



Agenda
City Council Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, October 28, 2025
Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard

City Council Workshop - 6:00 p.m.

Agenda Items:

1. Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (30 minutes)
 - Chris Waite, Parks & Public Facilities Director
2. Vacant Buildings (20 minutes)
 - Mike Rizzitiello, Development Services Director
3. Code Enforcement - Process Overview (30 minutes)
 - Heather Kintzley, City Attorney
4. Draft 2026 Legislative Priorities (20 minutes)
 - Joe Schiessl, Deputy City Manager

Future Workshop Agenda Items

Adjournment

This meeting will be broadcast live on [CityView Channel 192](#) on the City's website and on the [City's YouTube Channel](#).

Richland City Hall is ADA accessible. Requests for sign interpreters, audio equipment, and/or other special services must be received 48 hours prior to the meeting by calling the City Clerk's Office at 509-942-7389.



COUNCIL WORKSHOP COVERSHEET

Council Date: 10/28/2025

Department: Parks & Public Facilities

Strategic Priority 4 - Quality of Life

Subject

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (30 minutes)

Summary

MIG, the City's consultant for the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan, will provide a presentation to City Council on the status of the plan update. The planning process is about halfway complete, and the presentation will summarize findings from recent community engagement activities, including surveys and pop-up events that gathered input on how residents use and value Richland's parks, trails, recreation facilities, and programs. MIG will highlight key themes that emerged from the engagement such as access and connectivity, facility renewal, and opportunities for expanded programming, and discuss how this feedback is guiding the development of the updated plan.

The PROS Plan update is part of the broader *Future in Focus* initiative, which integrates parks and recreation planning with transportation and land use efforts to ensure coordinated community growth and investment. MIG will outline the current project phase, anticipated schedule, and next steps in preparing the draft plan for review early next year.

The workshop will also provide an opportunity for Council to ask questions, offer input, and help shape priorities that will guide future park and recreation investments across the city.

Attachments

- I. Richland PROS_City Council October 2025 Presentation



City of Richland Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, & Open Space Plan

City Council Meeting

October 28, 2025



Agenda

- **Purpose and Schedule Update**
- **System Assessment Findings**
- **Community Engagement and Key Themes**
- **Draft Vision and Plan Building Blocks**
- **Discussion Questions**
- **Next Steps**

PROS Plan

- Builds on current plan and other City initiatives
- Comprehensive, citywide long-range plan
- Systemwide needs analysis
- Future vision, goals, and objectives
- Recommendations for capital projects, recreation, operations, and maintenance
- Implementation and funding tools

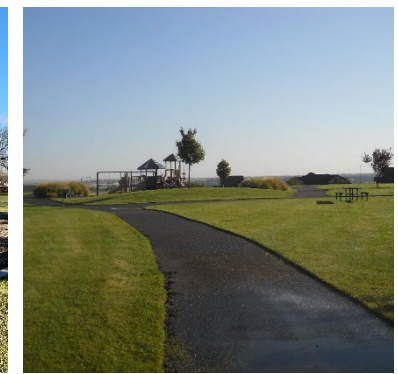
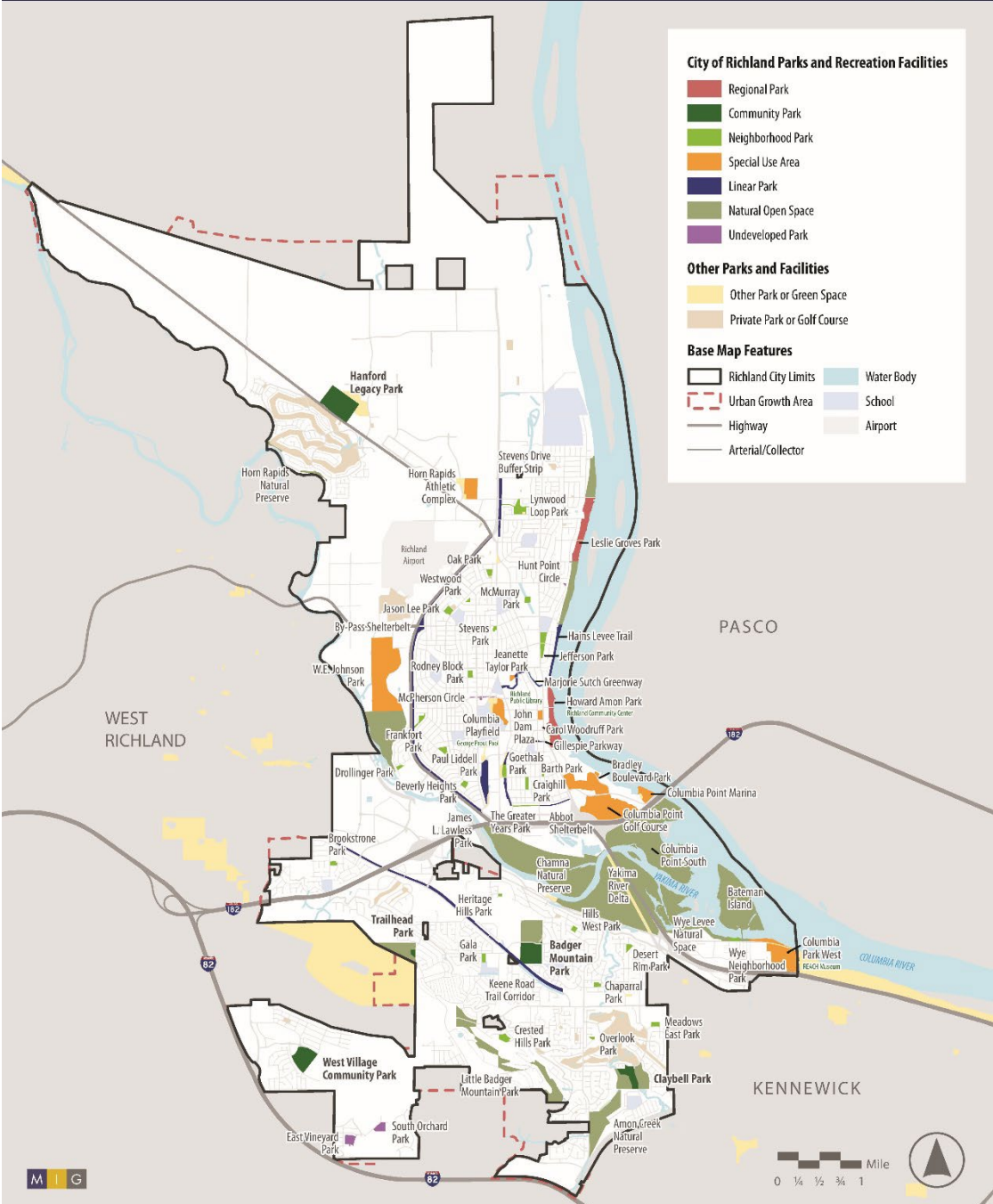


