

# City of Spokane

# 2008 State Legislative Agenda

## 2007-2008 Biennial Session

Adopted by the Spokane City Council December 17, 2007

### Economic Development

**North Spokane Corridor Redevelopment Plan Study** of land use designations, zoning, mitigation, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, business retention strategies and economic development opportunities (a request of \$500,000).

**Community Empowerment Zones** stimulate economic development by offering businesses Sales/Use tax deferrals/exemptions and B&O tax credits if they locate or expand within the designated geographic area and/or hire employees who are residents of the zone. The City wants amending language to expand the size of the geography of the zone and to eliminate industry exclusions and the 15% employment increase requirement in Spokane's CEZ program.

### State Infrastructure Assistance

- Monitor legislatively-appointed Public Infrastructure Study Committee whose recommendations are expected to be known by late 2007.
- Support acceleration of approval of the Public Works Board loan list as current state programs are significantly under-funded.
- Permanently fund the Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB). SHB 1790/SSB 5762 would have redirected a small portion of the state REET to permanently fund CERB, re-tool the Job Development Fund, and broaden the eligibility of CERB to be more inclusive of urban cities.

### Municipal Finance & Flexibility

**Public Safety/Libraries Multi-Year Operations & Maintenance Levies.** Support a constitutional amendment to allow all property taxing districts to ask their voters to approve excess levies for up to four years for operating purposes and up to six years for construction, modernization, or remodeling of facilities.

**Fire/Library Districts Annexation Authority.** Amend existing legislation to allow municipalities with population over 100,000 to annex to an adjacent Fire or Library District.

**State and Federal Telecommunications Policies.** The City strongly opposes franchise proposals that cause loss of local control, loss of local revenue, eliminates build-out requirements that assures equal access for all citizens, and eliminates a local venue for redress.

### Transportation, Public Works & Infrastructure

**North Spokane Corridor.** Partner with WDOT and the greater community to secure additional funding for the North Spokane Corridor, a top transportation priority for the region.

**U.S. 195/Spokane-Cheney Road Interchange.** Support WSDOT funding requests for a partial interchange at a cost of \$12.5 million.

**Riverside Avenue Extension.** Provide \$2.4 million to complete funding to construct an extension of Riverside Avenue around the southern border of the University District Riverpoint Campus in downtown Spokane. The City has raised \$8.6 million toward the total \$11 million project.

**Bridging the Valley.** Support SRTC Bridging the Valley project, including moving forward state funding appropriated in future biennia. This is especially important to the City completing its Freya Corridor project given the first railroad overpass is at Havana Street on the Corridor.

**Transportation Studies/Impact Fees.** Support change in RCW to allow government to use a portion of impact fees to develop or maintain traffic studies.

**Transportation Concurrency.** Monitor transportation concurrency matters before the legislature.

**Freight Mobility.** The City encourages the state to seek system-wide solutions to freight mobility that allow cities to partner with the state.

**Increase local transportation funding** through the ability to form a street utility, matching grants, direct gas tax distribution to local government, direct project funding, and/or other local revenue options.

## **Criminal Justice & Public Safety**

**Gang Task Force.** Monitor recommendations from the state Gang Task Force which are expected by year-end. The focus of the task force has been on gang suppression, intervention and prevention.

**Graffiti Abatement.** Support Gang Task Force funding request to abate graffiti (to include flexibility by cities in how funding is used) and monitor the remaining work of the Task Force and its recommendations.

**Courts of Limited Jurisdiction.** SB 5712 disallows municipal courts, which Spokane may desire; ensure Spokane is grandfathered to allow a municipal court among other options.

**Sex Offenders.** Resist any new activities that law enforcement may be mandated to undertake unless sufficient funding is made available to local government; endorse expansion of monitoring tools, including DNA collection, appropriate use of passive electronic monitoring, address verification that may include unannounced inspections, and inclusion of Level 1 offenders on the statewide website with failure to register; support services to victims, and review sentencing enhancements for effectiveness as a deterrent compared with additional costs for increased incarceration.

**Jail Funding.** Support AWC's proposal to explore new funding options to assist with public safety issues, including those specifically for city jail construction and maintenance and operation.

**Administrative Warrants Authority.** Support legislation that would provide local jurisdictions and courts the ability to issue civil warrants to conduct inspection of facilities that may have safety and health issues.

## **Environment, Land Use & Energy**

**Renewable Energy Credit.** Support legislation that would define municipal solid waste energy generated at Spokane's regional waste-to-energy facility as renewable, as does the federal government, 22 other states and the District of Columbia.

