

2023 LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

City of Bellingham - Port of Bellingham - Whatcom County

The joint legislative agenda outlines and defines the shared objectives of the three entities and the commitment to work cooperatively with the Legislature, to strengthen the partnership between state and local governments, and to ensure that we have the full resources to implement the policies and goals as adopted by the State of Washington.

- **Behavioral Health**
 - Support greater access to substance abuse treatment and crisis services
 - Support state investment in the planning, construction, operations, and maintenance of regional behavioral health facilities
 - Continue state funding for alternative response programs
 - Increase funding for behavioral health services and homeless crisis response
- **Criminal Justice**
 - Support funding for criminal and civil justice assistance and alternatives
 - Support state investments to help with the impacts of the Blake decision
 - Continue to improve legislation addressing law enforcement response
 - Encourage the State to provide funding for local government's Criminal Justice capital facilities
- **Capital Budget Priorities**
 - Preserve MTCA funding for environmental cleanup projects and brownfield redevelopment efforts
 - Continued funding for countywide broadband infrastructure
 - Provide funding for What-COMM Dispatch Facility
- **Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability**
 - Continued fiscal and policy support for energy efficiency and clean energy transition and development
 - Grant funding to support climate adaption and resilience projects, including funding for fully integrating climate change planning into Comprehensive Plans and other Growth Management Act documents
 - Provide funding for watershed planning efforts, including the Water Solutions Table and floodplain mitigation efforts
- **Housing Affordability and Child Care**
 - Advocate for policies and funding that increase housing affordability
 - Provide prudent flexibility in County Investment Pool Funds to invest in community needs, including Affordable Housing and childcare projects
 - Provide funding for childcare facilities and operation, including subsidies
- **Economic Development and Fiscal Sustainability**
 - Extend the .09% local sales and use tax for public facilities
 - Protect and enhance local revenue sharing options

