

Association of Washington Cities

JUNE 2024 STATE OF THE ASSOCIATION & ANNUAL REPORT



STRONG CITIES | GREAT STATE

Building a bright future—together!

It is our honor to share the 2024 AWC State of the Association and Annual Report. We are pleased to report that our association is thriving! With higher-than-ever attendance at conferences and trainings, new energy and ideas from our members, fully engaged boards and committees, and record sponsorship levels, AWC is poised to deliver the very best in advocacy, education, and services to members.

We have much to be excited about from the past year—here are just a few of the highlights.

Welcoming new elected officials to the city family

In November 2023, approximately 20% of our 2,000 mayors and councilmembers were elected to office for the first time. More than 400 members participated in AWC's Elected Officials Essentials Workshop at nine in-person sites and online. This record-breaking attendance is a sign of the commitment and enthusiasm of our newly elected leaders. Congratulations to all those who have joined the city family!

Stronger together

Washington's 281 cities and towns are stronger together. When we work to find common ground on policy issues, the collective city voice has a positive impact on the legislative process and yields results for our communities. And when city elected leaders and staff come together to learn, exchange best practices, and share their wisdom and resources, all communities benefit. This year the AWC Board provided new scholarship options to ensure that all our member cities can join our in-person events.

A clear vision for our future

This year the AWC Board updated our mission, vision, and values statements. Informed by engagement with our members—including through surveys, focus groups, and direct feedback—the Board adopted a mission statement that emphasizes the importance of building connections between our diverse cities and towns while providing members with the support needed to thrive through data-driven education, nationally recognized programs and services, and nonpartisan policy. In addition, our updated vision pushes us to be a national leader in all that we do. At our Business Meeting in June, our membership will update our Statement of Policy, which outlines the positions that AWC holds on fundamental municipal issues and serves as the framework for developing AWC's legislative priorities. Together we are leading the way toward future success.

Always evolving to work on your behalf

Your voice matters. AWC is committed to transparency in our operations and advocacy, and to providing opportunities to share your input on the direction of the association. Whether through volunteering to serve on an AWC board or committee, attending our Small City Connectors, Mayors Exchanges, and conferences, or participating in our member surveys, we encourage you to make your voice heard. We are grateful to the dozens of members of our city family who volunteered their time this year to guide our association, and to the hundreds more who made their voices heard in other ways.

AWC is fully committed to building strong cities, and a great state. It has been a pleasure to serve 281 cities and towns over the past year, and we look forward a bright future on the horizon.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Betsy Wilkerson".

Betsy Wilkerson
AWC President
Council President, Spokane



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Deanna Dawson".

Deanna Dawson
AWC Chief Executive Officer

Mission

The Association of Washington Cities builds connections between our state's diverse cities and towns, while providing our members with the support needed to thrive through delivery of data-driven education, nationally recognized pooling programs, and nonpartisan advocacy.

Vision

To be the national leader in programs, services, and policy impact. Together we are building strong cities, and a great state.

Core beliefs

Leadership – Supporting the development of highly competent and principled city leaders.

Excellence – Delivering innovative and effective programs, products, and services to our members.

Advocacy – Advocating on behalf of cities, towns, and local decision-making.

Diversity – Embracing the diversity of our membership, working toward equitable outcomes for all communities, modeling inclusivity, and ensuring that all our members feel a sense of belonging in our organization.

Education – Providing high-quality education, training, and professional development opportunities to give our members the tools to build sustainable and livable communities.

Responsiveness – Nimble responding to member needs, critical issues, and unforeseen events in a timely and effective manner.

Service – Providing exceptional service to our members in all that we do.





Advocating for strong cities

AWC continues to provide the highest quality of advocacy on behalf of our 281 cities and towns. AWC remains a highly respected voice before the Legislature. The 2024 Legislative Session was notable for its normalcy after a few years of upheaval due to the pandemic and large policy and budget-related issues. It was still a good session for cities, with passage of some notable policy updates and some additional funding for local initiatives. Looking back, the 2023 Legislative Session was a strong one for cities, with positive action on our highest priorities and funding for the most important programs. A significant win included seeing the Public Works Assistance Account fully funded for the first time in a *decade*. This is thanks in part to the strong advocacy of city leaders from around the state regularly reaching out to legislators and sharing the importance of this funding source to their city. AWC was created to advocate for cities, and we continue to build on that strong foundation.