Schedule and Progress



System Assessment Findings

Existing System Map



Programs & Services

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

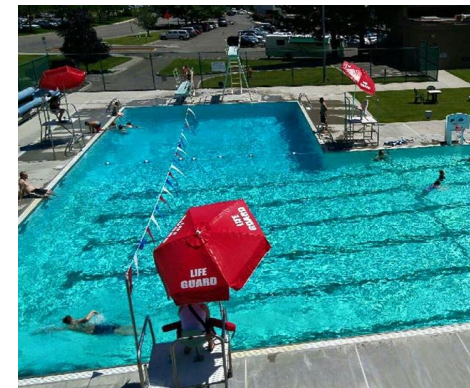
76 Large outdoor special events contracted

23 Sports tournaments contracted

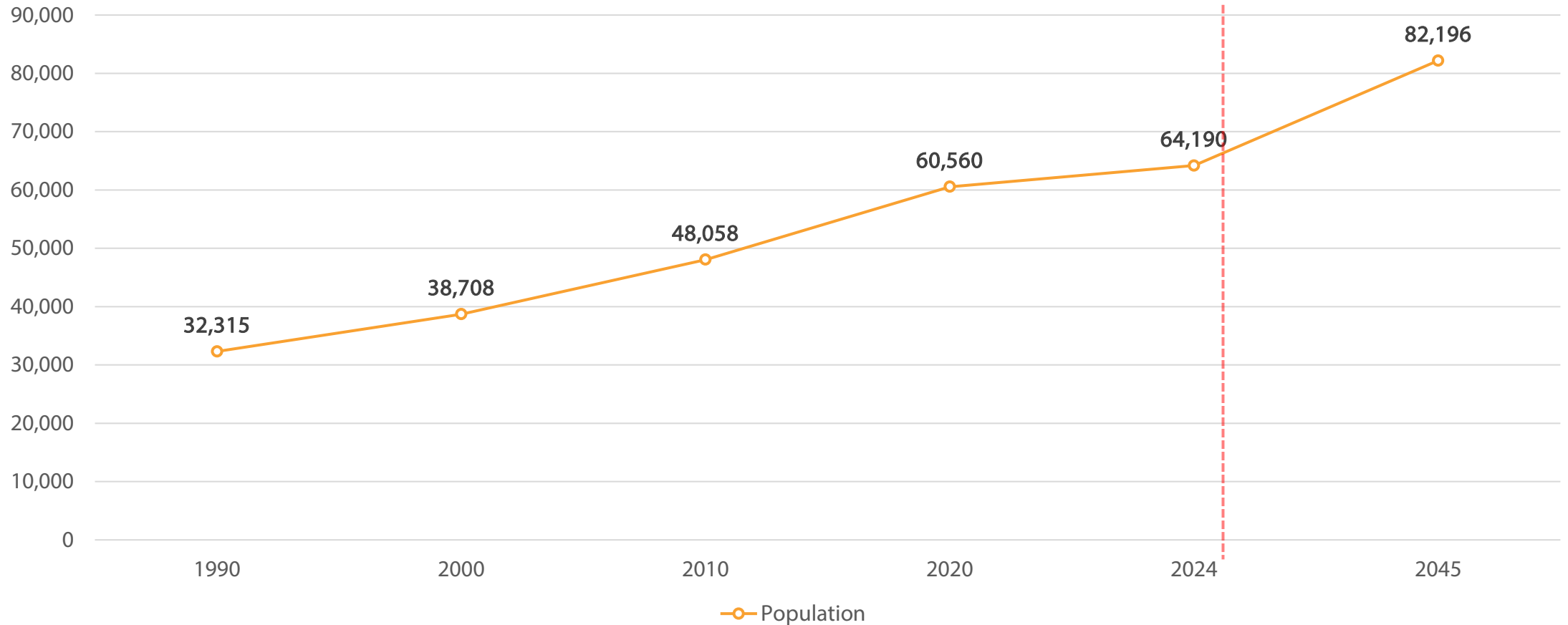
11,371 Community center drop-ins/registrations

6,243 Pool drop-ins

City of Richland, 2024



Population Growth



Source: 2024 Office of Financial management official population estimate, Decennial Census; 2045 20-year population estimate provided by City of Richland staff

Key Highlights: Strengths & Opportunities

- Natural area access
- Variety of features
- Well-maintained parks
- Well-known events
- Partnership and community involvement / stewardship
- Forward thinking planning
- Great City staff



Key Highlights: Challenges

- Natural area management
- Local and regional growth
- Aging partnership agreements
- Physical barriers to connectivity
- Balancing investments across the system
- Budget, staffing, and resources for programs, events, services, maintenance, and administration
- Climate impacts and rising costs



Community Engagement

Engagement at a Glance



5

Community Focus Group Meetings



Interview Topics

- Accessibility
- Trails & Conservation
- Large Events
- Youth Sports
- City Partners



