

CITY OF RICHLAND

2022 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



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The following items are the top priority legislative objectives of the City of Richland.

General Principles

Richland supports legislation that promotes the City Council's Strategic Leadership Plan and protects the City's ability to provide basic municipal services to its citizens.

Richland opposes legislation that would either preempt authority or discretion that is vested with local governments, or which would impose new or additional unfunded mandates upon local jurisdictions.

Richland seeks to work with the Legislature to strengthen the state and local government partnership and protect current revenue sources available to the City, provide new revenue options, and provide flexibility in the use of existing revenues.

Public Works Assistance Account

The City requests that the legislature support full funding of the Public Works Assistance Account loan program.

Transportation

The City is leading a regional effort to acquire an investment in SR240 to reduce existing congestion, support economic growth, and improve safety for all users. The investment should include the SR240 – Aaron Drive Flyover Interchange Improvements, estimated to cost \$30 million.

The second requested improvement is the regional Island View to Vista Field Pedestrian Crossing at SR 240, estimated to cost \$16 million.

Richland, along with many other impacted local governments, seeks action by the legislature to adopt a new transportation revenue package.

Economic Development

The City of Richland supports the extension of the .09 percent Sales and Use Tax for public facilities and economic development activities in rural counties. This tool helps build critical infrastructure, attract new industry, diversify economies, and create and retain jobs.

Public Safety

In 2021, the Legislature enacted several reforms related to law enforcement. Certain aspects of these changes are unclear and require resolution. To be effective, city officials and law enforcement personnel need clarity and understanding of what is expected of them.

Richland supports the Association of Washington Cities in seeking clarification that law enforcement officers have the authority to: use nonlethal alternatives, conduct brief investigative holds, use force for noncriminal activity related to community caretaking, and assist with transporting a person under the Involuntary Treatment Act.

Richland continues to support additional funding for the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) to ensure law enforcement officers have timely access to basic and continuing training.

Bateman Island Causeway

The City seeks to ensure adequate funding to address offsite impacts of any State sponsored project to improve the water quality in the mouth of the Yakima River.

Bateman Island is located at the mouth of the Yakima River at its confluence with the Columbia River. The Island is owned by the United States Army Corps of Engineers and leased by the City of Richland for recreational purposes.

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources owns a narrow strip of land providing the only access to the island known as the Bateman Island Causeway.

A private environmental organization commissioned a study that identifies poor water quality conditions in the mouth of the Yakima River because of the Causeway. The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife is now the project sponsor to evaluate solutions to improve the water quality.

A coalition of Tribes, federal and state agencies, local property owners and private stakeholders has been formed to work together to develop a mutually beneficial solution. The United States Department of the Army Corps of Engineers has approved the project as part of their I135 program and has begun the public participation and project scoping phase of the project. The state is expecting this project to be funded and constructed in the 23-25 biennium.