2024 advocacy highlights:

Successfully pivoted to host the sold-out 2024 City Action Days in a new location when the traditional location was sold

560 bills tracked in 2024

Published *State of the Cities: Municipal workforce – The foundation of city services* report

Awarded nearly **\$2 million** in grants to fund local alternative response teams. To date, \$3.8 million has been awarded to 17 programs

Concluded the **\$1 million** grant-funded Puget Sound Nutrient Technical Assistance Regional Project

2024 legislative highlights:

Passed liability protections for co-responder and alternative response programs

Preserved the Public Works Assistance Account

Eliminated the 25% local government cost-share requirement for the Basic Law Enforcement Academy classes during fiscal year 2025

Secured \$22 million for fish barrier removal

Secured \$4 million in clean energy retrofit dollars for grants for city-owned buildings to be administered by AWC

Expanded use of automated traffic safety cameras

\$27.2 million for safe routes to school grants and \$18.5 million for pedestrian and bicycle safety programs and grants

2023 advocacy highlights:

338 attended 2023 City Action Days

500 bills tracked in 2023

Concluded the **\$12 million** SEEK funding program – serving **113** local governments

Published *State of the Cities: Washington's interconnected infrastructure* and *State of the cities: Evolving public safety & criminal justice services* reports

Managed a new **\$1.9 million** grant program to fund local alternative response teams

2023 legislative highlights:

Passed a comprehensive statewide approach to drug possession, known as the Blake fix, in special session

Revised police vehicle pursuit restrictions to address cities' public safety needs

Adopted new middle housing density provisions for cities and streamlined permitting and regulatory requirements identified by cities to help foster housing development

Fully funded the Public Works Assistance Account for the first time in over a decade

Supported significant investments in substance abuse treatment and behavioral health programs

Training that is mobile, meaningful, and manageable

AWC targets education for municipal leadership, offering trainings that are available both online and in person, meaningful to the work of city leaders, and manageable for a busy schedule.



In 2023:

- 1,200** people attended **21 in-person** AWC trainings
- 365** attendees at the 2023 AWC Annual Conference
- 199** cities represented at AWC trainings and events
- 1,126** city officials and staff connected to 21 webinars
- 96%** of attendees rated experience as good or excellent

Certificate of Municipal Leadership (CML)

Our CML program recognizes city elected officials for expanding leadership skills by accomplishing training in five competency areas:

- Effective local leadership
- Community planning and development
- Public sector resource development
- Roles, responsibilities, and legal requirements
- Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging

In 2023:



- 37 CMLs** awarded
- 30 Advanced CMLs** awarded

Sharing city stories and data

AWC's resources and research tools help city leaders manage their day-to-day operations, evaluate results of past practices, and explore new ways to approach common issues.



AWC's quarterly *Cityvision* magazine explored stories of lessons learned and insights shared from Washington's cities.



1,200 yearly listeners of the *CityVoice Podcast*

37 members utilize the AWC GIS Consortium



9,000 job views each month



9,000+ followers across social media channels including LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram

Surveys provided valuable data for key city decisions and advocacy:

AWC Salary and Benefit Survey

AWC City Conditions Survey

Membership Survey



Member Pooling Programs support services for cities

AWC has added and evolved pooling opportunities for cities and towns to meet their unique challenges and to access quality benefits and services at a reasonable cost. These member-driven programs emphasize risk control, prevention, financial stability, and excellent customer service. The pooling of similar employers keeps overall costs lower and more predictable.



AWC Drug & Alcohol Consortium

The AWC Drug & Alcohol (D&A) Consortium helps members comply with federally mandated U.S. Department of Transportation drug and alcohol testing requirements for commercial driver license employees, transit drivers, and gas utility workers. Benefits include sample drug and alcohol policies and procedures, training, access to substance abuse professional services, and a Medical Review Officer.

