

The City of Seattle is committed to being a safe, vibrant, interconnected, and affordable city for all. To achieve these goals, Seattle has identified the following priorities for the 2017 legislative session:

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

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 gender equity and family-friendly workplace policies, such as paycheck fairness, paid family leave and affordable childcare, so that all people regardless of gender thrive economically, 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, to adopt tax measures that promote or expand public safety issues, and oppose preemption of local regulations related to protecting tenants and achieving housing affordability.

We support strong civil rights protections for all and efforts to protect the rights, programs, and services provided to immigrants and refugees. In addition, we support policies and programs that remove barriers and create opportunities for greater civic engagement, including voting rights and public safety employment, and that assess for impacts on racial and gender equity.

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

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. Further, the City supports efforts to explore alternatives to incarceration and evidence-based programs that emphasize early intervention. The City also supports abolishing the death penalty and pursuing safe and just alternatives.

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 additional funding to ensure that there are sufficient facilities to care for individuals in need of mental health evaluations and services, and funding for the recruitment and retention of high quality mental health care providers.

We support legislation that clarifies and strengthens state DUI laws, including clarifying the law regarding physical control of a motor vehicle under the influence, strengthening laws regarding drug related DUIs, and clarifying elements of lane-weaving violations. We also support

clarifying DNA sample collection laws to allow for samples collected from a defendant convicted of a similar crime under a local ordinance to be included in the state DNA database. Seattle supports legislation to clarify that a crime can be tried under a local ordinance if it matches state law.

The City of Seattle supports efforts to reduce domestic violence and protect our most vulnerable citizens from abuse. We support vacating convictions of those victimized by prostitution and sex trafficking. The City supports legal and regulatory efforts to protect victims of human trafficking and close businesses that profit from this crime. We also support strengthening criminal consequences for sexual exploitation.

The City supports 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) detainees unless they are supported by a federal judicial criminal warrant. We support the state setting a clear statewide standard for these restrictions.

We support legislation to enable law enforcement agencies to build departments more reflective of the communities they protect by extending employment opportunities to legally permanent residents. We also support providing adequate resources to programs that provide law enforcement officers with the critical training to help them respond to a wide range of issues. The City supports legislation that clarifies who pays the insurance premiums for inmates participating in the Department of Corrections offender work program. We support increasing the juror expense payment cap to support a more diverse juror pool. Finally, the City supports the efforts to review and amend state law regarding the use of deadly force by police officers.

We support legislation to remove barriers of entry for marijuana delivery services that will help reduce the impact of marijuana retailers on neighborhoods. In addition, we support clarifying marijuana penalty provisions that prohibit the small, non-commercial transfers of marijuana. We support harmonizing laws prohibiting underage marijuana use with laws prohibiting underage alcohol use. We support giving local jurisdictions authority to establish marijuana vaping lounges. We support vacating misdemeanor convictions for possession of marijuana for those over 21 years of age when the conviction occurred.

The City supports legislation to remove barriers placed upon opioid treatment programs and clinics and to facilitate the establishment of community health engagement locations. We also support additional funding to support and enhance chemical abuse and dependency treatment services.

We support the continued use of automated traffic safety cameras and other devices that improve safety and efficiency of our transportation system. 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.

Seattle supports amending the “Hold Harmless Law” to include protections for Seattle Department of Transportation representatives when clearing a motor vehicle, cargo, or debris from the roadway; “Hold Harmless” protections have been granted to officers of the Seattle Police Department.

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

We support funding for WIN 211, which helps the public access important information and government programs and services after disasters. We also support funding for research that assesses geological hazards and informs the public of their potential impacts on the region.

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. In addition, any funding solution that the legislature adopts should not create winners and losers between the state’s school districts. Seattle supports simplifying the requirements for individuals to become teachers in designated critical shortage areas.

We support increasing school construction capacity and providing flexibility to school districts so they may use capital construction funding to secure long-term leases to ensure we have the proper facilities to educate future generations. In addition, we support providing school districts with adequate access to on-site child care providers.

We support programs providing support to students, including support for mental and physical health, and access to healthy food choices 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 and Washington State’s investment in the Early Start Act during the 2015 legislative session, we support additional coordination and funding from the state and federal governments to continue to move closer toward preschool for all. We support expanding capacity and infrastructure for dual language instruction from early learning to K-12.

