

## 1. Transportation

Transportation Support funding for the construction of I-5 exit 21 area which will improve traffic flows off of the I-5 corridor. The City hired Kittelson & Associates, a traffic consultant engineer, in 2019 who completed evaluating exit 21 for solutions to improve traffic flow. They presented the current status of the intersection and increased congestion from future demand forecast traffic modeling for a “no build” situation to the City, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG) and the City of Woodland and Cowlitz County Planning Commissions. They presented preliminary concept designs to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), consisting of The City of Woodland, WSDOT and CWCOG. The preliminary concept designs in 2019 that included a multiple round-about (\$12 million (est.)) and signalized intersection (\$13 million (est.)) concept. The concepts were presented to the community through a number of open houses for public input in January 2020. The city is now ready to move forward in engineering and construction and is seeking financial support. The city and surrounding area are seeing continual traffic congestion due to the close proximity of multiple intersections, along with current and proposed developments in the area, which makes this a major concern for the citizens of Woodland and those that use exit 21 daily for commerce.

The City of Woodland is seeking financial support from the State of Washington in the amount of \$12 million dollars during the 2021 Legislative Session. The dollars will be combined with an additional \$1.1 million already slated for the I-5 exit 21 project. This construction and completion of this project will upgrade current infrastructure. These upgrades will create a safer roadway for those traveling along I-5, greater pedestrian safety and walkability to area residents, and improved transportation access for commerce.

## 2. Growth Management

The City of Woodland is in a unique position, regionally. The City rests in two counties, Clark and Cowlitz. Clark County is a GMA county, where Cowlitz County is not. The City of Woodland follows the GMA model. **The City of Woodland is the only City in Washington faced with the challenge of operating as a GMA city in non-GMA county.** The City of Woodland is asking legislators to support a change in legislation to allow the collection of impact fees associated with development within the Woodland School District Boundary, which spans both Clark and Cowlitz Counties. The City of Woodland has a population of just over 6,600 and provides a number of services to an additional 9,000 residents just outside city limits. In addition, the County is currently considering application for 402 additional residential units which could add service pressure from an additional 1,002 residents. City services feeling pressure from this rural county population include the use of roadways, parks, public safety services, and schools. The collection of impact fees in Cowlitz County will assist the City and County in continuing to provide new infrastructure to those living outside the City, who no option but to travel through the City every day. Not including potential impacts to Cowlitz County services, the city’s projected impacts from those 402 new units alone are estimated at \$2.3 million to the Woodland School District, \$615,060 to fire protection services, \$448,632 in park services, and \$336,876 in impacts to the City’s street system.

(And we know from our Exit 21 study noted above, that nearly 40% of the traffic at Exit 21 is generated for Cowlitz County property which equals an additional impact of approximately \$4.6 million in impacts the City is responsible for pursuing. See Legislative priority #1 above.)

### **3. Regulatory Relief and Revenue Flexibility/Unfunded Mandates and Do No Harm**

Public Records Requests have become a burden on local government by persons who are abusing the intent of the law. We support government transparency but a solution to the abuse of the system is needed.

Given the growth in both social media and the change in communication technology, the Legislature should further clarify what electronic messaging constitutes a public record requiring storage and indexing and what electronic data does not. Furthermore, penalties for failure to timely respond to public record requests should be indexed on a sliding scale tied to population and to tax base to avoid catastrophic penalties against small cities who do not have sufficient tax revenue to hire a full time “public records officer”. The city strongly opposes any legislation that would preempt authority traditionally and historically vested with local government or impose new or additional unfunded mandates.

### **4. Public Safety Medical Costs for Offenders**

The Legislature should pass legislation which provides health insurance under Apple Health for those arrested by city police and incarcerated by courts, including persons not legally residing in the United States. Even during good financial times, the public safety budget for small local governments can be devastated by unanticipated inmate health costs.

### **5. City encourages Legislators to consider AWC Priorities**

[City Legislative Priorities \(wacities.org\)](http://wacities.org)

### **6. Government Funding**

The City also requests that the legislature resist proposals that would reduce or eliminate funds historically designated for cities. This can place an undue burden on cities to tax or assess fees on citizens in order to keep services stable.