

2017 Legislative Policy Statements

Standing Principles: Cities are responsible for solving day-to-day public problems and responding directly to the needs of their residents. City officials should be allowed flexibility to exercise the full range of their local decision-making authority to make appropriate decisions for their communities. Because cities must determine their priorities and set their budgets through public process that reflects local choices and priorities, Salem opposes legislation that creates unfunded state mandates, increases existing costs or reduces current revenues to local governments, restricts local revenues, or otherwise preempts local government authority. Salem supports revenue reform that provides budget stability for municipalities and better enables cities to meet the service demands of the community.

Positions on Similar Bills: To make the most efficient use of staff, Legislative Committee and Council time, the City Council allows legislative positions and priorities approved by the City Council during the course of the Legislative Session to apply to future bills with substantially similar language and intent during the same Legislative Session.

Economic Development: The ability of cities to provide municipal services and maintain community viability depends on a healthy local economy. Cities need economic development tools that assist in maintaining, expanding, and diversifying local economies. These tools must include appropriate state infrastructure financing programs and flexible local options.

- Mill Creek Infrastructure: Support continued State investment in the Mill Creek Corporate Center, which would make available much needed industrial land for future development and regional job creation.
- Job Creation and Incentive Programs: Oppose cuts to, or elimination of, Business Oregon's economic development programs that create and retain jobs.
- Enterprise Zones: Renew and preserve existing Enterprise Zone authority in order to maintain the program's effectiveness as a tool for cities to encourage business recruitment and expansion.
- Urban Renewal: Preserve urban renewal statutory authority in order to maintain the State-wide program as a tool for cities to encourage business recruitment and retention through capital infrastructure investments.
- Redevelopment of Abandoned, State Owned Properties: Support legislation that encourages the redevelopment of the North Campus, Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility, and other surplus State-owned properties, including providing funding for selected demolition of buildings and site preparation for potential redevelopment to enhance both the livability and economic vitality of adjoining neighborhoods.

- Economy: Oppose cuts that disproportionately affect Salem's state workforce, or programs and services that disproportionately affect Salem residents.
- Brownfields Redevelopment Proposal: Support and participate in developing legislation that encourages assessment, cleanup and re-use or redevelopment of brownfields and other underutilized sites, including incentives for cleaning up and redeveloping brownfield properties.
- Statewide Infrastructure Funds: Support capitalization of the Special Public Works Fund and programs to provide municipalities with the incentives necessary to make industrial sites ready for development.
- Oregon Industrial Site Readiness Program: Support program implementation and funding to advance industrial sites to market-ready status and create traded sector jobs.
- Oregon Industrial Site Readiness Assessment Program: Support program implementation and grant funding to bring regionally significant industrial lands to market-ready status.

Finance, Revenue and Cost of Service: Cities continue to experience substantial difficulty in maintaining basic services and meeting the service demands of their residents, despite the slow but steady economic growth at state and national levels. Residents desire quality services and deserve to have tax dollars spent efficiently and effectively on services they deem most important. City officials must be allowed to work with their communities to determine revenue sources and service priorities.

- Property Tax Reform: Support the League of Oregon Cities' efforts to refer property tax measures that mitigate the tax inequities and negative fiscal impacts created by Measures 5 and 50.
- Transportation Funding: Seek passage of a comprehensive funding package with a top priority of maintaining and preserving existing transportation infrastructure.
- State Shared Revenues: Oppose any effort that violates the historic agreement between the State and local governments regarding shared revenues from liquor, cigarettes, and 9-1-1 taxes.
- Preemption of Local Government Taxing Authority: Oppose legislation that restricts or pre-empts local decision making and local control over revenues. Maintain local government authority to adopt revenue raising measures.
- Modification of the Tax Structure: Encourage and participate in efforts to evaluate changes to Oregon's current tax structure. Local government should be at the table to protect local interests.
- System Development Charges: Oppose attempts to limit or otherwise dilute the ability of cities to charge system development fees that fund infrastructure improvements for community growth and to mitigate deficiencies created by future growth.

