

## **2024 Legislative Priorities**

A thriving downtown is at the heart of Pullman's focus and vital to Pullman's continued priorities for recovery, retention, and recruitment of businesses and future commercial sustainability. This year by strategically narrowing the priorities that will directly affect the community members the most, the City of Pullman can obtain achievable priorities and goals.

### **Economic Development**

- **Downtown Revitalization**: This continues to be Pullman's number one priority. The City has made strides going forward in the Downtown Master Plan and wants to continue the economic development further. Continued revitalization requires investment into design improvements, understanding and responding to market forces, promotion, and organized leadership. Direct financial assistance from the State to support local businesses during construction efforts is requested.
- **Railroad Tracks in Pullman City Limits**: Repurpose the railways within the city limits to maximize flexibility and enable activation of projects for economic development, flood control, creation of city parks and active transportation, access to waterways, public safety, and assist with Washington State Ratings Bureau Fire Rating.
- **Pullman-Moscow Regional Airport**: Continued support for terminal construction, expansion, and growth of the airport makes Pullman and Whitman County reliable transportation for businesses, residents, and visitors for the entire region.

### **Transportation Safety Projects**

- **Downtown Bypass**: By requesting \$5,000,000 for bypass design work, the City of Pullman and its partners can focus on removing heavy traffic in the downtown area while providing regional transportation solutions. This would significantly improve walkability downtown and fulfill the revitalization priority.
- **Highway 26 Passing Lanes**: City Council asks that the Legislature add passing lanes on State Highway 26. This project will save motorists' lives and provide safe passage to and from Pullman.

### **Livability**

- **Housing and Affordability**: The rise in housing costs continues to create a shortage of affordable housing in our community and across the state. Incentivizing developers to build entry-level and affordable housing would allow for more opportunities for people to stay in Pullman long-term or relocate. Address issues around "Missing Middle" housing options.
- **Mental Health**: Pullman continues to recognize the need for mental health professionals. Providing reciprocity of certifications from other states and adding telehealth options would greatly increase the accessibility of much needed mental health resources – especially in Eastern Washington.
- **Policing**: Continue to reevaluate the unintended consequences of eliminating vehicle pursuits, and consider allowing pursuits to promote a great public good in certain circumstances. Reassess the "Blake Ruling" on drug possession offenses and increase penalties to motivate offenders to seek treatment after the first drug possession offense.
- **Tuition for Higher Education**: Tuition costs have continued to increase for all higher education in the State of Washington. When the State began withdrawing tuition support over a decade ago, the unintended consequences have impacted local communities in the form of cost increases for services and creating more need to maintain support systems for students already facing inflationary demands around housing, food, etc.