2023 highlights:

1,281 random drug tests and **254** random alcohol tests completed

0% positive alcohol tests and **22 total** verified positive drug tests for those tested in the random DOT testing pool

2,695 limited queries conducted through the U.S. DOT Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse

440 individuals trained in online supervisory sessions

245 views of online Designated Employer Representative training

64

entities accessed D&A trainings

157

D&A Consortium members



AWC Workers' Comp Retro Program

The AWC Workers' Comp Retro Program (Retro) provides training and tools that empower employers to lower risks for on-the-job injuries and reduce overall workers' compensation costs. Member benefits include workers' comp claims coordination, on-site safety trainings, and technical assistance.

2023 highlights:

\$3.1M invested in reserves, building, protecting, and stabilizing our financial position

132 Workers' Comp Retro Program members

63 members in the Retro Pool

69 members in the Safety Alliance, the service-only program

0 days delay for L&I data in new claims system

100% member retention

\$1.03M

refunded to members

\$137k

Stay at Work program reimbursements



2024 Healthy Worksite Summit—Lynnwood



AWC Employee Benefit Trust

For more than fifty years, the AWC Employee Benefit Trust (Trust) has been the premier provider of benefit programs and services to Washington’s cities, towns, and other local governments. Health plans are designed for municipalities, their employees, family members, and retirees. Benefits include medical, dental, vision, health promotion, Employee Assistance Program, tax-favored account administration, long-term disability, and long-term care coverage.

2023 highlights:

- 282** Employee Benefit Trust members
- 112** employers earned the WellCity Award, gaining a 2% discount on 2024 medical premiums
- 101** visits to member entities
- 1,154** open enrollment changes processed
- 38,000** employees and family members received Trust benefits

\$3.2M
in cost savings by providing dependent verification

70%
of insured households are registered on the Health Central employee portal



AWC Risk Management Service Agency

The AWC Risk Management Service Agency (RMSA) is the full-service risk management choice for Washington’s cities, towns, and special districts. RMSA offers comprehensive coverage for property and liability needs with a focus on proactive risk management, member education, technical assistance, and comprehensive claims management.

2023 highlights:

- Net position of **7** times the regulatory minimum at **\$15.2M**
- 36** members utilized pre-litigation services
- 496** member employees completed **1,333** RMSA-U online trainings
- 569** employment law, human resources, and cybersecurity trainings, and attorney hotline resources utilized
- 38** onsite risk management visits

98%
of members awarded loss prevention grant funding

106
RMSA members

Association of Washington Cities Statement of Financial Position

Statement of financial position as of December 31, 2023 and 2022

	2023	2022
Assets:		
Total current assets	\$5,272,261	\$8,380,014
Property and equipment (net of depreciation)	4,265,488	4,487,424
Investments and other assets	13,213,445	12,077,708
Total assets	\$22,751,194	\$24,945,146
Liabilities and net assets:		
Total current liabilities	\$3,914,499	\$5,413,451
Long-term liabilities	4,116,761	6,274,574
Financing lease liability, net of current portion	9,785	53,327
Other liabilities	98,197	198,197
Total liabilities	\$8,139,242	\$11,939,549
Net assets	\$14,611,952	\$13,005,597
Total liabilities and net assets	\$22,751,194	\$24,945,146

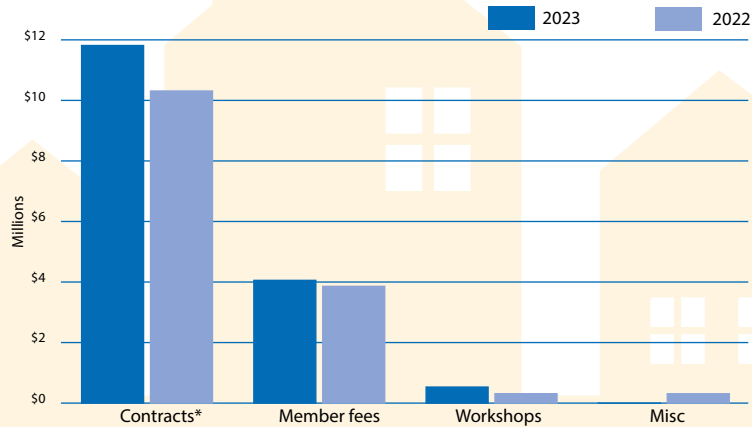
The condensed financial information shown is derived from unaudited financial statements for 2023 and 2022 and does not include notes and supplemental schedules.