- Oppose legislation which creates unreasonable public records request response timelines, caps fees or limits recovery of expenses associated with records requests, increases the City's defensible cost to produce or retain the public record, or expands the definition of public records.

Human Resources: Personnel-related expenses account for a substantial portion of municipal expenditures. Cities should be given broad discretion to manage their work forces.

- **Collective Bargaining:** Oppose legislation that requires specified benefit levels for public employees, mandates staffing levels, or determines or broadens the scope of bargaining unit membership or mandatory arbitration. Oppose legislation that requires mid-term bargaining to be subject to binding arbitration.
- **Workers' Compensation and Liability:** Oppose legislation that requires increased benefit levels for public employees and mandates certain illness to be presumptive for public safety sensitive positions, increases employer liability and legal defense costs, and narrows self-insured rights of public employers.
- **Personnel Administration:** Oppose legislation that creates duplicate regulations currently mandated by federal legislation. Support legislation to streamline and clarify current contradictory legislative mandates.
- **Management Rights:** Support efforts to provide cities with broad latitude to provide services and programs in the most efficient and cost effective manner.
- **Staff Work Schedules:** Oppose legislation aimed at guaranteeing employees work schedules that would be considered flexible and simultaneously predictable.

Land Use: A core function of cities is planning for, managing and protecting land use and municipal services within their borders. These fundamental activities are frequently the subject of considerable community interest and are undertaken within an increasingly complex array of state and federal laws governing land use and environmental protection.

- **Annexation:** Support legislation that removes the difficulties of annexing property to create a logical and efficient City boundary supportive of urban growth, and oppose legislation that creates additional barriers to achieving land use goals under existing annexation laws—particularly in unincorporated urbanized areas located outside of city limits but within urban growth boundaries. Preserve local annexation authority and oppose measures that would be contrary to our City Charter, which emphasizes voter approval of proposed annexations.

Public Safety: City officials are best positioned to direct emergency response efforts that reflect community values and standards to ensure public safety within their boundaries. To achieve this, cities need adequate resources, tools and authority.

- **Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP):** Oppose legislation that pre-empts the authority of a municipality to select its own PSAP (9-1-1 center) and forces state-mandated, regional consolidation of existing PSAPs.
- **Interoperability:** Support cost effective solutions that leverage partnerships to achieve interoperability within the public safety communications system.
- **Technology and Equipment:** Support legislation that will enable police agencies to retain data gathered from electronic devices for a sufficient amount of time to investigate and solve crimes. Oppose legislation that eliminates the option for cities to receive equipment from federal agencies that will increase the ability to protect residents. Oppose body camera legislation that creates unreasonable demands on city resources for required data retention and records requests.
- **Mental Health Services:** Support increased resources across the state for persons with mental health issues and those who assist them, particularly in crisis situations.
- **Oregon Resilience Plan:** Support the implementation of an ongoing, long-term resilience plan aimed at reducing risk and improving recovery from a major seismic event.
- **Hazardous Materials Transportation:** Support enhanced reporting of hazardous materials transportation, with notification to local agency first responders, and support increased funding for first responder training and equipment to enhance local emergency response capabilities to hazardous materials incidents.

Telecommunications: With consolidation of telecommunications providers and the convergence of various telecommunications services, the City of Salem believes in the importance of telecommunications policies that protect and enhance local government authority without interfering with competition or creating barriers to private investment in the telecommunications industry.

- **Right of Way Management:** Oppose attempts to pre-empt or dilute city authority to manage the public's right of way (ROW) and to determine and collect just and reasonable compensation on behalf of the public for use of the ROW. Oppose efforts to direct use of compensation or take away the City's right to determine the party responsible for relocation of facilities in the rights of way.
- **Franchise Fee/Privilege Tax:** Oppose caps to franchise fees charged to telecommunications providers and pre-emption on future taxation of internet.

Environment: City officials place high importance on protecting and enhancing the environment in order to maintain the quality of life for both current and future generations. Preserving our natural resources must be done in concert with providing adequate economic opportunities.

- Municipal Water Rights: Support protection and preservation of municipal water rights and drinking water sources, and affirm the needs of growing communities to have sufficient resources to efficiently serve expanding populations