**Water Quantity/Quality.** Support ban on phosphorous-containing fertilizers, support water conservation measures, and protect Spokane's water rights.

**Climate Control.** Monitor the Governor's Climate Advisory Team (CAT) and its recommendations, along with legislation proposed by other interested parties.

**Urban Forests.** Support in concept the Audubon Society's Evergreen Cities proposal to protect and restore the urban forests of Washington's cities.

**Green Building Incentives.** Support incentives for local government that encourage green building.

**Non-Point Source Funding program.** Support funding to assess non-point source contaminant loads in the Spokane River.

**Annexation Reform.** Advocate for changes to annexation statutes that better facilitate annexations, as required by the Growth Management Act, and support proposals to encourage cities and counties to better coordinate boundary and governance transition issues.

## Health Care, Human Services & Housing

### Homelessness/Housing

- Increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing by increasing the Housing Trust Fund to \$200 million per biennium. Every state dollar invested in the HTF leverages an additional \$5.56 in public and private investment.
- Expand service-enriched housing for homeless families with an investment of \$8 million to the Washington Families Fund (WFF), which will allow WFF to sustain its successful private fundraising and allow providers around the State to create new service-enriched housing for homeless families.
- Provide a \$10 million biennial increase for temporary rental vouchers and support services for homeless and at-risk families and individuals through the Transitional Housing, Operating and Rent (THOR) program. Short-term rental vouchers combined with support services can provide a quick exit from homelessness or prevent it altogether for homeless families.
- Prevent discharge from State systems into homelessness by funding housing and supporting services. Strategic investments in prisoner re-entry programs, community-based housing for people with mental illness, and support for youth aging out of the State's foster care system can help reduce homelessness in these populations.
- Build access to mental health services and substance abuse treatment for homeless individuals and others at risk of homelessness. People living with mental illness and chemical dependency frequently become homeless and cycle through jail and hospitals at great public expense. Additional funding is needed for Medicaid and non-Medicaid mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment programs to provide needed access to services for homeless people and other low-income Washingtonians at risk of homelessness.

### Access to Services

- Continue to support the statewide 211 system. 211 is a statewide program linking people who need help to the appropriate service providers.

### Health Care

- Support the Joint Select Committee on Public Health Financing's recommendation to the legislature to provide \$100 million a biennium in dedicated public health funding aimed at specific public health gaps in basic local services.
- **Mental Health/RSN.** Support Spokane County's solution to resolving the difficulties they face to meet RSN requirements, as well as the excessive penalties and damages.

### Education and Workforce Training

Support full funding for early learning education, K-12 and higher education, and workforce development for specific priority capital projects requested by Spokane area educational institutions.

#### Workforce Training agenda:

- Support funding additional Workforce Development Council capacity to identify, prioritize, and address local skill shortages in key industries.
- Stabilize funding for WorkSource Center infrastructure. Over 150,000 Washingtonians find work through WorkSource each year.
- Fund expansion of Workforce Development Council community-based programs that have program results on dropout prevention and retention, including the very successful Summer Youth Employment Program funded by the legislature in the late 1990s.

**Applied Sciences Lab at WSU.** The Friends of the Applied Sciences Laboratory at WSU seeks \$1.5 million in operating funds to add three additional scientists (currently have six) to focus on energy renewal research.

## State Capital Budget/Community Projects

**Fish Lake Trail** – Support \$1 million City request to partially fund the completion of Fish Lake Trail. The City received \$1 million from the 2007 legislature, for which it is very appreciative. The City has requested \$2 million in federal funding, and with local partners expects to raise the final \$2 million. The trail is an important link in the region's expanding trail system that will connect the Centennial Trail and the Columbia Plateau Trail and provides a major recreation facility and an alternative transportation link to Cheney and EWU.

The City, along with its many partners, supports state investment in important state capital budget projects. These projects support the community's economic development efforts with capital investment that creates construction jobs and ongoing benefits. Recognizing that 2008 is a supplemental budget year, the City expresses support for the following community project requests with the understanding these organizations will lobby on their own behalf:

Armed Forces & Aerospace Museum	\$5,000,000
Mobius Science Center	5,950,000
Museum of Arts & Culture	87,686
YMCA/YWCA	2,500,000



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### City of Spokane Elected Officials

Mary B. Verner, Mayor  
Joe Shogan, City Council President  
Michael Allen, City Council  
Bob Apple, City Council  
Steve Corker, City Council  
Al French, City Council  
Nancy McLaughlin, City Council  
Richard Rush, City Council

### For information on the City of Spokane's legislative priorities, contact

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