



## **CITY OF BATTLE GROUND PRIORITIES**

### **Paradise Point Regional Water Supply System Project**

We support Clark Public Utilities' grant funding request for the Paradise Point Regional Water Supply System Project. As a regional partner responsible for a proportionate share of the project cost, the city requests the legislature appropriate funds to the Watershed Implementation & Flow Achievement Capital Grant Program, or other accounts, from which Clark Public Utilities can obtain funding for the Paradise Point project.

### **Association of Washington Cities' 2017 Legislative Action Agenda**

We support AWC's 2017 Legislative Agenda and affirm their statement that the legislature must take action to defend local authority, maintain and restore state shared revenues, and support city efforts to preserve public safety and infrastructure needs.

- Allow cities to increase property tax to an extent that accounts for inflation and population growth
- Revitalize key infrastructure assistance programs; restore funding to the Public Works Assistance Account; support MTCA (Model Toxic Control Act) funding preservation
- Provide adequate and sustainable funding for the for the Criminal Justice Training Center
- Update PRA (Public Records Act) to permit cities to charge for providing complex digital data and electronic copies of public records.

## **Economic Development, Growth, and Innovative Finance**

### **Industrial Lands**

We support a modification of GMA-related HB 1360 (2013-14) clarifying language to accept as valid comprehensive plans and development regulations related to creation of an industrial land bank that were adopted by a county prior to December 31, 2016. We also support the intention to develop an industrial land bank in Clark County at the Lagler site.

### **Main Street Program**

We support legislation similar to HB 1370 (2015-16) that would enhance DAHP's Main Street Tax Credit Program to incentivize revitalization and economic development of the city's Old Town district.

### **Hirst Decision and GMA**

We ask the legislature to review the GMA in relation to the Whatcom County v. Hirst decision. The decision could imply that municipalities considering development applications would have to conduct hydrology impact studies to process each application.

### **Innovative Financing Tools**

The city supports legislation that maintains and enhances innovative financing tools such as the use of Public-Private Partnerships for capital projects.

## **SUPPORT OF REGIONAL PRIORITIES**

### **Clark Country Transportation Alliance**

The City of Battle Ground endorses the Clark County Transportation Alliance 2017 Policy Statement.

### **Port of Ridgefield**

We support the Port of Ridgefield's Broadband Policy requests.

### **For more information please contact:**

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# CITY OF BATTLE GROUND



## 2017 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

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### Grant Projects

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### FEDERAL REQUEST

##### **Grace Avenue Realignment – Phase II**

\$ 80,000 design

\$ 1.5 million construction

SE Grace Avenue is part of a critical north-south corridor serving Battle Ground's industrial core. Grace connects to East Main Street and when construction is complete would provide a vital route to serve the trucking needs of industrial companies, including Andersen Plastics, Tapani Underground, Tapani Electric, 3 Kings Environmental and many others. Andersen Plastics is the largest private sector employer in Battle Ground.

The project is estimated to cost \$6.3 million and will consist of realigning SE Grace Avenue to eliminate the existing offset intersection at NE/SE Grace Avenue and East Main Street and widening to meet current road standards. SE Grace Avenue will be widened to 44 feet and include a continuous two way left turn lane with left turn pockets at the intersections. The addition of a continuous two-way left-turn lane and an added signalization at the intersection will reduce delay and rear end collisions.

When 2,400 students are released every school day at 3pm, traffic along Main Street comes to a halt. Congestion and delays range from 30 minutes to an hour getting through the half-mile corridor. Complaints from local businesses that rely on the transportation network are getting to a level that brings significant concern that some will relocate, which could cost the City literally hundreds of jobs. These businesses need an alternative to Main Street that Grace Avenue would provide.

In addition, a number of industrial and commercial sites in the development area are vacant or underused. By having the public infrastructure in place, the parcels adjacent to SE Grace Avenue would be less costly to develop or redevelop encouraging private sector business investment in capital and workforce in this part of the City. This investment will also provide enhanced truck capability, resulting in an increase use of the adjacent railroad infrastructure. New access to the railroad would also allow a proposed Rail School project to move forward and provide workforce training opportunities for high skilled workers along the rail line.  
*Account: Economic Development Administration*

##### **Aerial Ladder Fire Truck**

\$890,000

The City is requesting federal funds to purchase an aerial ladder fire truck to meet its changing local protection requirements and emergency needs. Due to rapidly rising demand for affordable housing around the Portland Metropolitan area, the rate of development of multi-unit apartment complexes has increased

significantly. Battle Ground's firefighters do not have the capability to respond to emergencies at buildings over two floors in height nor at those requiring high fire flows. With several more large, multi-level projects already under construction in the City, the lack of a locally-available aerial ladder fire truck poses a serious risk to the life and safety of firefighting professionals and the community on a daily basis.