2024 Mayors Exchange—Olympia



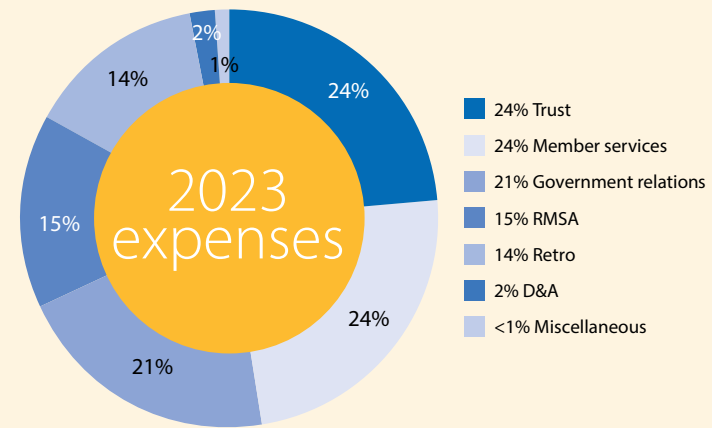
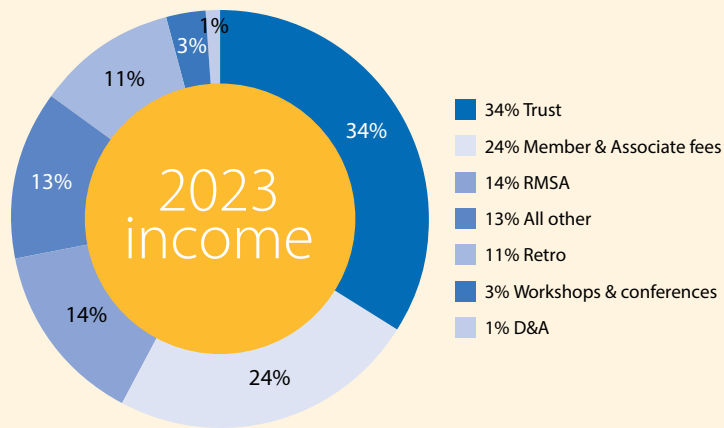
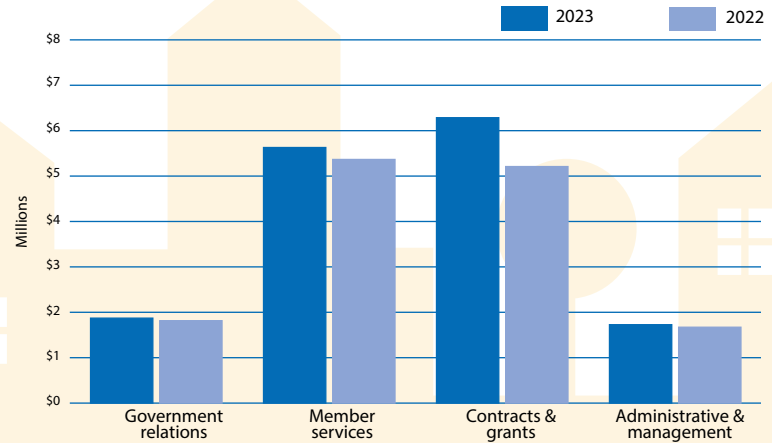
Income and expenses for the years ending December 31, 2023 and 2022

Income for the years ending December 31, 2023 and 2022



*This includes income from the contracts to administer the AWC Employee Benefit Trust and the AWC Risk Management Service Agency.