52

Ambassador Toolkits Distributed



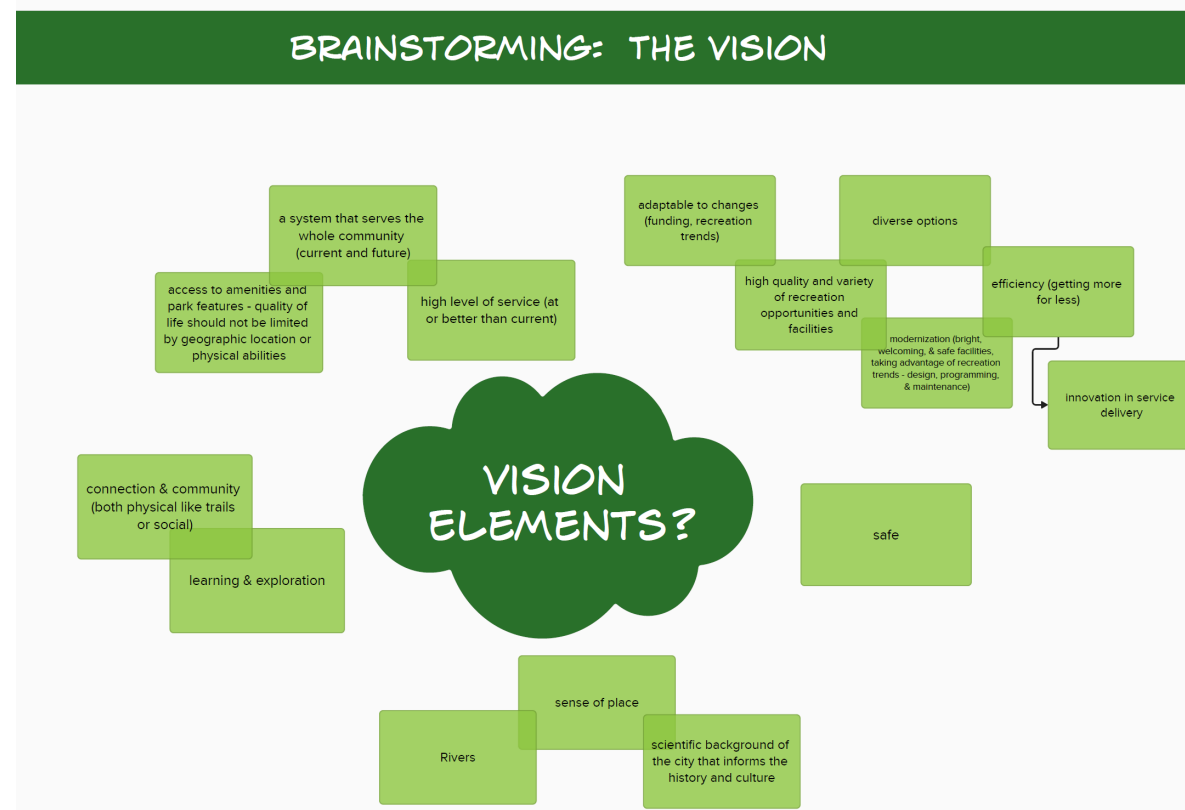
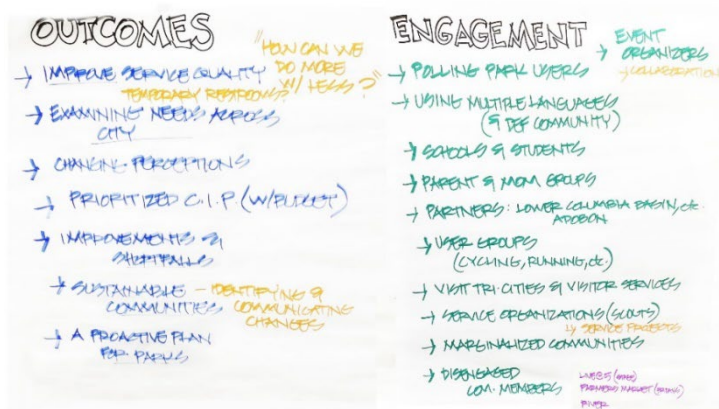
1,159

Community Survey Responses



2

Parks & Recreation Commission Meetings



Online Community Survey

- **Available online** from August 11th to August 29th 2025
- **Included 17 questions** with an additional six demographic questions (all questions, including demographic ones, were optional)
- **1,159 total “visitors”** or people who clicked into or opened the survey
- Of that number, **818 fully completed survey responses** (71% completion rate)



Outreach Key Theme #1

Richland offers a varied and well-maintained system of parks, trails, open spaces, programs, and events that is well-loved by the community.

Both City partners and park, trail, facility, program, and event users noted their appreciation for Richland's park system



You're already doing a tremendous amount. Keep up the amazing work!

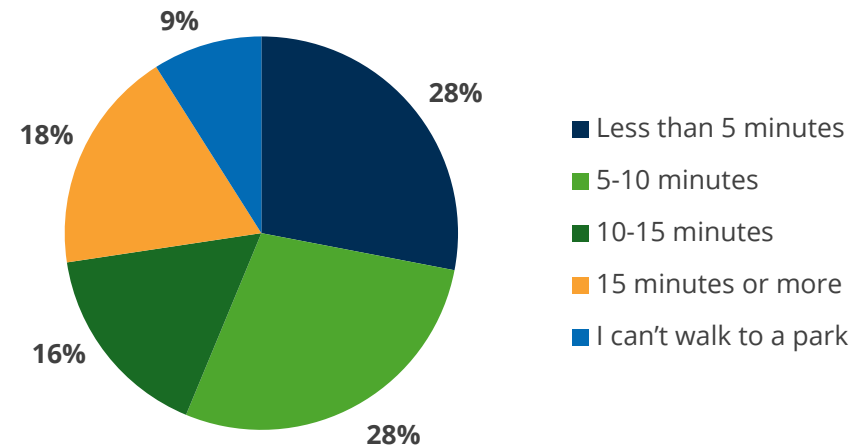
- Online Community Survey Respondent

Outreach Key Theme #2

Access to parks can be limited by poor connectivity, barriers, unsafe walking or biking conditions, or overall distance from people's homes to a park.

If you were to walk to your nearest park, how long would it take you?

86%
of community survey
respondents said they typically
drive to a park



Respondents to this question; n = 935

Outreach Key Theme #3

Natural areas are assets that provide benefits to both people and wildlife and **need to be taken care of.**

57%

of community survey respondents said being surrounded by trees, plants, and wildlife was their top reason for visiting a park

Challenges noted by the Trails & Conservation Focus Group:

- Threats from growth, development, and public use on natural areas
- Management and maintenance practices for river corridors
- Invasive species and climate impacts
- Cost of trail and open space acquisition & management

Outreach Key Theme #4

There are concerns about **safety and cleanliness at certain City parks** and a need for increased efforts to keep the park system safe, clean, and welcoming.

In the categorized open-ended responses to the question of "Do you have any ideas or thoughts on how the City can better support access to parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces?"

