

RESOLUTION NO. 14-2022

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY OF LEAVENWORTH IDENTIFYING FY 2023 AND FY 2024 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

WHEREAS, the City of Leavenworth has a vested interest on how the Washington State Legislature actions can and do impact the City; and

WHEREAS, it is the City’s intention to work with the Governor’s Office and Leadership throughout the Senate and House with specific help from the City’s 12th District Legislator’s; and

WHEREAS, the City of Leavenworth has a good positive working relationship with the current 12th District Legislators; and

WHEREAS, this positive working relationship does depend upon the frequent and ongoing exchange of information where the specific needs and priorities of the City of Leavenworth are clearly expressed to our 12th District Legislators; and

WHEREAS, it is by the attached Exhibit “A” that the City of Leavenworth wishes to extend to Washington State Senator Brad Hawkins, Representative Keith Goehner, and Representative Mike Steele as the City of Leavenworth’s 2023 and 2024 Legislative Agenda.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Leavenworth, Washington, that the attached Exhibit “A” is hereby adopted as the 2023 and 2024 Legislative Priority Issues of the City of Leavenworth.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Leavenworth and approved by its Mayor this 27th day of September, 2022.

CITY OF LEAVENWORTH

MAYOR

ATTEST:

Approved as to Form:

Andrea Fischer, City Clerk

Tom Graafstra, City Attorney

EXHIBIT “A”

CITY OF LEAVENWORTH LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY ISSUES FOR 2023 AND 2024

1. Funding for Housing

The City of Leavenworth will work with the Governor’s Office and other legislative partners including the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) to explore new resources and policies that may increase resources for affordable housing, building upon the passage of SB 5868 that allowed for the use of the county .09% sales tax for economic development to include workforce housing. Further funding is needed and could include the following:

- Pursue using lodging tax as a funding stream for workforce housing. This could be done by adding an additional small portion of tax to the existing lodging tax to be used to develop workforce housing. In lieu of this, to at least expand what the existing lodging tax can be used to provide housing. Currently, a portion of lodging tax can be used to retire debt for low-income housing projects within ½ mile of public transit. The City would like the flexibility to use these funds in support of workforce housing, serving residents up to 120% of AMI.
- The City is requesting the legislature to review the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 82.14.530 Sales and use tax for housing and related services. This legislation authorized a 1/10 of 1% increase to the local sales tax focused on affordable housing once approved by a vote of the people. At this time, those funds would be targeted at specific populations for those requiring special needs or very low or poverty level incomes. The City is requesting that the legislature consider revising the language of RCW 82.14.530 to provide additional flexibility to the cities and counties and modify the legislation to allow for the use of these funds for workforce housing serving up to 120% AMI.
- The City would like to see the state change current law to allow for additional taxes to be assessed on houses that are purchased as homes, that are not to be used as primary residences by the buyers. These could include additional fees collected at the time of sale, as well as a surcharge added to the property tax rate of such homes, with funds raised in such a manner to be used to address the City’s need for workforce housing up to 120% of AMI.
- Allow Cities and Counties to transfer surplus property to non-profits to support the building of permanently affordable housing for a workforce of up to 120% of Area Median Income.

2. Fire Prevention and Mitigation

According to a 2018 study by the USDA Forest Service, Leavenworth is the most wildfire-threatened community in Washington.

The City shall work with legislative partners to improve fire hazard mitigation legislation and to seek to get state and federal agencies to put some of the approved fire mitigation funds into the immediate area surrounding the City for fire reduction work. The City is in support of the efforts of the nonprofit C6- Forest to Farm’s initiative to place a large biochar facility at the former Winton Mill site, and will advocate for state funding for this purpose. The City shall pursue collaborative approaches to community wildlife hazard reduction. We will support the efforts of the County to locate a small diameter mill in our county to assist in the thinning of our forests to maintain health

and reduce fuels. The City understands that educating property owners and community groups on loss mitigation strategies in wildland urban interface. We will work with the Forest Service to make sure that the mitigation efforts planned for our surrounding area are completed in as timely a manner as possible.

3. Support the Legislative Agenda of the Association of Washington Cities

The Association of Washington cities has identified five key legislative priorities for 2022 (housing was also on their list in a more general statement cited below). The City believes that these priorities are consistent with our own needs and will work with the AWC to pass these priorities. The five include:

- **Infrastructure funding**

Fully fund the Public Works Assistance Account (PWAA), including allowing the current revenue diversions to sunset at the end of fiscal year 2023 and refraining from further transfers or diversions of funds to other infrastructure programs or other non-infrastructure accounts.

Explore expanding state funding opportunities to assist with maintenance and operations of local infrastructure.

- **Blake decision response**

Support clarification regarding the crime of possession of a controlled substance so individuals, law enforcement, and treatment providers can respond appropriately. Revise the current system of two referrals prior to criminal charges so that it can be more effectively administered across the state.

- **Public safety vehicular pursuits**

Support clarification of the ability to conduct vehicular pursuits using a reasonable suspicion standard in order to address concerns about impacts to public safety and allow for effective and safe pursuit of suspects when there is an immediate threat to public safety. Cities continue to support safety standards and training for officers who engage in vehicular pursuits.

- **Housing affordability, availability, & accessibility**

Support a proactive approach to create new tools, incentives, and revenues that cities can use to help increase housing supply and address affordability. Cities need resources to encourage development of housing at all income levels and particularly state funding to support housing for the lowest income levels.

- **Behavioral health**

Support creating greater access to behavioral health services including substance abuse treatment and dual diagnosis treatment facilities.

Support continued state funding to help communities establish alternative response programs like co-responder programs, diversion programs, and others that provide options beyond law enforcement for responding to situations that involve individuals suffering from behavioral health issues.