



2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



TRANSPORTATION

State Route 516 Funding Shortfall: The City of Covington received funding within the Connecting Washington package to complete improvements along State Route 516 from Jenkins Creek to 185th Ave SE. Due to project cost increases, the City faces a \$1 million shortfall. To date, the City has invested over \$6 Million towards State Route 516. The City requests the state's investment of an additional \$1 million in order to complete the project.

Widening and Safety Improvements on State Route 18: The City is grateful for the state's investment of \$640 million for widening and safety improvements along State Route 18. The City will be closely monitoring the development of the project and urges the Legislature to maintain the current project timeline and phase of funds in a manner that allows for the most expeditious delivery schedule.

Maintenance and Preservation: Although the Legislature made significant investments in Move Ahead Washington, there is still more work to be done to address local maintenance and preservation needs. The City urges the Legislature to identify a sustainable, ongoing funding source that supports existing transportation infrastructure and meets the unique needs of communities throughout the state.



EXTENDED PLANNING DEADLINES

Cities are grappling with challenges in meeting the legislative deadlines outlined in House Bills 1110, 5290, and 1337, scheduled for June 2025. These deadlines, as written, create a position where every city is vying for the same resources. This situation is particularly burdensome for smaller cities with constrained budgets and understaffed resources. Extending these deadlines is essential to afford cities the crucial time and personnel needed to successfully implement these policies, ultimately ensuring the enactment of these bills.

CAPITAL FUNDING - JENKINS CREEK TRAIL

The City requests \$750,000 in the 2024-25 Capital Budget for Jenkins Creek Trail to create recreational connections between Jenkins Creek Park and SoCo Park. This is the first step towards providing a local trail that provides a direct link to the King County Regional Trails, providing residents from Covington, neighboring cities, and surrounding unincorporated areas equal access to recreational amenities. Trail users will have the ability to reach several local destinations, including neighborhoods, parks, schools, healthcare, and downtown/commercial areas.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The current implementation of HB 1220 creates a challenge for cities, mainly due to a lack of clarity in assessing housing target allocations at the five-year check-in by the Department of Commerce. This issue of reporting and expectations is related to inconsistent guidance by the Department of Commerce, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and King County (KC) regarding expectations that cities shall meet the housing target allocations. Covington is particularly concerned about the ambiguity surrounding how cities' financial contributions to housing authorities for regional housing construction projects will be evaluated by these different agencies in meeting the city's housing targets.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The state and local governments have a shared responsibility to provide public safety services that protect, connect and support residents. The City of Covington contracts with King County Sheriff's Office for court, jail and law enforcement services. In the past year, the cost to maintain the same level of public safety services has increased by over 20% in the past two years. Covington requests further investment from the Legislature in order to keep up with the increase in public safety costs and the growing demand for services.

*The City supports the efforts of the Association of Washington Cities and Sound Cities Association.