17%

of responses identified issues around park maintenance and cleanliness

13%

of responses identified parks safety and security (law enforcement, vandalism, homelessness)

Ideas Shared by Community Members

- Additional lighting at parks, trails, and facilities
- Increased City staff or uniformed officer presence at parks
- Security cameras

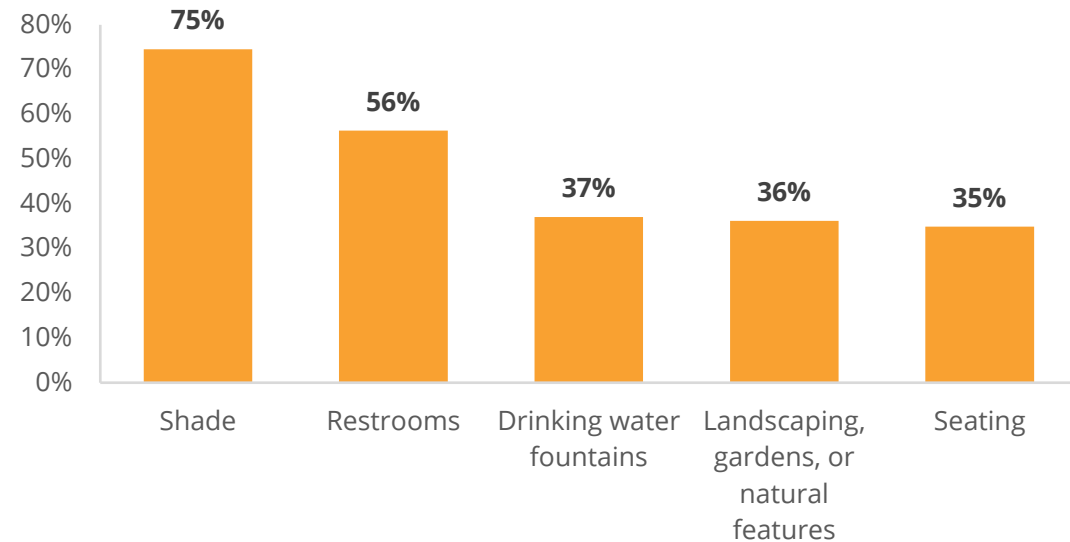
Outreach Key Theme #5

Parks need **amenities to increase user comfort** like shade, restrooms, and seating.

35%

of community survey respondents chose added or improved comfort amenities (restrooms, seating, etc.) as one of their top three improvements to make to parks

What types of amenities would make parks, trails, recreation facilities, and open space areas more comfortable and welcoming?



Respondents to this question; n = 802

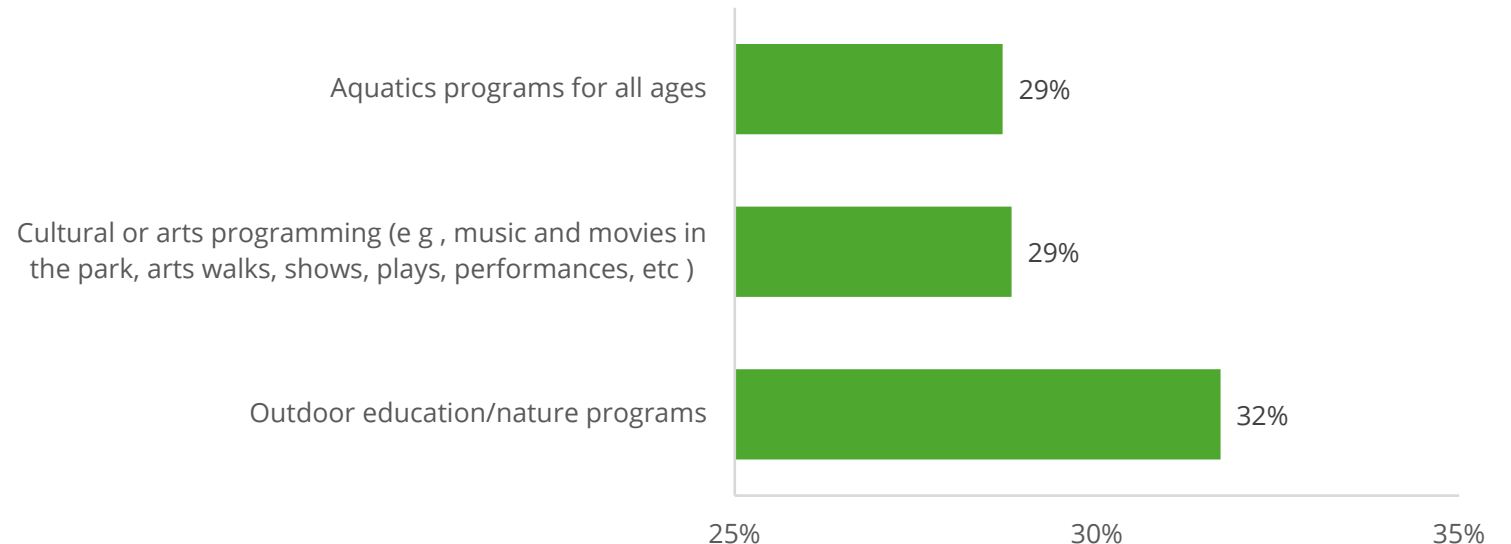
Outreach Key Theme #6

Richland hosts well-known events and popular recreation programs but there are **challenges to organizing events and programs and increasing offerings.**

Challenges

- Staff availability and capacity
- Facility space or site infrastructure
- Sponsorships, partners, resources

Top three responses to: What types of recreational programs or activities are missing, or you would like to see more of in Richland?

