

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION**2023 State Legislative Agenda**

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City Manager's Office

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL**ACTION**

Staff is asking Council to consider the draft 2023 State Legislative Agenda and adopt the agenda at this meeting or a subsequent meeting, in advance of the next session of the Washington State Legislature, which begins in January.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council consider, discuss, and adopt a State Legislative Agenda in advance of the next legislative session. Adoption of the agenda allows staff and other City officials to clearly articulate the City's 2023 legislative priorities to state lawmakers, state agencies, peer jurisdictions, and community and other stakeholders.

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS**Preview of the 2023 Regular Session**

The 2023 Regular Session of the Washington State Legislature will begin on January 9 and will last for 105 days. The upcoming session will be a "long session," where the legislature will craft the three biennial budgets: operating, capital, and transportation.

Governor Jay Inslee will develop his budget proposals informed by the next quarterly revenue forecast, which is scheduled for November 18. The governor will submit his 2023-25 budget proposals to the Legislature in later December. The Legislature will hold public hearings on his budget proposals during the early weeks of the legislative session as part of their budget process.

The long session also provides lawmakers with more time to delve into policy matters, often a difficult task in the shorter 60-day sessions. Democrats will retain the majorities in both the House and Senate, given the general election results. There will certainly be changes in committee chair positions and in committee assignments, as well as leadership posts –this applies to all four caucuses.

Looking ahead to the session, Bellevue has developed a draft 2023 State Legislative Agenda that will help staff and officials articulate the needs and positions of the City with state lawmakers and others. The agenda document has two sections: Highest Priority Issues and a State Policy Statement.

Highest Priority Issues

The agenda's Highest Priority Issues section highlights the items of utmost importance to the City of Bellevue in the upcoming state legislative session. These items are primarily either exclusively or largely Bellevue-led and Bellevue-focused and focused on the areas of greatest value at this time. In the 2023 session, those priority issues are:

- Affordable Housing and Land Use
- Transportation
- Services and Infrastructure for a Growing Community

State Policy Statement

The agenda's State Policy Statement covers a broad set of issues and gives the City the flexibility and charge to weigh in on a host of issues, funds, and bills that may arise during the legislative session.

Many of the items captured in this section are led by other parties or coalitions, and Bellevue intends to weigh in as necessary and strategic to advocate for the City's interests, direct or indirect.

In the 2023 session, those issue categories are:

- Homelessness and Human Services
- Climate and the Environment
- Fiscal Sustainability, Financing Tools, and General Government
- Equity and Social Justice
- Public Safety
- Transportation
- Public Works and Infrastructure
- Economic Development and Workforce
- AWC Legislative Priorities
- Implementing Bellevue's Vision and Priorities

Adopted AWC Legislative Priorities

Bellevue participates with the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) year-round, both at the elected official level and at the staff level. Bellevue weighed in on the association's legislative priority development process this year, and the AWC Board of Directors adopted their 2023 legislative priorities last month. Each of these issues is touched upon in the City's Draft 2023 State Legislative Agenda.

The 2023 AWC legislative priorities are:

- Respond to the Blake decision
- Address vehicle pursuits for public safety
- Ensure basic infrastructure funding
- Increase housing availability & affordability
- Provide behavioral health resources

Timeline and Next Steps

After Council has considered and adopted a legislative agenda, staff will take several steps to help maximize its utility, some of which are already in early stages. Those next steps include:

- Schedule meetings with each of our 41st and 48th District lawmakers to brief them on the agenda
- Further refine and flesh out the highest priority issues, including identifying supporters and opportunities
- Develop a set of marketing materials for lawmakers and staff as compelling educational pieces

- Attend committee assembly in Olympia on December 1-2, where Bellevue will both present to committees and collaborate with colleagues
- Talk with other cities and additional partners about developing legislation and budget items
- Plan out key dates in the upcoming session and when Bellevue will plan to be on the ground

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

An adopted state legislative agenda is an important messaging document for the City, encapsulating the most important state-level policy positions for Bellevue in 2023. The work of the Washington State Legislature will have myriad impacts on the City, and it is important that the City weigh in appropriately on bills throughout the course of the session.

Fiscal Impact

The budget developed at the state level are of critical importance to the City, as many important programs either directly within the City's scope or of benefit to or impact upon our residents, employees, businesses, and visitors. The legislature's ability to impact or modify authorized City revenue tools and revenue streams is also of direct and essential interest to Bellevue.

OPTIONS

1. Adopt the State Legislative Agenda as proposed.
2. Adopt the State Legislative Agenda with amendments.
3. Do not adopt and provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Draft 2023 State Legislative Agenda

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N/A