

2026 State Legislative Agenda & Session Preview

Mina Hashemi, Office of Intergovernmental Relations Director

Anna Johnson, State Legislative Affairs Director

Samir Junejo, State Relations Director



Preview

- December 9th - Council vote on Legislative Agenda Resolution
- OIR is engaging with legislators, finding sponsors, and working with other stakeholders
- November Election Results - All House and Senate members retained their seats
 - Rep. Salahuddin (48th LD), Rep. Zahn (48th LD), Rep. Obras (33rd LD), Sen. Slatter (48th LD), Sen. Krishnadasan (26th LD), Sen. Hunt (5th LD), & Rep. Hall (5th LD) appointed
 - Senate | 29 Democrats – 20 Republicans
 - House | 58 Democrats – 40 Republicans
- Pre-filing of legislation begins December 1st
- December 4th & 5th - Legislative Committee Days
- Governor Ferguson's first complete budget released in December
- 60-day short session, drafting supplemental budgets



Hot Topics

- November revenue forecast and budget shortfall
 - 2025–27 Near General Fund: Now projected at \$74.45 billion, an increase of roughly \$105 million.
 - 2027–29 Near General Fund: Now projected at \$79.35 billion, about \$185 million lower than the September estimate.
 - Legislators are already signaling that these challenges could translate into a roughly **\$7 billion shortfall across the four-year outlook.**
- Rising caseloads
 - Agencies expect higher enrollment and service demand for Medicaid, food assistance, and long-term care than previously planned, driving up projected costs.
- Federal pressure
 - Federal actions are compounding state-level challenges. Newly announced tariffs on lumber, furniture, and heavy-duty vehicles are expected to create tariff-driven inflation, becoming more noticeable in 2026. Legislators may face additional pressure from advocates to backfill potential federal reductions to Medicaid, SNAP, and other safety-net programs under H.R. 1.



Legislative Process & Deadlines

- January 12 – First Day of Session
- February 4 – Policy Cut Off
- February 9 – Fiscal Cut Off
- February 17 – House of Origin Cut Off
- February 25 – Opposite Chamber Policy Cut Off
- March 2 – Opposite Chamber Fiscal Cut Off
- March 6 – Opposite Chamber Floor Cut Off
- March 12 – Sine Die



Seattle's Legislative Agenda





2026 State Legislative Agenda

The City of Seattle has identified the following priorities for the 2026 legislative session:

Federal Response

- Prohibit law enforcement and federal enforcement agencies from wearing face coverings and require that officers be clearly identifiable while performing their duties.
- Add protections and benefits for immigrant workers, including notice to employees of interactions with immigration officials and job and wage stability for detained workers.
- Mitigate losses of federal funding for essential services including food access, housing and shelter, Medicaid, and immigrant services.
- Provide state support for the Seattle-King County Public Health Clinic to ensure access to essential health services for uninsured and immigrant communities.
- Maintain funding for asylum and migrant support services.

Affordability

- Advance policies, including B&O tax exemptions, that expand equitable access to groceries and medicine.
- Maintain and strengthen state investments in Working Connections Child Care and ECEAP to ensure access and affordable to high-quality early learning opportunities.
- Support revenue options that help safeguard access to essential services.

Housing & Homelessness

- Invest in service intensive shelter capacity for those diverted from the public safety system.
- Support operations, maintenance, and services and stabilization for a range of affordable housing options, including permanent supportive housing and workforce housing.
- Provide funding, and additional flexibility for current funding tools, to address homelessness.
- Restore full funding for the state Encampment Resolution Program.

Public Safety

- Champion legislation that fosters a safer environment for everyone by giving local jurisdictions tools and funding to uphold justice, protect communities, and ensure accountability.
- Allow local jurisdictions to restrict firearms in city buildings, parks, and community centers and require secure storage for firearms in vehicles and residences.
- Support policies that encourage diversified 911 response and allow civilian alternative response to appropriate crisis and welfare calls for service.
- Address the State Patrol's toxicology lab backlog and allow for federally accredited labs to conduct testing of blood samples in presumed DUI cases.
- Increase funding to help local governments hire more police officers and reinstate the state's coverage of the 25% local costs to send officers to the Basic Law Enforcement Academy.
- Provide funding for organizations and programs that support survivors and victims of crime.
- Improve the reasonable use of involuntary treatment by increasing system capacity and making the Involuntary Treatment Act a more effective and useful tool for first responders.