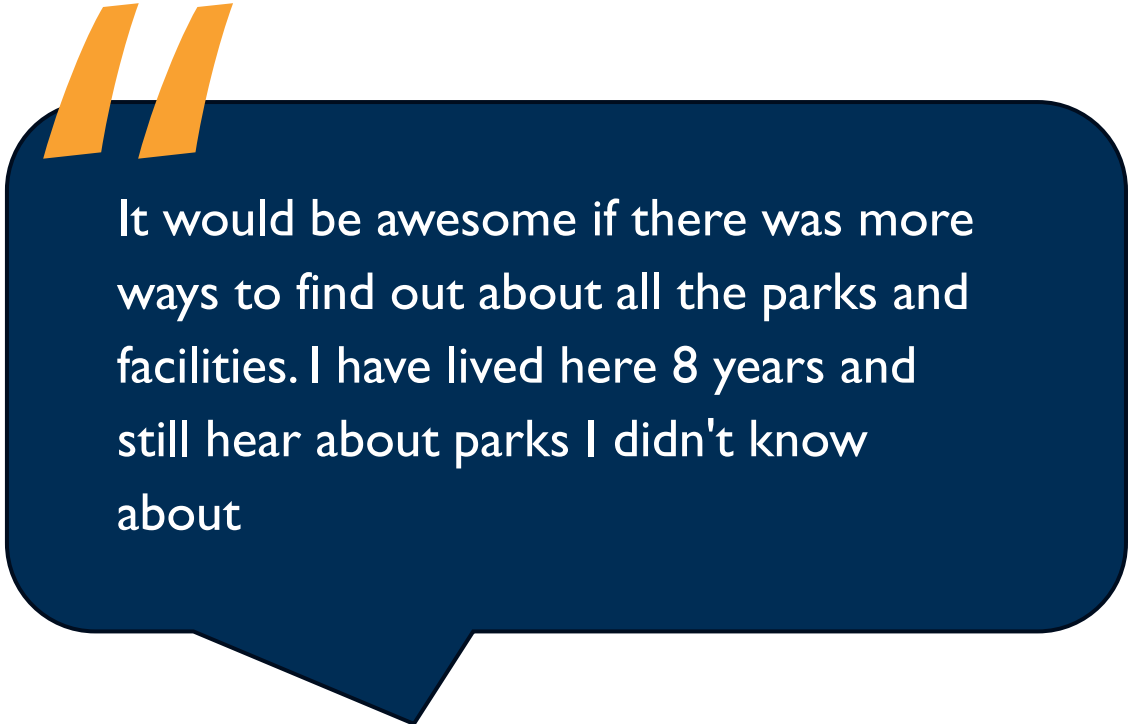


Outreach Key Theme #7

There is a desire for **better communication and information sharing** about parks, events, and programs.

59%

of respondents selected "lack of awareness" as an answer to what barriers they faced to participating in Richland recreation programs



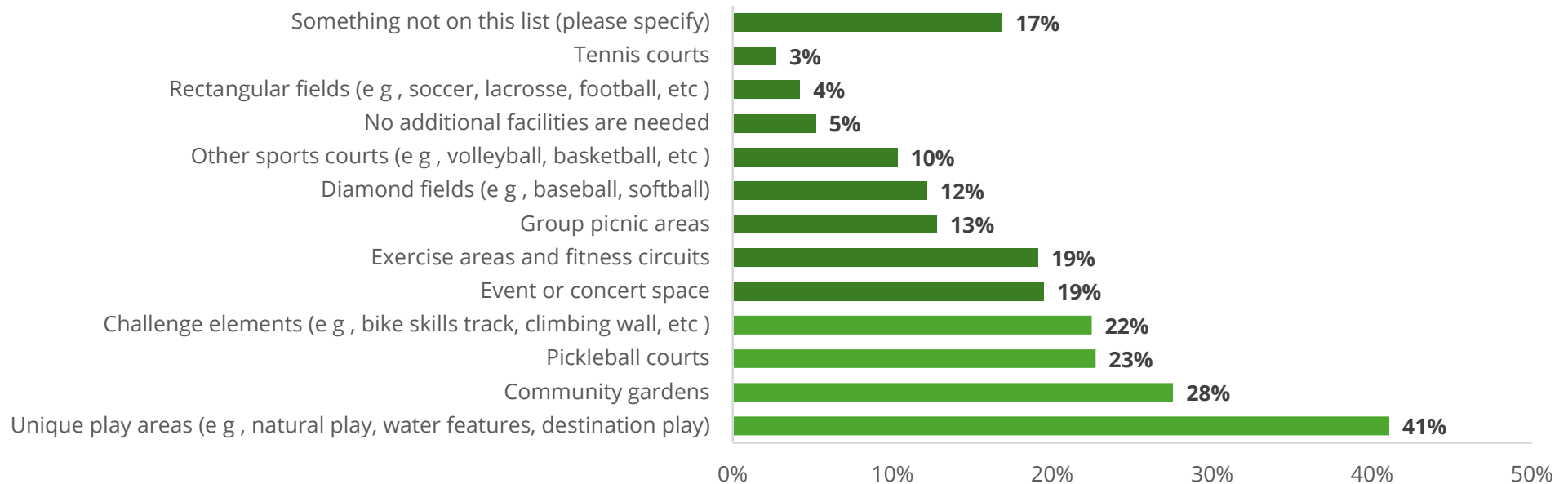
It would be awesome if there was more ways to find out about all the parks and facilities. I have lived here 8 years and still hear about parks I didn't know about

- Online Community Survey Respondent

Outreach Key Theme #8

There is a **desire for more facilities** including diverse and accessible play features, walking and biking trails, community gardens, pickleball courts, water and aquatics, sports fields, and dog parks.

What types of facilities would you like to see more of in Richland parks?



Respondents to this question; n = 806

DRAFT VISION AND PLAN BUILDING BLOCKS

Vision Statement (Draft)

“ From ridges to rivers, Richland’s parks and natural areas are healthy, welcoming, and resilient spaces that enrich life, inspire joy and belonging, encourage learning and exploration, and support the health and well-being of our people. The City supports a thriving community through active and connected neighborhoods, welcoming programs and events, and innovative, high-quality services. Natural areas, trails, and open spaces are carefully managed for future generations, along with opportunities to expand the knowledge and celebration of our unique environment and history. All of these qualities make Richland’s parks and recreation system the cornerstone of our community, providing the foundation for a healthy environment, a strong local economy, and distinctive sense of place. ”



Plan Building Blocks



RIDGES, TO RIVERS, TO NEIGHBORHOODS

Connecting our natural areas and shorelines, parks, and trails while preserving open space and securing future park land



HIGH QUALITY REINVESTMENT

Maintaining and improving our existing parks and recreation facilities with a focus on durability, safety, and sustainability



UNIQUELY RICHLAND

Showcasing our special landscape, culture, and identity through information, education, and communication



Ridges, to Rivers, to Neighborhoods

CAPITAL RECOMMENDATION EXAMPLES

- Trail / Natural Open Space Acquisition and Development
 - Tapteal Trail (formalize trail easements)
 - River to Ridges Trail (Connecting Badger Mountain Trails to Tapteal Trail)
- Parkland Acquisition and Development
 - City View Park Acquisition and Development of Undeveloped Park Sites (South Orchard Park and West Village Park)

Related Outreach Key Themes:

- Improve access to parks
- Care of natural areas
- Added recreational facilities



High Quality Reinvestment

CAPITAL RECOMMENDATION EXAMPLES

- Support Amenities (shade, restrooms, seating, parking)
- ADA Improvements
- Safety Improvements
- Update and Repair Old or Worn Facilities
- Improvement of Natural Open Spaces

Related Outreach Key Themes:

- Improved communication and information
- Added recreational facilities
- Clean and safe parks
- Improved comfort
- Varied and well-maintained system



Uniquely Richland

CAPITAL RECOMMENDATION EXAMPLES

- Systemwide Signage and Wayfinding
 - Use, Safety, and Etiquette Signage
- Public Art Installations
- New Destination Play Area
 - Thematic design in community park

Related Outreach Key Themes:

- Varied and well-maintained system
- Clean and safe parks
- Improved comfort
- Optimized events and programs
- Improved communication and information
- Added recreational facilities

Discussion Questions

- Do you think the **DRAFT VISION** and **BUILDING BLOCKS** meet community needs? What's missing?
- Thinking about the outreach **KEY THEMES** what would you prioritize? Where should the City focus its resources?

