



AWC 2027 legislative prep update briefing

August 17, 2026



AWC's Government Relations Team

Candice Bock

Director

Issue areas – Economic development; federal issues; finance, taxes & budgets; human resources, labor relations & pensions; liability; open government

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Issue areas – Building codes; environment & natural resources; housing & homelessness; land use & planning

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Issue areas – Public works & infrastructure; telecommunications; transportation; utilities & energy

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Issue areas – Cannabis; emergency management; general government; human services & behavioral health; public safety & criminal justice

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Issue areas – Building codes; environment & natural resources; housing & homelessness; land use & planning

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Issue areas – Cannabis; emergency management; finance, taxes & budgets; human services & behavioral health; public safety & criminal justice

Kirsten Petersen

Special Projects Coordinator

Issue area – Economic development; federal issues; human services & behavioral health; parks

Rob Dumouchel

Small Cities Program Manager

Small cities assistance



AWC's Legislative Priorities Committee

33 city officials from around the state

Two-year term (26-27) appointed by the President

Chaired by the AWC President

New approach in 2027 to encourage more engagement throughout the interim and session

26-27 Legislative Priorities Committee members

President Jon Nehring, Mayor, Marysville, Chair
Vice President Matthew Lundh, Mayor, Cle Elum, Vice Chair

James Alberson, Councilmember, Renton
Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager, Ellensburg
Roger Bell, Mayor, Selah
Francis Benjamin, Mayor, Pullman
Neal Black, Deputy Mayor, Kirkland
Regan Bolli, City Manager, Covington
Fred Brink, Mayor, West Richland
Krystal Craig, Councilmember, Gold Bar
Leatta Dahlhoff, Mayor, Tumwater
David Goldman, Deputy City Administrator, Oak Harbor
Linda Herald, Councilmember, Wenatchee
Stanley Holland, Councilmember, Orting
Kitty Klitzke, Councilmember, Spokane
Katrina Knutson, City Administrator, Gig Harbor
Erin McCardle, Mayor, Chelan

Ronn Mercer, Mayor Pro Tem, Duvall
Laura Mork, Councilmember, Shoreline
Mark Mullet, Mayor, Issaquah
Lon Pluckhahn, City Manager, Vancouver
Rob Putaansuu, Mayor, Port Orchard
Maritza Rivera, Councilmember, Seattle
Sandesh Sadalge, Councilmember, Tacoma
Victoria Schroff, Councilmember, Maple Valley
Don Schwab, Councilmember, Everett
Brian Shay, City Administrator, Hoquiam
Melissa Stuart, Councilmember, Redmond
Claire Sumadiwiryra, Councilmember, Bellevue
Chuck Torelli, Mayor Pro Tem, Kennewick
Toni Troutner, Councilmember, Kent
Don Vanney, Mayor, Arlington
Ben Wick, Councilmember, Spokane Valley

Developing AWC's 2027 Legislative Agenda



Legislative Priorities Committee meeting to develop recommendations – May 1, June 25, July 22, Sept. 9



Member input & SCAC & LCAC input



August 17 Member update webinar



September 9 Legislative Priorities Committee meeting to vote on recommendations



September 24 AWC Board will adopt the 2027 Agenda

Looking ahead to 2027

105-day marathon, full budget session

New leaders of key committees & new legislators

Another budget shortfall

Continued impacts from federal actions

Key topics may include: education funding, more on housing, focus on affordability



AWC legislative agenda for 2027

Focus on budget
sustainability

Overview of potential 2027 issues



Budget sustainability

- Expand existing revenue tools: TBD tools; MCJAA; increased liquor and cannabis revenue sharing and flexibility; revise the property tax cap
- Fully fund an ongoing local government fiscal health account that includes a growth factor
- Undertake a collaborative study to develop recommendations for an update of the local tax structure



Public safety & criminal justice

- Increase state funding for the Municipal Criminal Justice Assistance Account
- Expand the timeframe for using HB 2015 grant funds
- Clarify the ability to use and establish appropriate requirement when using generative AI in police reports



Transportation

- Increase TBD funding tools – vehicle weight fees; councilmanic sales tax authority
- Work to limit transportation related liability by modernizing insurance coverage requirements, allowing courts to consider seatbelt usage; and providing a defense for cities when the claimant was engaged in a crime
- Support sustainable state and local revenue sources to fund local transportation needs

Overview of potential 2027 issues



Public works & infrastructure

- Authorize use of \$500 million from the Public Works Assistance Account to fund projects
- Provide support for more technical assistance to smaller jurisdictions to help them access funding
- Ensure regulatory requirements, including proposals related to procurement and contracting, are balanced and take into account the impacts on local governments and ratepayers.



Land use & housing

- Increase funding and expand eligibility for the Connecting Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP)
- Clarify HB 1220 obligation to plan for an accommodate growth and specific income levels is a planning responsibility and not a funding requirement
- Provide authority to suspend impact fees without a requirement to backfill funding
- Authorize a local short term rental tax for affordable housing

To do list: Before 2027



Get regular meetings on the calendar

The interim is your best opportunity to get real time with your legislators to discuss the issues impacting your community. By setting up regular meetings, you build understanding, relationships, and dialogue.



Develop your legislative agenda

A foundational tool to advocate for your city is an annual legislative agenda that distills what your city needs from your legislators in the upcoming session. This is where you can lay out your policy, budget and regulatory needs. Remember to indicate support for the AWC agenda as well.



Plan at least one tour or site visit

Inviting your legislators out to see a project or an area that illustrates a challenge can be a great way to spend time with your delegation and build support for your city. Think about inviting them to spend time with you and your public works crews in the field.



Stay engaged and help your elected officials engage in the legislative process

- ✓ District meetings – October-November
- ✓ Friday City Action Calls – every Friday during session
- ✓ Monday City Manager/Administrator calls – every other Monday (TBD)
- ✓ City Action Days – February 2027
- ✓ Read the *Legislative Bulletin* and provide feedback when requested
- ✓ Act when we send out action alerts
- ✓ Communicate with your legislators ALL THE TIME
- ✓ Stick together - Support your fellow cities and towns

What are the legislative issues that would help your city?

- ❖ What new, more flexible, or expanded revenue tools would you use?
- ❖ Which unfunded mandate would you eliminate?
- ❖ What could the legislature do to reduce your costs?
- ❖ What legislative action would really make a difference for your community?





Questions?

<https://wacities.org/advocacy>