Capital Budget

- Provide funding for shovel-ready improvements at Red Barn Ranch to enable youth programming and regional outdoor learning access.
- Foster a strong regional green economy by securing funding for a demonstration project at Seattle Center that will help lead to a fully decarbonized eco-district.
- Authorize transfer of WSDOT's Montlake surplus property to the City for the purpose of affordable homeownership development.

Transportation

- Provide Sound Transit with expanded authority and financing options to maintain project timelines and deliver voter-approved light rail extensions.
- Fund city and county efforts to mitigate Revive I-5 construction project impacts.
- Provide local governments authority to remove vehicle obstructions from streetcar tracks to ensure reliable and efficient public transit operations.

Samir Junejo, State Relations Director, samir.junejo@seattle.gov

Anna Johnson, State Legislative Affairs Director, anna.johnson@seattle.gov

www.seattle.gov/intergovernmental-relations



Federal Response

- Prohibit law enforcement and federal enforcement agencies from wearing face coverings and require that officers be clearly identifiable while performing their duties.
- Add protections and benefits for immigrant workers, including notice to employees of interactions with immigration officials and job and wage stability for detained workers.
- Mitigate losses of federal funding for essential services including food access, housing and shelter, Medicaid, and immigrant services.
- Provide state support for the Seattle–King County Public Health Clinic to ensure access to essential health services for uninsured and immigrant communities.
- Maintain funding for asylum and migrant support services.



Affordability

- Advance policies, including B&O tax exemptions, that expand equitable access to groceries and medicine.
- Maintain and strengthen state investments in Working Connections Child Care and ECEAP to ensure access to affordable, high-quality early learning opportunities.
- Support revenue options that help safeguard access to essential services.

Housing & Homelessness

- Invest in service-intensive shelter capacity for those diverted from the public safety system.
- Support operations, maintenance, services, and stabilization for a range of affordable housing options, including permanent supportive housing and workforce housing.
- Provide funding and additional flexibility for current funding tools, to address homelessness.
- Restore full funding for the state Encampment Resolution Program.

Public Safety

- Champion legislation that fosters a safer environment for everyone by giving local jurisdictions tools and funding to uphold justice, protect communities, and ensure accountability.
- Allow local jurisdictions to restrict firearms in city buildings, parks, and community centers, and require secure storage for firearms in vehicles and residences.
- Support policies that encourage diversified 911 response and allow civilian alternative response to appropriate crisis and welfare calls for service.
- Address the State Patrol's toxicology lab backlog and allow for federally accredited labs to conduct testing of blood samples in presumed DUI cases.
- Increase funding to help local governments hire more police officers and reinstate the state's coverage of the 25% local costs to send officers to the Basic Law Enforcement Academy.
- Provide funding for organizations and programs that support survivors and victims of crime.
- Improve the reasonable use of involuntary treatment by increasing system capacity and making the Involuntary Treatment Act a more effective and useful tool for first responders.



Capital Budget

- Provide funding for shovel-ready improvements at Red Barn Ranch to enable youth programming and regional outdoor learning access.
- Foster a strong regional green economy by securing funding for a demonstration project at Seattle Center that will help lead to a fully decarbonized eco-district.
- Authorize transfer of WSDOT's Montlake surplus property to the City for the purpose of affordable homeownership development.

Transportation

- Provide Sound Transit with expanded authority and financing options to maintain project timelines and deliver voter-approved light rail extensions.
- Fund city and county efforts to mitigate Revive I-5 construction project impacts.
- Provide local governments authority to remove vehicle obstructions from streetcar tracks to ensure reliable and efficient public transit operations.

What to expect during session

- Regular council briefings from OIR's state team
- Weekly council bulletin & hearings schedule
- Opportunities to engage with the state and other local governments on shared priorities
- AWC City Action Days (January 21-22)
- OIR's state team is available to meet with you or your staff

Questions?



Contact

Anna Johnson, State Legislative Affairs Director

Anna.johnson@seattle.gov

Samir Junejo, State Relations Director

Samir.junejo@seattle.gov

