

**CITY OF WEST RICHLAND  
RESOLUTION NO. 05-23**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF WEST RICHLAND, WASHINGTON,  
ADOPTING THE CITY OF WEST RICHLAND 2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of West Richland wishes to outline and articulate its primary policies, projects, and programs to emphasize during the upcoming 2023 Washington State Legislative Session in order to focus the resources of the Council and City Staff; and

**WHEREAS**, the attached Legislative Priorities document represents the City's top legislative priorities, compiled with input from department directors, the Association of Washington Cities, and elected officials.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, The City Council of the City of West Richland, Washington, does hereby adopted the attached 2023 City of West Richland Legislative Priorities document.

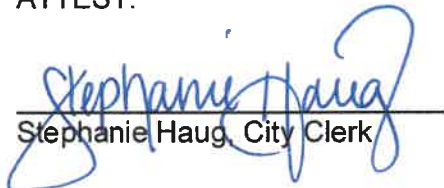
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the establishment of these legislative priorities does not limit the City's advocacy in support or opposition to legislation that conforms to the positions the city has taken in the past or new positions to be taken on matters of importance to the City.

**PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST RICHLAND,  
WASHINGTON**, this 17<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2023.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Brent Gerry, Mayor

ATTEST:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Stephanie Haug, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Bronson Brown, City Attorney



# CITY OF WEST RICHLAND

## 2023 Legislative Priorities

The following items are the official 2023 Legislative Priorities as adopted by the City Council of the City of West Richland on January 17, 2023 (Resolution 05-23).

### General Principles

West Richland supports legislation that promotes the City Council's Strategic Focus Areas and protects the City's ability to provide excellent municipal services to its citizens.

West Richland believes the best governmental decisions are those made at the local level; closest to the people. Cities have the will, ability and authority to provide for the safety and welfare of their residents. The legislature must abstain from restricting, mandating, or otherwise interfering with local decisions. West Richland opposes legislation that would either preempt authority or discretion that is traditionally and historically vested with local governments, or which would impose new or additional unfunded mandates upon local jurisdictions.

The City of West Richland seeks to work with the Legislature to strengthen the state and local government partnership and protect current revenue sources available to the City, provide new revenue options and to provide flexibility in the use of existing revenues.

### Transportation

The City supports our State Legislators in honoring previous commitments and fully fund projects within the 2015 Connecting Washington funding package specifically, the SR 224 / Red Mountain Transportation Improvement Project. The City requests that the remaining \$23.5 million in Connecting Washington Transportation Funding along with an additional \$5 million to cover project under scoping by WSDOT and increased unit prices in crushed rock, concrete and asphalt pavement (total of \$28.5 million) be appropriated in the 2023-2025 Transportation Capital Budget. In early 2022, the city executed an agreement with WSDOT to take over the project's design, environmental permitting, road right-of-way acquisition, and construction management to get the project back on schedule for construction in the fall of 2024. In 2023, the city will be constructing nearly \$2 million of water and sewer infrastructure along the corridor in preparation for the roadway project. Appropriation of the \$28.5 million is critical for the project to remain on schedule and on the revised budget.

### Water & Sewer Infrastructure

The city requests a \$4 million appropriation in Department of Ecology's Office of Columbia River's (OCR) Columbia River Water Supply Development Program's FY 2023-2025 Capital Budget to complete the third phase of the Well #10 Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Project. The project is a multi-year partnership that began in 2017 with the Department of Ecology to meet projected water system demands through 2038 in sustainable and fish friendly manner.

The City requests a \$2.5 million appropriation in the 2023-2025 Capital Budget for design and environmental permitting and a \$20 million appropriation in 2025-2027 Capital Budget for construction as part of a public-private partnership to upgrade/expand its wastewater treatment facility to increase capacity from 1.5 mgd to 4.2 mgd to meet projected sewer system demands for the next 20 years in an efficient, environmentally friendly and sustainable manner. The total investment to upgrade/expand the facility is estimated at \$45 million.

### Public Safety & Behavioral Health

The City supports local control over city law enforcement policy decisions to meet the needs of each community. The city also supports the statewide policing reforms listed in the Association of Washington Cities and Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs' 2023 Legislative Priorities including but not limited to the Blake decision, vehicular pursuits and efforts to secure funding for recruitment and retention.

### Energy Resource Adequacy

The City supports the development of safe and affordable generation, transmission, and distribution resources to provide adequate capacity for our consumers' needs. Energy related policy must have no negative impacts on reliability of the electric generation, transmission, or distribution system. Both hydro and nuclear power are 100% carbon-free and each resource does not rely on intermittent natural elements (wind or solar) to produce power for the region. Our state's energy policy must recognize and protect the value of both hydro and nuclear.



# CITY OF WEST RICHLAND

## 2023 Legislative Priorities

### **Public Safety**

The City of West Richland supports clarification around the crime of possessing control substance stemming from the Blake decision as well as vehicle pursuits.

The City of West Richland supports funding for regional law enforcement academies.

### **Infrastructure and Economic Development**

The City of West Richland supports funding for critical local infrastructure projects including returning the diverted revenue streams that would fully fund the Public Works Assistance Account.

The City of West Richland supports incentives that encourage annexation, including utilizing utility extensions, and mechanisms that facilitate the annexation of unincorporated islands.

The City of West Richland supports flexible state and federal dollars to help finance basic infrastructure.

The City of West Richland supports economic development incentives and flexible funding.

The City of West Richland opposes the removal of dams along both the Columbia and Snake Rivers.

### **General Government**

The City of West Richland supports a revision to the property tax cap to tie it to inflation and population growth factors so that the city can adjust the local property tax rate to better serve our community needs and priorities.

The City of West Richland supports preserving and enhancing state-shared revenue systems.

### **Local Decision Making**

The City of West Richland opposes any proposals that restrict, mandate, or otherwise interfere with the City's ability to make local decisions.

The City of West Richland supports engagement in Growth Management Act reform conservation and secure dedicated planning funding.

The City of West Richland opposes preemption of local land use authority.

The City of West Richland opposes extended State emergency powers without appropriate input and oversight.

### **Regional Behavioral Health Recovery Center & Crisis Response**

The City of West Richland supports the effort by Benton County to fund and build a recovery center in the Tri-Cities. The Center will provide over 550,000 individuals access to full continuum of behavioral health services.

The City of West Richland supports greater access to community-based behavioral health services to include substance use disorder treatment and state funding to help communities establish alternative response programs.

### **Affordable Housing**

The City of West Richland supports a proactive approach to create new tools/incentives/revenues for cities to use to support increasing 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.

**Contact Information: Brent Gerry, Mayor**

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