NEXT STEPS

Next Steps...





COUNCIL WORKSHOP COVERSHEET

Council Date: 10/28/2025

Department: Development Services

Strategic Priority 4 - Quality of Life

Subject

Vacant Buildings (20 minutes)

Summary

Staff will bring forward several items for Council discussion pertaining to vacant building regulations including: a) enforcing existing municipal codes; b) develop vacant building registries like some jurisdictions in the State and across the country; c) key sections of the International Property Maintenance Code.

A PowerPoint presentation will be used to facilitate staff's discussion with Council.

Attachments

- I. Vacant Building Registry Presentation



Vacant Building Regulations

Mike Rizzitiello

Development Services Director

October 28th , 2025

Agenda



- Vacant Building Regulations 101
- What can be done?
 - Existing Codes
 - Other Municipal Solutions
- Parting Thoughts
- Questions?



Vacant Building Regulations 101



Vacant Building Regulations 101

- Purpose is to promote general safety, security, and cleanliness of structure that are vacant.
- Broken Windows Theory
 - Criminological concept that posits that visible signs of disorder, such as broken windows, graffiti, and litter, can lead to an increase in more serious crime.
- International Property Maintenance Code has been around since 1998.
- Vacant building registry concepts took root in Midwest around the 2008 recession.





What does the term “Vacant” Mean?

- Liberty Lake
 - “Any condition that on its own or combined with other conditions present would lead a reasonable person to believe that the property is vacant and not occupied by authorized persons. Such conditions include but are not limited to overgrown and/or dead vegetation; accumulation of newspapers, circulars, flyers, and/or mail; past due utility notices and/or disconnected utilities; accumulation of trash, junk, and/or debris; statements by neighbors, passersby, delivery agents, or government employees that the property is vacant; and for residential properties, the absence of window coverings or furnishings consistent with residential habitation.”
- Bremerton
 - “Commercial building that has not had any legal occupancy during the preceding one hundred eighty (180) days.”
- Olympia
 - “A property that is not legally occupied.”
- Everett
 - “Any portion of a street-level commercial space that is not occupied and has not been occupied during the preceding ninety days.”





Existing Regulatory Codes

Existing Regulatory Codes

RMC 23.38.110: Maintenance of required landscaping.

Whenever any standard contained in this title requires the installation of landscaping, fencing, screening or a combination thereof, the owners of such property shall be responsible for the continued maintenance of such landscaping/fencing in good condition.

RMC 23.54.140 (J): Maintenance of landscaping within Commercial areas. The owner, tenant or duly authorized agent, if any, shall be responsible for the maintenance of all landscaping required pursuant to this section (RMC 23.54). Such landscaping shall be maintained in good condition so as to present a neat and orderly appearance; shall be kept free from refuse and debris; and living landscape material shall be kept alive and in a healthy condition.



RMC 23.54.160 (G): Maintenance of landscaping within

Industrial areas. The owner, tenant or duly authorized agent, if any, shall be responsible for the maintenance of all landscaping required pursuant to this section (RMC 23.54). Such landscaping shall be maintained in good condition so as to present a neat and orderly appearance; shall be kept free from refuse and debris; and living landscape material shall be kept alive and in a healthy condition.





RMC 23.58.040: Outdoor Lighting.

It is unlawful for any individual to engage in the following activities:

- A. The illumination after midnight of an outdoor public recreation facility unless a specific recreational activity is already in progress;
- B. The outside illumination of any buildings, public or private, by floodlight projected above the horizontal, between midnight and sunrise; provided, that this prohibition shall not apply to any emergency lighting as may be required by any public agency engaged in the performance of their duties;
- C. The illumination of outdoor signs by floodlight projected above the horizontal between midnight and sunrise.

RMC 23.70.270: Violations – Penalties.

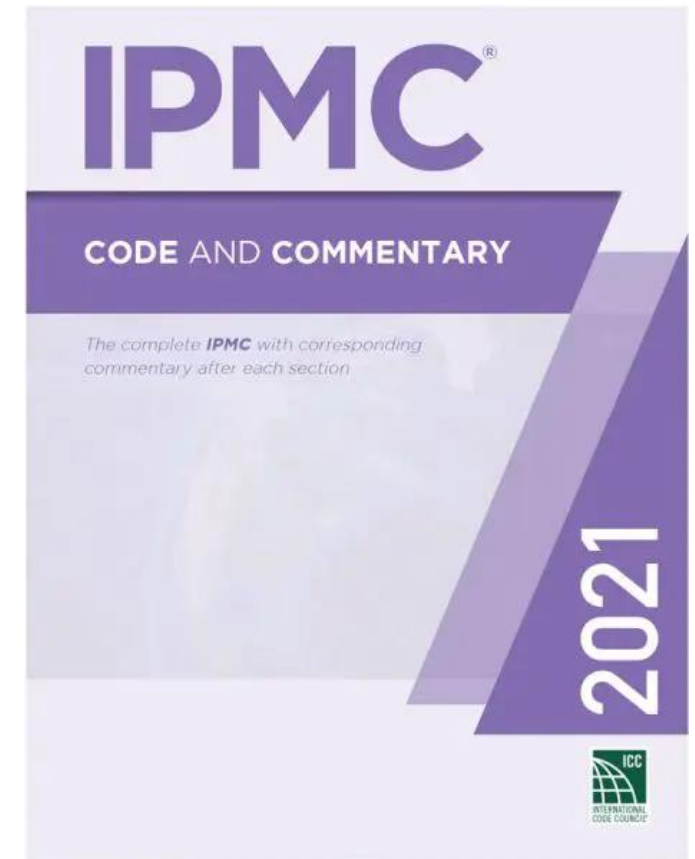
Any person who has violated any provision of this title shall have committed a civil infraction subject to a civil penalty as set forth in RMC 10.02.050(E).

