and their families about social services, and about the consequences of criminal activity early on, the City hopes that youth criminal activity will be curtailed.

### **Geographic Equity in Discharge from State Facilities**

The City appreciates the State's recent efforts to move toward a more community-based behavioral health system. This transition presents an opportunity to not only provide more accessible services to those who need it most, but also for the facilities to be more geographically disbursed. Based on the findings from the Commerce report, the State should invest in long term care facilities in underserved regions of the state.

The City requests the following changes be made to state law:

- 1) Per the findings from the April 2023 Commerce Report, the state needs to procure additional services and supports in Olympic, North Central, Great Rivers, Greater Columbia, and King regions. The report also shows that adult family homes in Pierce County are serving a large percentage of Long-Term Civil Commitment (LTCC) patients. Incentivize providers, particularly adult family homes, to provide services in underserved areas.
- 2) Institute fair share policies for discharge planning from state hospitals for individuals that have a history of one or more violent acts (extend SB 5163 (2021) policies, that only apply to the Special Commitment Center, to state hospitals).

### **Protecting Residents of Adult Family Homes**

Adult Family Homes (AFHs) serve adults with functional limitations who need personal and special care. The City requests legislation that protects these

vulnerable members of our community by preventing Level 2 and 3 registered sex offenders, sexually violent predators and “felony flips” from residing in AFHs. The City supports amending the definition of “resident” in RCW 70.128.010 to exclude individuals convicted of sexually violent crimes and crimes that require registration as a sex offender.

### **Body Worn Cameras**

In the 2023 budget the state legislature allocated \$1.6 million for the body camera grant program administered by the WA Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC). The City supports ongoing funding for this program to assist municipalities with the purchase, maintenance or replacement of Body Worn Cameras (BWC), ongoing costs related to record management, and hiring of personnel to operate the BWC program.

### **Binding Interest Arbitration Reform**

The City recognizes the importance of having a tool to help resolve potentially devastating strikes by essential service personnel, such as police and firefighters. However, existing binding interest arbitration statutes are out-of-date and inflexible, resulting in many unintended consequences – the City finds this particularly true in regard to disciplinary processes. The City requests that the state reform existing binding interest arbitration language to limit unintended repercussions.

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

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

### **Traffic Enforcement Cameras**

The state legislature has authorized local government to use traffic enforcement cameras in limited situations, including red light enforcement at certain intersections and speed control in certain zones. Traffic enforcement cameras have proven to be successful at reducing instances of speeding and violations 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 when there is probable cause.

### **Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA)**

The City supports ongoing funding of the Basic Law Enforcement Academy which is the sole training program for police departments statewide. With an increasing number of law enforcement officers retiring, it is imperative this program receive adequate funding to provide ample training openings for new hires in a timely manner. The City supports adequate and ongoing funding for the recently established regional Criminal Justice Training Commission campuses which will help address the backlog of training slots at the Academy and ease of access to more agencies. The City also supports the discretion of CJTC to hold academy seats based on number of anticipated officer hires, as currently, academy seats are not held until a potential hire name has been provided, which can further delay the hiring process.

### **Jail and Court Costs**

The City supports legislative proposals that reduce jail and court costs, and maintain its 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. The City will monitor all legislation that impacts the City's ability to contract with government agencies.

### **State Hospital Reentry Program**

The City supports language that would expand the reentry community safety program. The current program is designed for individuals being released from a correctional facility. The City supports expanding the program to apply to patients who are civilly committed after prosecution for a violent offense or who are civilly committed based on criminal insanity.

### **Enhanced Services Facilities**

Enhanced Services Facilities (ESFs) serve adults with mental and chemical disorders or other impairments that require supervision and daily care. The City supports legislation that would prohibit Adult Family Home businesses (AFHs) from converting to ESFs, as well as legislation that would prohibit the locating of ESFs in residential neighborhoods.



### **Acute and Long-Term Care Facilities**

The City supports the implementation of the Trueblood Settlement Agreement and state funding for the construction and ongoing operation of acute and long-term care facilities equitably dispersed in communities throughout the state.

### **Civil Asset Forfeiture**

Civil asset forfeiture allows law enforcement agencies to take possession of property when the property itself is illegal, was used to facilitate a crime, is proceeds from a crime, or was purchased with proceeds traceable to criminal activity. The City views civil asset forfeiture as a valuable tool, and will closely monitor legislation and oppose provisions that add restrictions on law enforcement's use of civil asset forfeiture.