Expenses for the years ending December 31, 2023 and 2022



AWC Board of Directors

as of December 2023

Officers Executive Committee



PRESIDENT
Betsy Wilkerson
Council President,
Spokane



VICE PRESIDENT
Amy Ockerlander
Mayor, Duvall



SECRETARY & DISTRICT 2
Fred Brink
Mayor pro tem, West Richland



IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT
Rob Putaansuu
Mayor, Port Orchard



PAST PRESIDENT
Kent Keel
Councilmember,
University Place



LARGE CITY REPRESENTATIVE & DISTRICT 9
Zack Zappone
Councilmember, Spokane



DISTRICT 1
Micki Harnois
Councilmember, Rockford



DISTRICT 3
Carl Florea
Mayor, Leavenworth



DISTRICT 4
Holly Cousens
Councilmember, Yakima



DISTRICT 5
Ron Onslow
Councilmember, Ridgefield



DISTRICT 6
Josh Penner
Mayor, Orting



DISTRICT 7
Wendy Weiker
Councilmember, Mercer Island



DISTRICT 8
Jon Nehring
Mayor, Marysville



DISTRICT 10
Keith Blocker
Councilmember, Tacoma



DISTRICT 11
Dan Strauss
Councilmember, Seattle



DISTRICT 11
Tammy Morales
Councilmember, Seattle



DISTRICT 12
Amy Howard
Deputy Mayor, Port Townsend



DISTRICT 13
Nancy Backus
Mayor, Auburn



DISTRICT 14
Jill Boudreau
Mayor, Mount Vernon



AT-LARGE #1
(Western >5,000 population)
Ed Prince
Councilmember, Renton



AT-LARGE #2
(Western <5,000 population)
Jerry Phillips
Mayor, Long Beach



AT-LARGE #3
(Eastern >5,000 population)
Ben Wick
Councilmember, Spokane Valley



AT-LARGE #4
(Eastern <5,000 population)
Jose Trevino
Mayor, Granger



WCMA President
Stephanie Lucash
Deputy City Manager,
Kenmore



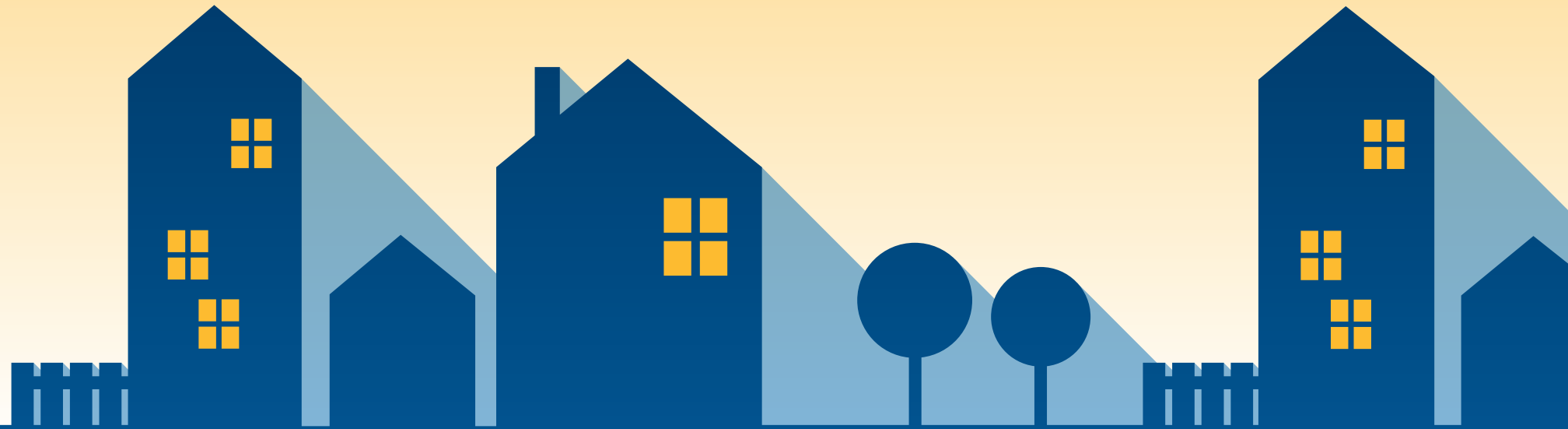
WCMA Past President
Kristi Rowland
Deputy Chief Administrative
Officer, Renton



AWC CEO
Deanna Dawson

Directors

ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON CITIES



Association of Washington Cities
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