Provided, if the same violator has been found to have committed an infraction violation for the same or similar Conduct two separate times, with the violations occurring at the same location and involving the same or similar sections Of the Richland Municipal Code or other similar codes, the third or subsequent violation shall constitute a misdemeanor, Punishable as provided in RMC 1.30.010 for criminal offenses. For any violation of a continuing nature, each day's violation shall be considered a separate offense and shall subject the offender to the above penalties for each offense.



International Property Maintenance Code

- The Richland Municipal Code adopts the International Building Code (IBC) pursuant to RMC 21.01.010(A).
- Pursuant to IBC 101.4.4. the IBC adopts the IPMC and considers it as part of the IBC for “existing structures and premises.”
- Any violation of the IPMC constitutes a violation of the IBC which is a violation of RMC 21.01.010(A).
- The [International Property Maintenance Code](#) by section as it is a standard code utilized in many jurisdictions across the country.
- Applicable sections:
 - Section 108 – Replace “Board of Appeals” with “Code Board”.
 - Section 109 – Violations
 - Section 111 – Unsafe Structures and Equipment
 - Section 112 – Emergency Measures
 - Section 113 – Demolition
 - Section 304 – Exterior Structure
 - Section 308 – Rubbish and Garbage





Municipal Solutions



Municipal Solutions

CITY OF AUBURN

Chapter 15.20 – Property Maintenance Code and Vacant Property Management. Includes Vacant Property Registration.

CITY OF BREMERTON

Chapter 6.11 – Vacant Commercial Building Registration.

CITY OF EVERETT

Chapter 16.16 – Maintenance of Vacant Commercial Space in the Central Business District. Establishes minimum maintenance requirements for vacant properties in the central business district; requires registration for each vacant commercial space.

CITY OF GRANDVIEW

8.24.020(4) – “All vacant, unused or unoccupied buildings and structures within the city, which are allowed to become or remain open to entrance by unauthorized persons or the general public because of broken, missing or open doors, windows or other openings, so that the same may be used by vagrants or other persons in a manner detrimental to the health and welfare of the inhabitants of the city. The existence of a building or structure under this subsection (A)(4) is a class “A” nuisance.”

CITY OF ISSAQUAH

Chapter 18.502.030 – Vacant or uninhabited commercial property. Includes maintenance standards.

CITY OF LYNNWOOD

Chapter 16.08 – Regulation and abatement of unsafe and unsanitary structures. unfit buildings, substandard buildings, nuisances, hearings before the Hearings Examiner, enforcement.

Chapter 10.08.200 – Definition of "nuisance" includes vacant, unused, or unoccupied buildings that have not been properly secured.

CITY OF OLYMPIA

Chapter 16.06.30 – Vacant Property Registration.



CITY OF PORT ANGELES

Chapter 13.16.010(c): “Every property in the City that has utility service available to it shall pay the base rate, as approved in the Utility Master Rate Schedule, for each available utility without regard to whether utility service is being consumed at that property.”

CITY OF SEATTLE

Various Code Chapters – includes requirements for maintaining vacant buildings, vacant building options, and vacant building monitoring program.

CITY OF SPOKANE

Chapter 17F.070 – Existing Building and Conservation (abandoned buildings, substandard buildings, unfit buildings, Foreclosure Registration Program). After one year, a boarded-up building is designated as an “unfit building.”

Chapter 8.02.067 – Annual Hearing Processing Fee (fee covers the cost of administration, notice, inspections, hearing process).



Municipal Solutions

Jurisdiction	Population	Year Adopted	Proof of Vacancy	Property Type	Registry	Fee
Liberty Lake	13,353	2017	Notice of default, Lien or foreclosure	All	Yes	\$200/Annual
Olympia	56,271	2022	Notice of default, foreclosure lien, commercial building that is unoccupied and not listed for sale or rent.	Undeveloped land, vacant residential buildings – 180 days, vacant commercial buildings not listed for sale or rent.	Yes	\$200/Annual
Grandview	11,599	1981	Missing doors or windows to exterior.	All	No – Is treated as Nuisance	Up to \$500 per infraction
Bremerton	45,291	2018	Failure to safely and completely close and secure all doorways and windows.	Just commercial buildings – 180 days.	Yes	\$150/Annual



Parting Thoughts

Parting Thoughts

- Failure to maintain property impacts values of adjacent properties and can attract criminal activities.
- Cities can regulate vacant structures.
- Need to determine definition of vacant?
 - Bremerton definition is straight forward.
- Are we going to regulate all structures or just commercial ones?
 - Commercial ones are a less significant lift.
- There is a limit to how far a jurisdiction can use police power in this arena (9th Circuit).
 - Lenci vs. City of Seattle (1964)
 - Polygon Corp vs. City of Seattle (1978)
 - Duckworth vs. City of Bonney Lake (1978)
- Municipal regulations can be based in part on aesthetic considerations.
- However, a public health, safety, or welfare issue must be present in order to substantiate regulations on vacant buildings.







COUNCIL WORKSHOP COVERSHEET

Council Date: 10/28/2025

Department: City Attorney

Strategic Priority 4 - Quality of Life

Subject

Code Enforcement - Process Overview (30 minutes)

Summary

Code enforcement in Richland exists to maintain community standards and protect public health, safety, and welfare. The City's authority for this work comes from the Washington State Constitution, state law, and the Richland City Charter. These provisions allow the City to identify, prevent, and abate nuisances that impact neighborhoods.

Most enforcement activity follows a simple and familiar pattern. A complaint is received, staff inspects the property, and the owner is given an opportunity to voluntarily correct the problem. In most cases, this cooperation resolves the issue without the need for penalties. When voluntary efforts fail, the City may issue a citation, and in rare instances, proceed to court or abatement. The process remains largely civil, designed to secure compliance rather than punishment. Richland's current model relies on a Code Enforcement Board to hear cases.

A small number of properties, however, fall outside this pattern. These are chronic or extreme violators, and their cases can take months or years to resolve. Properties on Jones Road, Pullen Street, Hains Avenue, and Thayer Drive are examples where conditions have required repeated action or full abatement. These cases demonstrate the patience and persistence needed to achieve long-term results while respecting legal due process.

Overall, Richland's code enforcement program is consistent with other Washington cities and produces strong outcomes through education, consistency, and fairness. The system works well for the vast majority of cases, but extreme situations continue to demand time, coordination, and careful legal attention.