### **Consolidate Traffic-Based Financial Obligations**

The City supports legislative proposals that would authorize the Administrative Office of the Courts to establish a unified payment plan system for the consolidation of multiple traffic-based financial obligations. This solution allows defendants to bring multiple outstanding obligations into the new payment plan for ongoing servicing with a single point of contact, reduces the volume of driver's license suspension for failure to respond or pay, fewer DWLS-3 prosecutions, and improved collection rates.

## **GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

### **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.

## **MILITARY AFFAIRS**

### **Defense Community Compatibility Account - North Clear Zone Funding**

The DCCA is a grant program that supports necessary infrastructure and compatible land use near Washington military installations. The DCCA is the most viable long-term option to secure the required state/local match to resolve the incompatible development in the McChord North Clear Zone. The City supports the state's ongoing investment in the DCCA via the biennial capital budget.

### **Statewide Coordination for Federal Military Affairs**

Washington is the 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation for the number of active-duty military and has five major military installations yet there is no statewide coordination of federal military affairs. The City supports the creation of a cabinet level position within the Governor's office to coordinate federal military affairs.

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

The City of Lakewood is a strong partner with Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) and a founding member of the South Sound Military & Communities Partnership (SSMCP), a nationally recognized organization that gives unique voice to a range of issues affecting Pierce and Thurston Counties and their cities as well as JBLM, the largest military installation in Washington State. JBLM is a regional employment hub and a major statewide economic driver. The City supports the ongoing efforts of SSMCP and supports policy and financial decisions that assist JBLM's operational readiness and sustainability.

The City also believes in strong policy and financial commitments from the State in support of statewide military affairs while preserving local governments' and regional coordinating organizations' flexibility and authority to maintain communications and relationships with area installations. Lakewood supports establishing a Military Advisory Council to advise the Governor and Legislature; providing financial support of regional military-community partnerships such as Forward Fairchild, Puget Sound Naval Bases Association and SSMCP; and strengthening financial, legislative and political support for 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.

The City supports SSMCP's 2024 Legislative Priorities:

**1) Military Family Quality of Life**

One of the greatest challenges facing military families in the South Sound are access to housing, childcare and spousal employment. SSMCP is working regionally to remove barriers to these necessities and supports state level action through 1) incentives, 2) increased investment and/or 3) reduction in administrative burdens that drive up costs.

**2) Military/Defense Sector Statewide Economic Impact Analysis**

SSMCP is grateful the Legislature has directed the Legislative Committee on Economic Development and International Relations (LCEDIR) to conduct a statewide analysis on the military/defense sector's impact. SSMCP has coordinated two regional economic impact analyses over the last several years and is working closely with the Lieutenant Governor's office to support this statewide study. The report is due to the Legislature in September 2024. SSMCP requests the report be used to inform future regional and statewide policy decisions.

**3) Defense Community Compatibility Account (DCCA)**

The 2023-25 Capital Budget invests \$35.8 million in defense community compatibility projects throughout the state. This investment leverages over \$126 million in local and federal funds. SSMCP requests the Legislature prioritize ongoing investment in the grant program that supports civilian communities near military installations. For the Sound Sound, biennial investment is critical to helping resolve encroachment in the McChord Airfield North Clear Zone which has a commitment of up to \$80 million from the federal government but requires a state match.

**4) I-5 Mounts Road to Tumwater & Nisqually River Delta**

SSMCP appreciates the Legislature's commitment of \$75 million over the next 6 years to address the challenges along I-5 from Mounts Road to Tumwater and through the Nisqually River Delta. The current design of I-5 restricts critical ecological functions impacting salmon survival, is at a high risk of being overtopped by a major flooding event and has limited capacity to handle the growing South Sound economy and population - a key component to national security since 30% of the JBLM workforce live south of the Nisqually River. Additional state or federal or state funds are required to finalize engineering work. This includes \$1.5

million for preliminary engineering of part time shoulder use on southbound I-5 between Sleater-Kinney and Henderson Boulevard. This practical solutions approach would improve the transportation outcomes of the initial investment the state has made in the Nisqually River delta.

### **American Lake Veterans Golf Course Tax Exemption**

The American Lake Veterans Golf Course (ALVGC) has always been a United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) golf course. In 2017, the VA decided to have the golf course run by Friends of American Lake Veterans Golf Course (Friends), a nonprofit, and it is unclear whether Friends will have to pay sales tax and business and occupation tax. The City supports legislation that clarifies that the ALVGC is not subject to sales tax or business and occupation tax.