

The City of Auburn, like most communities, faces a number of issues that impact our community. What is becoming very clear, we cannot treat each issue as separate. Instead, the City is committed to continue efforts that look at solving our challenges in a comprehensive manner. Our belief is that the following problems can only be solved with an interconnected strategy for success.

PUBLIC SAFETY

ISSUE: The City of Auburn supports the continued reforms to policing and community caretaking in our State and wishes to continue working in concert with legislators, police officers, our communities and others to continue this effort.

REQUEST: Work with cities to make technical fixes those bills in which language is vague, conflicting or confusing.

REQUEST: Support changing language in regards to police pursuits from probable cause to reasonable suspicion as it relates to "...crimes against persons offenses pursuant to RCW 9.94A.411, or another criminal offense where the public safety risks of failing to apprehend or identify the person are considered to be greater than the safety risks of the vehicular pursuit under the circumstances" as outlined in SB 5919 in the 2022 session. The City of Auburn supports balancing the level of the offense and the authority to pursue.

ISSUE: Police agencies are currently in a staffing crisis. As we recover from the pandemic and also seek to fill vacated positions we will need tools to ensure our departments are fully staffed and able to effectively respond to local public safety needs.

REQUEST: Additional funding for the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) would drastically shorten the amount of time prospective police officers are on municipal payrolls without being able to get into training.

REQUEST: Additional funding for officer wellness and DEI staffing within police agencies.

ISSUE: Impacts to towing companies from the Seattle v. Long decision force cities to expend more sums for towing services.

REQUEST: Additional dedicated funding to cities for towing services, or an increase in funding to the State reimbursement account under RCW 46.53.010

ISSUE: Ongoing crime/public safety issues related to illegal drug use.

REQUEST: Restoration of criminal penalties for possession and use of illegal drug paraphernalia

REQUEST: Restore drug free school zones and expand to community parks

ISSUE: RCW 10.112.010 requires a subpoena for records in a criminal investigation of an offense involving the sexual exploitation of children. This process is slow and can lead to further exploitation of children or allow the perpetrator to avoid arrest.

REQUEST: Change the requirement to a search warrant to allow officers to quickly identify evidence to interrupt the cybercrimes against children.

SOCIAL SERVICES

ISSUE: Cities throughout the state do not have the local resources available to adequately address homelessness, substance abuse disorders and untreated mental illness.

REQUEST: Support greater funding for behavioral health programs and incentivize workers to pursue careers in behavioral health

REQUEST: Support and fund programs that will alleviate the need for police response to quality of life issues such as mental distress or illness, substance abuse and persons experiencing homelessness

REQUEST: Make any necessary changes to State laws that prohibit cities from hiring Mental Health Professionals or Designated Crisis Responders.

REGULATORY & LAND USE

ISSUE: As communities grow there are no impact fees to benefit police.

REQUEST: Enact legislation that would allow cities to collect a police impact fee since added population and businesses have the same resource demands and challenges as fire, transportation, parks and schools.

ISSUE: Affordable housing needs are deeper than 60% AMI – more like 50% or 40%. Washington State Housing Finance Commission programs are providing great support for projects that hit the 60% AMI mark.

REQUEST: Create incentives to hit the deeper marks since that is where the greatest need exists.

REQUEST: Future legislation related to affordable housing, missing middle housing or other land use laws must provide safe harbor for those cities that are creating or in the process of creating their Housing Action Plan (HAP) in line with previous legislative actions that included grant funding provided by the State Legislature.

ISSUE: Rehabilitate Existing Affordable housing. There are very few programs that help maintain older homes and multifamily complexes which results in one of two outcomes (1) older properties are maintained appropriately but the investment is reflected in increasing rental costs, or (2) older properties are not maintained which helps keep rental costs down but at the sake of declining health and safety.

REQUEST: Create dedicated funds to put towards the rehabilitation of single or multifamily units because it is far less expensive and environmentally sustainable to preserve existing housing stock instead of building new units and will ensure housing stock is readily available in the market.

ISSUE: The large number of regulatory processes are a hindrance to bringing affordable housing projects to fruition including SEPA, GMA, NPDES. State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) is an outdated and overly

burdensome process that adds time and money. Growth Management Act (GMA) and affordable housing objectives are at direct odds because the GMA limits supply which increases costs. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) adds significant cost to development which is passed on to future owners or tenants.

REQUEST: Allow procedural relief for any mandates that the State Legislature imparts upon cities. Work with cities to make it easier for us to update our local laws if or when it is in response to a State mandate rather than having to go through all of the obligations related to the planning commission, SEPA, public notice, etc.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

ISSUE: Help cities protect and maintain parks and open spaces

REQUEST: Maintain funding for the Washington Recreation & Conservation Office and Land/Water Conservation Fund so residents have increased access to existing and new public spaces

REQUEST: Support Washington State Historical Society's (WSHS) capital budget request and the Heritage Capital Projects in the 2023-2025 funding biennium which includes the transformation of Auburn's Historic Post office building into an Arts & Culture Center

REQUEST: Support Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) request for municipal parks deferred maintenance grant funding program in the 2023-25 Operating Budget