Attachments



COUNCIL WORKSHOP COVERSHEET

Council Date: 10/28/2025

Department: Deputy City Manager

Strategic Priority I - High Performance Government

Subject

Draft 2026 Legislative Priorities (20 minutes)

Summary

Each year, the City of Richland identifies its state legislative priorities in preparation for the upcoming legislative session. The 2026 Washington State Legislative Session is scheduled to begin on January 12, 2026, and conclude on March 12, 2026. Actions taken by the Washington State Legislature have a direct and significant impact on the City's ability to provide essential municipal services to its residents.

Historically, the City of Richland has supported legislation that advances the Richland City Council's Strategic Plan and opposed measures that would preempt local authority or restrict the discretion traditionally vested in municipalities. The City's goal is to work collaboratively with the Washington State Legislature to strengthen the partnership between state and local government and to advocate for legislation and funding that enhance the quality of life for Richland residents.

The City is a member of several industry associations that develop and promote legislative agendas specific to their fields, including the Association of Washington Cities (AWC). In some instances, it is appropriate for the City to advance its own legislative agenda; in others, it is most effective to align with the agendas of partner organizations. For reference, both the City's draft 2026 Legislative Agenda and AWC's 2026 Legislative Agenda are included in this report.

Throughout the session, the City Manager's Office will collaborate with the Tri-Cities Legislative Council and other regional partners, including TRIDEC, the Tri-Cities Regional Chamber of Commerce, Visit Tri-Cities, the Port of Benton, the Port of Kennewick, and other community and industry stakeholders. Engagement will also include participation in the Tri-Cities Legislative Day in Olympia, scheduled for January 21, 2026.

Tonight's discussion serves as the initial step toward adopting the City's 2026 legislative priorities by resolution, coordinating with state elected officials, and preparing for active participation in the upcoming session.

Attachments

1. Draft 2026 City of Richland Legislative Priorities
2. 2026 Association of Washington Cities Legislative Priorities



The City of Richland is Washington's center for technology and innovation. Richland is working with partners on the following items for the 2025 legislative session.

Targeted Urban Area Amendment:

The legislature authorized targeted urban areas in 2022 allowing certain tax exemption for qualifying new businesses that create new jobs. The timeline for construction of the new businesses does not presently accommodate complex projects in support of the Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA). Increasing project construction timelines would benefit several known and anticipated nuclear, hydrogen, and other complex projects in support of the State and City's job creation, industrial growth, and clean energy objectives.

Shrubsteppe Regulatory Overreach:

Support efforts to right-size the regulation of shrubsteppe critical habitat in the Columbia Basin to balance with state and local growth objectives including housing production.

Protection of Sensitive ALPR Data:

Richland supports legislation that exempts automated license plate reader data from public disclosure under the Public Records Act.

Traffic Enforcement:

Richland supports legislation and programs allowing for the use of technology to augment traditional traffic enforcement methods with a specific emphasis on street racing.

Capital Project Funding:

SR-240/Aaron Drive Complete Streets Improvements Project:

This project will improve safety and mobility by making needed changes to a 40-year-old traffic design. The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments has named this project a tier one priority of their congestion management plan. In addition, Washington State Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration have each approved this project.

Island View to Vista Field Trail System:

This project will improve safety, mobility, and congestion on the SR-240 corridor. The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments and Benton-Franklin-Walla Walla Good Roads Association has named this project a top priority for the region. In addition, Washington State Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration have each approved this project. Design will be completed by 2027 and funding is needed for construction.

RCW 10.101.030 Public Defense Standards:

Richland endorses a regional solution to address a required reduction in misdemeanor caseloads for public defenders. This change, effective in July 2025, will significantly increase the number of public defenders required to prosecute crime occurring in the City of Richland. The cost to the City of Richland will be unsustainable. Richland requests legislative assistance to address the unfunded mandate.

State Crime Lab:

Encourage the State to increase funding and staffing for the State Crime Lab to provide more timely justice.

Housing Choice:

Richland supports legislation that encourages and facilitates access to housing through policies leading to increases in inventory to serve a wide range of incomes including fiscal tools to address needed infrastructure.

Northwest Advanced Clean Energy Park:

Richland supports utilizing industrially designated Hanford lands for projects in support of the Northwest Advanced Clean Energy Park.

Energy Generation and Effective Energy Transmission:

Richland supports reliable, affordable, and clean electrical resources. Richland strongly supports retaining critical base load energy resources, like the four lower Snake River Dams, as the state advances its carbon emission objectives. Richland also supports nuclear power generation and affiliated fuel refinement, fuel assembly, and advanced manufacturing in support of the clean energy business sector. Richland will advocate for new transmission capacity through electric transmission corridors and conductor modernization to deliver clean energy benefiting the citizens of Richland and our industries.

The City will support the efforts of other state and local organizations on issues consistent with City positions. These include efforts of the Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC), Visit Tri-Cities, the Port of Benton, the Port of Kennewick, the Washington Economic Development Association (WEDA), the Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs (WASPC), Washington Fire Chiefs (WFC), and the Association of Washington Cities (AWC).

2026 City Legislative Priorities

Cities and towns are home to 66% of Washington's residents, drive the state's economy, and provide the most accessible form of government. The success of our cities and towns depends on adequate resources and community-based decision-making to best meet the unique needs of our communities.

Washington's 281 cities and towns ask the Legislature to partner with us and act on the following priorities:



Indigent defense

Increase state support and funding for indigent defense services to meet existing needs as well as the new lower caseload mandates ordered by the Washington Supreme Court. Enhance state support for increasing the indigent defense workforce with incentives and programs to encourage more public defenders.



Transportation

Increase sustainable revenue that supports local transportation preservation, maintenance, and operations and includes direct distributions to cities and towns. Continue to support efforts to improve traffic safety. Explore revenue tools such as a highway usage fee, a retail delivery fee, expanded transportation benefit district (TBD) authority, or a "sidewalk utility."



Housing supply

Provide time to implement recent state housing legislation. Increase housing investments to meet needs across the housing continuum, including construction and preservation of affordable housing, home ownership, and senior housing. Support tools to better coordinate urban growth area (UGA) development and funding options such as a local option real estate excise tax, short-term rental tax, and expanded use of lodging taxes for housing.



Shared revenues

Continue the historical revenue-sharing partnership between the state and its cities and towns, which provides stability and continuity for local budgets. Preservation of these resources, such as liquor revenues and criminal justice assistance funds, are indispensable to local fiscal sustainability and predictability.



Contact: **Candice Bock**
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