



CITY OF ANACORTES LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2025



STATE HIGHWAY 20/COMMERCIAL AVENUE

Fund repaving the 23 blocks of State Highway 20 Spur/Commercial Avenue, which is the main commercial and retail corridor linking downtown, the waterfront, and the State Ferry Terminal. The City has made a significant investment in this project and is actively seeking grant funds. The projected total is \$3.5M.



WASHINGTON STATE FERRIES

Restore Washington State Ferries' international service between Anacortes and Sidney, B.C., before 2030.



ANACORTES COMMUNITY EVENT CENTER

Support the City of Anacortes in securing grant funding opportunities, including capital, Ecology, and Transportation Alternatives applications.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TREATMENT CAPACITY

Advocate for increased investments in community behavioral health treatment, covering both capital start-up and operational expenses for the **Skagit STAR Center**.

Increase funding for grants to establish and sustain local behavioral health crisis co-responder programs.

Support the expansion of treatment options, from crisis stabilization to inpatient and outpatient care, including forensic behavioral health.

Provide additional mental health support services for students to address their unique needs.



PARKS AND RECREATION

Support full funding of Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account and city's grant application to fund the Heart Lake Shoreline Restoration project as approved in the 2010 Heart Lake Site Plan.

Maintain Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program funding at \$150M or greater supporting future capital projects for city parks and programming.

Fund Youth Athletic Facilities at new grant limits supporting future capital projects for city parks and programming.



CITY OF ANACORTES

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2025

FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

- **Revise** the 1% property tax cap, in place for over 20 years, up to 3%, by linking it to inflation and population growth, allowing local governments to meet rising costs for essential services such as police, fire, street maintenance, and parks.

HOUSING SUPPLY

- **Allocate** existing funds and explore new sources, such as the real estate excise tax (REET), to meet the growing demand for housing, especially for those at 0-50% Area Median Income.
- **Incentivize** multifamily construction by allowing cities to exempt qualifying multifamily housing projects from state & local sales tax (a similar program exists for qualifying commercial office space in RCW 82.14.532).
- **Secure** substantial state support to address the housing needs of low-income residents, as market-rate construction alone won't meet demand.
- **Guarantee** that funding reaches all communities, including small cities like Anacortes.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- **Fund** efforts to recruit and retain additional public safety officers.
- **Expand** programs to reduce juvenile crime and increase access to juvenile behavioral health treatment and correctional facilities.
- **Pass** legislation to permanently fund multijurisdictional drug task forces.

INDIGENT DEFENSE/CASELOAD STANDARDS

- **Increase** funding for indigent defense, which currently covers only 3% of the costs.
- **Fund** new caseload standards to be set by the State Supreme Court to ensure fair defense services.
- **Address** workforce and training shortages that are straining the criminal defense system.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

- **Invest** in local infrastructure to support the expansion and maintenance of aging systems.
- **Fund** the Public Works Assistance Account for crucial infrastructure projects.
- **Advocate** for sustainable state transportation revenue to support local preservation, maintenance, and operations including public transportation.
- **Invest** in electrical grid improvements to accommodate industrial and residential electrification as housing and electrification efforts grow.
- **Fund** the Connecting Housing to Infrastructure Program (CHIP) and develop new fiscal tools to support housing-related infrastructure.
- **Expand** cities' use of REET for additional capital needs, including infrastructure maintenance and affordable housing.