

City of Blaine 2019 Legislative Priorities

Fully Fund the East Blaine Infrastructure Project

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. During the 2018 legislative session, the City of Blaine joined 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. The City was funded at \$1.2 million in the 2018 supplemental Capital Budget and **requests the remaining \$2 million during the 2019 legislative session.** The City and local developers are committed to match the State investment.

Allocate Funding for a Grade Separation Rail Traffic Solution at Blaine Road (SR 548)

Due to the City's location on the border, certain border control and security equipment that monitor people and goods passing between the US and Canada are located within the city. One of these pieces of equipment is the Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System (VACIS), which is operated by the federal government through US Homeland Security. Inspection of southbound cargo trains by the VACIS prevents through traffic access across Blaine Road (SR 548) and disrupts flow on and off of Interstate 5 at Exit 274. Blaine Road is one of the main access points into the City from communities such as Birch Bay and Semiahmoo. The operation of the VACIS causes serious local traffic delays. Solving this problem enhances public safety, promotes economic development, and supports the movement of goods into and out of the US.

The City has continued to pursue small updates to the interchange to manage traffic. Currently, we are working to secure funds to add turn lanes for queuing traffic, but we are seeking a permanent solution. The City of Blaine secured \$550,000 in state Transportation funds last year to support improvements at this interchange but needs additional funding for engineering and design costs of the newly identified grade separated rail crossing solution. The City seeks a state partnership in developing the solution. The next stage is completion of design and environmental review of the grade separated rail crossing. **The City requests the necessary funds to complete design and planning of this project in 2019.**

Local Transportation Revenue – to include second penny/gallon and other options

Fish Landing Shared Revenue – to obtain a share of the state tax on fish brought ashore in city limits.

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