



## **City of Kelso 2017-2019 Legislative Biennium Agenda** *(Revised for 2018 Legislative Session)*

### **Pass a 2017-19 Capital Budget that Funds Tam O'Shanter Athletic Complex Improvements**

The City of Kelso encourages the Legislature to pass a 2017-19 Capital Budget that includes \$1 million to improve the Tam O'Shanter Athletic Complex. The most recent version of the Capital Budget (released 7/20/17) includes this funding. The Tam O'Shanter Park is a regionally-significant athletic complex which provides recreation and expansive public space for residents. The park contains three baseball and softball stadiums, soccer fields and disc golf, in addition to river trails, playgrounds and community gathering space. The park's heavy usage and limited ingress/egress points have created a need for additional parking facilities that improve access for both patrons and emergency vehicles. Tam O'Shanter's current paved parking areas are insufficient for demand, and auxiliary lots are difficult to maintain or prone to standing water.

### **Reimburse City Funds that Backfilled Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loans**

Due to an error in the "re-appropriations only" 17-19 Capital Budget and the failure to adopt a Capital Budget, jurisdictions that received Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loans in previous biennia were issued stop work orders on projects that were mid-construction. The City of Kelso received one of these loans for the Minor Road Reservoir Project for \$4.5 million. Because the City was already under contract, Kelso would have incurred significant penalties had it stopped work. Instead, the City used its utility cash reserves to continue the project. The City requests budget proviso language retroactively reimbursing Kelso and similarly situated jurisdictions that continued to move projects forward on time, and within budget.

### **Local Business Licensing and Business & Occupation Tax Apportionment**

The City of Kelso recently joined the state business licensing system (ATLAS). The City will closely monitor any subsequent changes to the administration of local business licenses. Additionally, the Legislature has directed a work group of city and business stakeholders to explore changes to the apportionment of local business & occupation taxes. The City will monitor this work group and opposes any change to the apportionment formula that is not revenue neutral for cities.

### **Indigent Defense Funding**

The City of Kelso requests additional funding assistance to meet the new Supreme Court-mandated caseload limits. Under these standards, Kelso's indigent defense costs increased over 60% from \$90,000 to \$145,000 annually. Although expansion of the current public defense grant programs is appreciated, this is not a sustainable funding mechanism to address local financial burdens long-term. Kelso requests that the Legislature provide additional relief for the cost of providing indigent defense.

### **Future Transportation Request: S. Kelso RR Grade Separation Project**

The City is thankful for the \$25 million in Connecting Washington funds allocated to the S. Kelso Railroad Grade Separation Project (17-19: \$900k; 19-21: \$11,600k; 21-23: \$12,500k). Project design funded with the \$900,000 allocated in 17-19 is under way and the City soon expects an updated overall cost estimate. The S. Kelso Grade Separation Project increases safety by removing two at-grade crossings on Mill Street and Yew Street which are blocked by passing trains. The project will ensure emergency access to residents and businesses located between the BNSF mainline railroad and Cowlitz River. In future years, the City hopes to continue its partnership with the state in securing funding for the total cost of the project.

*The City supports the Association of Washington Cities' 2018 Legislative Priorities.*