



CITY OF RENTON

2022 Legislative Agenda

KEY PRIORITIES AT A GLANCE

Quality of Life – 2022 Capital Budget Request

Funds for boardwalk to connect May Creek Trail and 405/NE 44th Avenue park-and-ride: Renton seeks funding of \$250,000 for a time-sensitive project to connect a boardwalk from a city-owned property just east of the 405/NE 44th Avenue interchange to the May Creek Trail and the “Seahawk Station” Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station just west of the freeway.

Racial Justice and Equity

Seeking outside funding and tools: As part of a citywide reorganization last June, Renton established a new Equity, Housing, and Human Services Department (EHHS) to shine a bigger spotlight on efforts and initiatives advancing both racial justice and equity as well as to better deploy resources for affordable housing and human needs. The City will support legislative initiatives to add funding resources for basic needs, stable housing, and greater access for historically unserved and under-served communities.

Transportation Infrastructure

Interstate 405 Corridor – address funding gaps to make managed Lanes and BRT work effectively: Renton will join with other cities and Chambers of Commerce along the 405 corridor in urging the Legislature to use revenue tools such as “GARVEE” bonds to ensure all projects on the 405 corridor stay on track. Members of a 405/167 Executive Advisory Group were united in rejecting one idea put forth by Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), which would have expedited certain projects while delaying others—such as the 405/N. 8th Direct Access Ramp in Renton—for up to 10 years.

Transportation Package and Projects

Renton will actively support passage of a transportation revenue package during the 2022 Session. The City will work in coalition with chambers and business groups, local governments, contractors, and others to promote direct distribution of new fuel taxes, enhanced funding for grant programs, local funding options, and monies for the following projects:

- » **405/N. 8th Direct Access Ramp (\$245 Million):** Renton will urge that completion of this project, which was first called out as part of Sound Transit’s Sound Move plan in 1996. Funding for this project has been in all “Forward Washington” lists put out by the Senate.
- » **I-405/SR 167 Area Transit Improvements (\$55 Million):** Renton requests that any project list include this project, which will feature an overcrossing of Rainier Avenue at Grady Way and will save nearly two minutes travel time each way for buses accessing the Rainier & Grady Way BRT Station coming from and going to I-405. Funding for this project was in the House’s “Miles Ahead Washington” plan.

» **Eastrail – Extension of Current Renton Terminus from Milepost 5 to Coulon/Southport (\$6 Million):**

As part of any bicycle/pedestrian capital projects portion of a package, Renton—in collaboration with King County and Eastrail partners—will seek funding to help extend the current Eastrail southern terminus point from Milepost 5 off Lake Washington Boulevard to the entrance to Coulon Park and the Southport development. Funding for this project was included in both the “Forward Washington” (Senate) and “Miles Ahead Washington” lists.

Fiscal Matters – Revenue Relief and Flexibility, Protecting Existing Revenues

Revenue Relief – 1 percent property tax limit: Renton, like many cities across the state, has weathered significant budget impacts during the COVID-19 pandemic. While funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) has brought short-term relief, the long-term outlook remains challenging. As a result, the City asks that state lawmakers look at structural ways to provide revenue relief to local governments, including a change to the 1 percent property tax limitation that does not allow annual revenues to keep pace with cost inflation.

Public Safety, Including Technical Fixes to Policing Reform Bills

Language changes to use-of-force, tactics legislation: During the 2021 Session, Renton actively supported numerous bills to re-imagine local policing and the conditions where law enforcement agencies would exercise the use of force. (Renton Police has one of the lowest use-of-force rates in King County). However, the City believes that in making several dramatic changes to state laws regarding law enforcement, the Legislature may have created a few unintended consequences in bills dealing with police tactics and use of force. Renton supports clarifications of the civil standards for use of force in situations involving mental health crises, “Terry stops” for suspected criminal activity, use of non-lethal ammunition, and conditions where vehicle pursuits are conducted.

Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) training

slots: Renton will strongly support legislative efforts to enhance funding for BLEA slots, particularly as rehiring of police post-COVID picks up and the wait for Academy slots is now six months and growing. The Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) is seeking four new BLEA slots for Fiscal Year 2022 (total of 19) and five additional slots for FY 2023 (total of 20). Renton also supports a \$1 million allocation to CJTC to help fund a new on-phone/on-laptop training app.



Issues to Support/Oppose or Track/Monitor

Budget and Fiscal Matters

Protect existing revenues: Renton urges lawmakers to **refrain** from state-shared revenue reductions or other local governments cuts that result in transferring negative impacts from the state level to the local level.

B&O Tax Authority: Renton **opposes** efforts to undercut local authority of cities that have a B&O tax.

