



CITY OF BLAINE

2018 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Allocate Funding to Advance the Exit 274 Project

When drivers travel on I-5 south out of Canada, the current Exit/Interchange configuration limits opportunities for tourists, residents, and others to stop and explore Blaine. Exit 276, located within 100 yards of the border is the only southbound exit from the border. If drivers miss that exit, the next available exit is over 6 miles away from the Blaine City Center, with no other exit serving Blaine. This limited highway access significantly hinders Blaine's ability to grow as a city and subsequently meet the needs of the community.

In addition, the northern border that the city and State of Washington share with Canada is the largest freight border crossing west of the Mississippi River; more than \$12 billion in goods are moved across the border each year according to the International Mobility and Trade Corridor Program. This causes significant freight congestion within the city creating safety issues. Constructing Exit 274 would divert freight congestion away from city roads would provide access to alternate routes leading to the border crossings at SR 539 in Lynden and SR 546 in Sumas. Alleviating this congestion would significantly improve network connectivity throughout the city while still supplying vital freight routes to the border.

The City of Blaine is currently meeting with WSDOT to identify next steps in advancing Exit 274. The City is hopeful that a 2018 funding request will be identified in this work, and encourages the Legislature to advance that request in the 2018 legislative session. The City requests that the state invest in developing Exit 274 on I-5 as a full, 4-way interchange.

East Blaine Infrastructure: Public Private Partnership

The City of Blaine is expected to accommodate substantial portions of Whatcom County's projected population growth, under the Growth Management Act's required comprehensive plan and regional planning tools. In order to meet these population projections, the City needs to develop infrastructure to support growth in East Blaine. The City of Blaine joins private developers in seeking \$3.2 million in state capital funding to design and construct drinking water, sewer and electrical infrastructure that will extend service capacity to reach the east end of Blaine city limits. These utility extensions will be utilized in constructing three new housing developments. The private sector is committed to providing a match of \$3 million to construct this infrastructure. The current developer has a preliminary plat that is scheduled to expire on June 1, 2018, but can be extended for one year.

The City of Blaine supports the priorities of the Association of Washington Cities.