



CITY OF PULLMAN

HIGH Tech, HIGHER Education, HIGHEST Quality of Life

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pullman-wa.gov

2021 Legislative Priorities (Economic Recovery – Retention – Recruitment)

A thriving downtown is vital to Pullman’s priorities for recovery, retention, and recruitment of businesses and future commercial sustainability. Pullman’s Downtown is the most appropriate place to serve as the center for community activity as we phase into the post COVID-19 world. Downtown is an obvious place for residents and visitors to form positive impressions about Pullman’s charm and distinctiveness. The effects of COVID-19 has seriously effected the ability to implement a Downtown Pullman Revitalization Plan. This plan has identified features that foster economic developments that include: availability of office space, ground-level retail environments, a variety of residential offerings, green spaces, and leisure enclaves. As the City phases into post COVID-19, implementation of the plan will require investment in design improvements, active response to market forces, promotion of assets, and focused attention of leadership. Implementation of the strategies recommended by the BDS consultant recommends the improvement of safety and accessibility by pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. This will create a more people-friendly environment and will encourage the use of downtown and be a boon to local business.

- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF):** Through TIF, the Legislature can partner with cities to build a robust and diverse economy. This will help to maintain, expand, and modernize local infrastructure to spur local private sector investment.
- **Parks & Recreation:** Public health, enhanced by adequate funding of grant programs and budgetary items that help youth and adults to live active and healthy lifestyles, will be an essential component of recovery in the coming years. The City of Pullman strongly encourages the Legislature to advocate for Key “Healthy & Active Communities” funding within the State Budget Process (Capital, Transportation, Operating Budgets).
- **Transportation Funding:** To ensure retention and recruiting while providing a safe and well-maintained transportation system, we ask for comprehensive transportation policies that provide new local funding options such as Transportation Benefit Districts (TBDs).
- **Liquor & Marijuana Sales Tax Distribution:** As local jurisdictions are responsible for administration and enforcement issues, the percentage of revenue from marijuana and liquor sales that is shared with city and county governments needs to be reevaluated.
- **Healthcare & Pullman Regional Hospital:** COVID-19 has placed previously unimaginable pressure on our health care systems, particularly those in rural areas. Legislative action to increase funding for physician residency training programs in eastern Washington will build the capacity we need for the growth of industry and jobs in our area. We also support increased funding for a more robust mental health system and efforts to streamline the health care credentialing process to get qualified mental health practitioners available to people in need.
- **Housing and Homelessness:** Affordable housing needs to be a top priority in the post COVID-19 recovery period. Flexible options should include rental assistance and eviction assistance beyond the current moratoriums. State regulatory restrictions that hamper the development of affordable housing also need to be examined.

- **Aftercare and Aging Aftercare:** For those recovering from the long-term effects of COVID-19 will be a growth industry. Pullman is well-positioned to be at the forefront of this economic opportunity as there is already a robust infrastructure for such care in our community. However, many more long-term/eldercare workers are needed. Education and certification programs need to be developed at the State level to assure that workers are available for these living wage jobs. Pullman's retired population is growing in size and advancing in age and are a positive force in our local economy. Assuring that there are trained eldercare workers to meet the needs of this important group and retain their economic influence should be a Legislative priority.
- **Immigration & Diversity:** We recognize the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The City Council hopes that the Legislature agrees and will work to ensure that these principles that make Washington State a great place to live, work, and play, are woven throughout all of the work of state and local government.
- **Transportation Safety Projects:** Recovery from COVID-19 will put more vehicles on our roadways. We ask that the Legislature to continue to add passing lanes on Highway 26 and 195 and to expedite their continued implementation. This project will not only save the lives of motorists but provide safe passage to and from Pullman for commercial traffic and visitors alike will encourage trade and investment in our area.
- **Police and Law Enforcement:** The reformation of the civil service system will enable Sheriffs & Police Chiefs greater flexibility to hire & promote law enforcement officers who are best suited to their communities, reflecting diversity and demonstrating commitment to the mission. Encourage the Legislature and Governor's office to establish earliest possible vaccination protocol for uniformed personnel.
- **Fire Service:** The City also encourages the Legislature to consider funding mechanisms that help offset the cost of training at the Washington State Training Academy and make permanent, the state temporary allowance of using immediate aerial suppression of wildfires
- **Alternative Energy Requirements:** The City has demonstrated its support for moving to clean energy by purchasing six hybrid busses and a successful grant application to purchase two all-electric buses. The City requests that the Legislature provide funding for alternative energy-related infrastructure upgrades to support these vehicles.
- **Public Works Trust Fund:** Demonstrating the capacity for necessary infrastructure is a strong recruiting inducement for private investors. The Public Works Trust Fund is seeking full funding for the program and to strengthen the program by ending ongoing revenue diversions.