Criminal Justice/Public Safety/Fire/Courts

“Blake” decision: Renton **supports** additional funding for diversion efforts, therapeutic courts, and more for handling drug offenses under the Blake decision.

Catalytic converter thefts: Renton **supports** legislative initiatives to enact statutory changes that address the rapidly growing rate of catalytic converter thefts.

Traffic safety cameras: Renton **opposes** unnecessary limitations for the use of traffic safety cameras that have proven to reduce accidents and save lives.

Citizen Oversight Boards and civil liability exposure: In 2021, Renton **opposed** HB 1203, which would have mandated establishment of Citizen Oversight Boards for law enforcement, and HB 1202, which would have expanded civil liability exposure for local governments in cases involving officer misconduct.

Economic Development/Infrastructure/Affordable Housing/Homelessness

Affordable housing/homelessness: Renton **supports** measures to provide funding and tools to local communities for affordable housing, permanent shelter space, and other options for those in need.

Housing stability: Renton supports measures to increase housing stability as part of COVID-19 recovery.

Public Works Assistance Account (PWAA): Renton **supports** efforts to rebuild PWAA and recapture funding streams previously diverted into the Education Legacy Account.

Environmental Sustainability

Laws on recycling, packaging, safe disposal: Renton **supports** legislation that enhances recycling and safe-packaging practices and continues to bolster the disposal of goods through the Product Stewardship program.

Advance work of King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (“K4C”), assist WRIAs: Renton **supports** proposals that advance the work of K4C and funding to support capital requests through WRIAs 8 and 9.

Land Use/Growth Management Act (GMA)

Achieving density and “Missing Middle” requirements: Renton **supports** state lawmakers ensuring that local communities accept their share of population growth, while at the same time respecting local discretion on how best to accommodate that growth and refraining from “one size fits all” density mandates.

Local authority for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs): Renton **opposes** legislation that would mandate specific ADU development standards and regulations. Such decisions are best left at the local level.

Statutory changes to stimulate more condominium construction in cities: Renton **supports** legislation that would further incentivize condominium building. Even with recent actions by the Legislature to stimulate the condominium construction market, the preponderance of building is in cities such as Seattle and Bellevue.

Planning provisions for ESHB 1220: Renton **supports** a legislative push to ensure funding for cities to plan for and accommodate emergency housing, emergency shelters, and permanent supportive housing.

Clarification on local authorities imposing a fee in lieu of requiring frontage improvements: Renton **supports** legislation for clarification to state law that seems to allow cities to impose a fee on developers in lieu of frontage improvements in cases where the frontage improvements do not make sense.

Local Government in General

Restrictions on “puppy mill” pet sales: Renton **supports** legislation that strengthens regulations regarding “puppy mill” pet sales or institutes additional consumer protections.

Release of body-worn camera footage: Renton **supports** statutory changes allowing unredacted Body-Worn Camera (BWC) video footage to be released to attorneys involved in criminal prosecutions.

Conducting virtual public meetings under the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA): Renton **supports** legislation that permanently enables local governments to conduct public meetings virtually during a declared emergency.

Public Records Act (PRA): Renton **supports** direct funding and/or better cost-recovery mechanisms in addressing PRA requests, especially for the rapid rise of electronic records (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.).

Civil remedies for malicious doxing: Renton **supports** a civil damages remedy for cities that are victims of malicious doxing of personal information.

E-Mail Records Retention: Renton **supports** changes to e-mail records retention that requires a minimum seven-year retention regardless of the content of the written message contained in the email.

Parks and Recreation / Arts and Culture

Local funding options for parks and recreation agencies: Renton **supports** legislation that provides new funding options for local parks and recreation agencies.

Stadium & Exhibition Center Account funds for youth fields and youth activities: Renton strongly **supports** utilizing a one-time, \$42 million allocation to the Recreation & Conservation Office (RCO) for youth fields and recreational activities.

Changing 1/10th of 1 cent sales tax option: Renton plans to **track/monitor** changing the tax option for Cultural Access Authorities from voter-approval required to “councilmanic”.

Personnel, Pensions, Other Human Resources Issues

Pension rates: Renton asks lawmakers to **proceed with caution** in increasing employer and employee pension rates as state/local governments still struggle under the economic impacts brought on by COVID-19.

Transportation

Changes to Transportation Benefit District (TBD) statutes: Renton **supports** legislative changes that make it easier for local jurisdictions to renew and maintain Transportation Benefit Districts once established.

Water/Wastewater/ Stormwater/Utilities

Puget Sound Nutrient General Permit: Renton **urges a review** by the Legislature of the Washington State Department of Ecology’s proposed Puget Sound Nutrient General Permit (PSNGP), which regulates the discharge of treated wastewater into the Puget Sound from Wastewater Treatment Facilities.