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 also support the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

In 2016, the City worked to standardize and disaggregate demographic data into racial subgroups to more accurately ensure equity in policy outcomes, and we support a parallel effort at the state level.

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, arts and culture, maritime, 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 and historical institutions. We support the expansion of the leasehold excise tax exemption to include facilities/venues that are publicly operated. 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 Improvement 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, and efforts aimed at increasing the participation of women and minority owned businesses (WMBE) in state and local contracting.

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

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, and cap-and-trade. Seattle supports measures which clarify the role public utilities have in relation to the electrification of the transportation system. We believe utilities have a role to play in reducing the greenhouse gases in the transportation system.

Seattle supports the extension of the solar production incentives and an increase in the per-utility tax credit cap so Seattle City Light can continue to offer the state incentives to their customers and support the green-collar jobs in the solar installer sector. The City supports efforts to consider how to better align the Energy Independence Act with actions to address climate change to comply with US EPA greenhouse gas reduction requirements. We look forward to working with the Governor 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’s 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 fully funding the Model Toxics Control Act and using the funds for their statutory purpose. The City supports efforts to clarify the Hydraulic Code and the permit process through the Hydraulic Project Approvals.

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 and composting. We support product stewardship for surplus pharmaceuticals, batteries, carpet, paint, solar arrays, and additions to the products covered by E-Cycle Washington. We also support legislation that will reduce or eliminate products that can be harmful to our residents, infrastructure and waterways.

Seattle supports local authority to impose impact fees related to development for public safety, affordable housing, transit, and other necessary facilities and services, 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.

The City of Seattle supports designating local broadcasters as “first informers” with all the rights and responsibilities that entails. Additionally, we support legislation giving local broadcasters special access to public emergencies, so that real time information in times of crisis (e.g. earthquake, wildfire, and extreme weather), can be provided consistent with FCC broadcast license responsibilities.

We support financial policies that consider externalized costs to our residents, environment, and value social justice. We support local options to hold public depositories in credit unions and support the repeal of RCW 39.58.240, which restricts public depositories in credit unions but not in commercial banks.

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; and meet both the City’s and the State’s greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets. Seattle supports modifying local options that could be used to significantly improve pedestrian safety and help

expand transit, including light rail. Seattle supports regional tolling as one possible option to meet the needs and demands of aging infrastructure.

In addition, Seattle supports modifying the City's parking tax authority to allow for more equitable application of the tax.

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

We support efforts to ensure a safe and modern rail and maritime infrastructure, which includes protecting citizens from the hazards posed by oil and coal shipments through our rail corridor and our waterways.

We support continued efforts to clarify and strengthen regulations of disabled parking placards and plates in order to cut down on fraud and ensure that necessary parking is available for those with need.

Seattle supports local control over regulations concerning the shared economy. 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, like many other cities across the country, is facing a homelessness crisis. We support additional tools and funding to address the homeless crisis and protect our most vulnerable populations. Seattle's needs outweigh current capacity and our goal is to make life better, safer, and healthier for seniors, families, and unsheltered individuals.

The City of Seattle will work to protect funding for affordable housing, human services, public health, and other critical programs. We recognize that public health is an essential service and support additional funding for core services to allow public health to rebuild its statewide system. We support raising new state revenue and increased flexibility for local tools, such as the expansion of the real estate excise tax and a local property tax exemption to help preserve affordable housing, prevent displacement of lower income residents, and expand essential human services.

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 ensure quality of care, we support fully funding caseload ratios and staffing levels for Medicaid case management, increasing reimbursement rates, and the Medicaid benefit for services provided in permanent supportive housing.

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 the repeal or modification of RCW 35.21.830, to allow local governments to protect tenants from rent increases, without causing a negative impact on the quality or quantity of housing supply. Seattle supports 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 make homelessness rare, brief and one-time, and support utilizing health care reform opportunities to prevent and end homelessness.

As the federal government implements changes to the way they allocate funds for homeless programs from a formulaic to competitive process, we support modifications in state law that will provide us with the tools we need to better compete for federal funds.

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.