According to the standards of the Washington Survey and Rating Bureau, Battle Ground is characterized as the type of community for which an aerial ladder truck is required. Current practice is to rely on mutual aid services from neighboring Vancouver and Clark County fire departments when the need arises. With distances of ten and fifteen miles, respectively, their response times to Battle Ground are approximately 20 minutes and would prove costly should the need for an aerial ladder truck arise. Purchasing an aerial ladder fire truck would allow firefighters to perform interior rescue and firefighting operations at multi-level buildings throughout the City and is a vital, immediate need for local firefighting professionals. *Account: FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program*

**Emergency Operations Center Generator and DAS**

\$ 50,000

The City of Battle Ground maintains an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) which is utilized by Fire and Emergency personnel to coordinate emergency events for Northern Clark County. Battle Ground EOC serves as the backup EOC for Clark County Emergency Management Coordination and disaster response. The EOC is vital for the dispatch of both Fire and Police events during an emergency. The EOC needs a backup generator to provide reserve power to City Hall. Should City Hall lose power during a disaster without a backup generator, the network would go down leaving the City EOC with no network capability.

Battle Ground High School and Police Station are in need of Distributed Antenna Systems (DAS). Modern construction techniques and materials can block or degrade internal and external wireless communications. DAS installation at the High School and Police Station will extend wireless coverage within the structures, allowing first responders to communicate clearly in an emergency. *Account: FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant*

**School Resource Officer**

\$ 125,000

A COPS Hiring Grant would allow the Battle Ground Police Department to hire a second SRO to restore a critical presence within the K-8 populations and assist with problems at the high school. The new SRO will work in conjunction with school officials, juvenile justice professionals, alcohol and drug prevention groups, and other community resources to increase the resiliency of children in our community and address the prevalence of suicide, depression, isolation among students and bullying.

In the Battle Ground School District, 105 suicide threats and 50 attempted suicides were recorded between 2012 and 2014. The rate of suicide-related mortality within Battle Ground School District is 16.7/100,000, about 20% higher than the rate for Washington State.

The new SRO will foster trusting relationships and communication channels between the police department and student-oriented community partners. The SRO will create community-wide awareness, shared language, and understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and assist partners to adopt trauma-informed approaches and policies. Over the long-term, the project will improve mental, physical, emotional, and behavioral health, academic achievement, and family and child resilience. *Account: COPS Hiring*

## **POLICY INITIATIVES**

### **FY 18 Program Funding**

The City supports maintaining funding levels for these critical local programs - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), USDA Rural Development, COPS Hiring, Byrne Discretionary and Economic Development Administration.

### **Protect Municipal Bonds**

The City strongly supports protecting tax exempt municipal bonds from being eliminated or limited. Since the federal income tax was instituted in 1913, interest earned from municipal bonds issued by state and local governments have been exempt from federal taxation. These bonds are the primary financing mechanism for state and local infrastructure projects, with three-quarters of the infrastructure projects in the U.S. built by state and local governments, and with over \$3.7 trillion in outstanding tax-exempt bonds, issued by 30,000 separate government units.

Local governments save an average of 25 to 30 percent on interest costs with tax-exempt municipal bonds as compared to taxable bonds. This is true because investors are willing to accept lower interest on tax-exempt bonds in conjunction with the tax benefit. If the federal income tax exemption is eliminated or limited, states and localities will pay more to finance projects, leading to less infrastructure investment, fewer jobs, and greater burdens on citizens who will have to pay higher taxes and fees.

### **COPS Technology Funding**

The City strongly supports additional funding for the COPS Technology program. There are very few funding options at the federal level to help police departments purchase equipment despite the fact that federal mandates continue to require costly upgrades. Federal funds for equipment upgrades are important especially for police departments with cash strapped budgets.

### **Internet Sales Tax**

The City supports the Marketplace Fairness Act, which would provide states and local governments with the authority to require out-of-state sellers to collect sales tax. At a time when our cities and towns face on-going budget challenges under lingering recessionary impacts, having the authority to collect sales taxes owed on internet or out-of-state purchases is essential. The Washington State Department of Revenue estimates it would generate \$650 million for Washington local governments and \$1.3 billion for the state over the next 5 years. Over the 2015-2017 biennium, Battle Ground would receive \$59,268 in sales tax. Battle Ground supports an exemption level for small businesses of \$10 million.

### **USDA Rural Development Community Facility Grants**

The City supports increasing the amount of grants available under the USDA Rural Development Community Facilities program. Less than \$15 million is made available nationwide through the grant program. While loan programs can be useful, cash strapped rural communities would greatly benefit from allocating more funding to grant programs that directly invest in transportation, water and community facility projects throughout rural America.

### **EPA Regulatory Concerns and Unfunded Mandates**

The City opposes legislative or regulatory initiatives that undermine local government decision making and contributes to reduction in our workforce. The partnership with federal policy makers should recognize local government roles and no preempt city authority on issues such as land use, rights of way and other local functions.