

CITY OF PORTLAND

2021 State Legislative Agenda

Prepared by

The Office of Government Relations
1221 SW 4th Avenue, Suite 410
Portland, OR 97204
503.823.4130



City of Portland Council

Mayor Ted Wheeler

Commissioner Carmen Rubio

Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty

Commissioner Dan Ryan

Commissioner Mingus Mapps

Auditor Mary Hull Caballero

2021 State Legislative Agenda Priorities

Eliminate Racial Disparities

Improve Police Accountability

Stabilize Individuals and Families

Support Portland Businesses and Non-Profits

Advance Environmental and Climate Justice to Build an Equitable Future

Preserve and Enhance Local Authority

The City of Portland is committed to centering racial and disability equity in our collective responses to COVID-19 and in the City's state policy and budget advocacy work. Recognizing that Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), individuals with disabilities, older people, immigrants, refugees, people who are LGBTQIA2s+, veterans, and individuals experiencing poverty are often disproportionately affected, the City of Portland is committed to ensuring existing inequities are not exacerbated and working to repair past harms through the City's state advocacy work.

The City of Portland supports, in concert with its tribal partners, efforts to preserve tribal members' and their descendants' rights for tribal sovereignty and self-governance secured under Indian Treaties, Executive Orders, and benefits to which they are entitled under the laws, treaties and constitution of the United States.

ELIMINATE RACIAL DISPARITIES

The City of Portland is advocating for anti-racist public policy and budget allocations to advance equitable outcomes for Oregonians. The City recognizes and acknowledges the impacts of policy and budget decisions that lead to inequitable outcomes and is actively engaged in evaluating and challenging its own practices, while advocating for the state government to:

- Pass the **Oregon Cannabis Equity Act** to provide equal opportunity for Black, Indigenous, and Latinx ownership in the growing cannabis industry and invest in communities disproportionately impacted by over-policing and cannabis criminalization.
- Address **Racial Disparities in Homeownership** and reverse the decreasing rates of homeownership among Oregon's BIPOC residents.
- Require **racial impact statements** for all legislative bills to analyze potential impacts to BIPOC communities, in alignment with the Reimagine Oregon Project initiative.
- Address **hate symbols**, including banning the display of a noose.

IMPROVE POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY

The City of Portland is committed to advocating for policies to allow for the development of public safety solutions that best fit the needs of our community, allow all Portlanders to feel safe, and improve police accountability through initiatives that:

- Remove barriers to efficiently implementing the voter-approved **Portland Community Police Oversight Board** and its ability to independently investigate police misconduct.
- Reform the **qualified immunity doctrine** for law enforcement officers.
- Reform the **burden of proof and standards** public employers must meet when imposing just cause discipline in instances where police misconduct jeopardizes public safety and public trust.
- Continue building on the newly established **statewide database** for law enforcement misconduct and discipline.
- Create and fund opportunities for **reimaging emergency response**, including support for Portland Street Response.

STABILIZE INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

The City of Portland is committed to keeping families and individuals housed and ensuring that their essential needs are met through the instability of the COVID-19 pandemic, concurrent economic crisis, and beyond. The public health and economic crises have exacerbated existing instability and inequities for individuals and families. Addressing these crises is paramount to the well-being and future recovery of Portlanders, through initiatives to:

- Prevent mass evictions and foreclosures through additional funding for **emergency rental assistance, homeowner assistance**, and enhanced **eviction and foreclosure prevention**.
- Support reform of the **mortgage interest deduction**, applying the deduction only to a taxpayer's principal residence and establishing an income-based cap, to increase state funding available for housing needs.
- Improve access to effective **behavioral health services and supports** for all Oregonians with serious mental illness or co-occurring substance use disorder by investing in the behavioral health workforce and housing options.
- Establish a statewide water, wastewater and stormwater **utility rate assistance program** and support the expansion of existing **energy rate assistance programs**.
- Improve **digital equity and inclusion** by securing funding for computers and affordable, reliable internet service, regardless of location or income of recipient, to address the digital divide.
- Support the **Oregon Worker Relief Fund** and other programs that support people and families left out of state and federal support systems.
- Support funding and expansion of **legal aid services**, including immigration defense services, eviction prevention, and expungement, among other legal services designed to support immigrant communities, renters, and BIPOC Oregonians.

SUPPORT PORTLAND BUSINESSES AND NON-PROFITS

Portland businesses and non-profits are struggling to survive and adapt during this protracted public health emergency. Businesses owned by BIPOC Oregonians are particularly vulnerable to the severe disruption in the economy. The City of Portland is advocating for resources and policies to stabilize the economy and promote an equitable recovery for workers, small businesses, major employers, and community and non-profit organizations, including:

- **Commercial tenant protections** for small businesses facing eviction and asset retention for small and BIPOC property owners facing foreclosure, including credit protections.
- **Resources for small businesses** otherwise hindered from accessing traditional federal funding streams (e.g., businesses in the cannabis industry and businesses owned by undocumented immigrants).

ADVANCE ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE JUSTICE TO BUILD AN EQUITABLE FUTURE

The City of Portland recognizes the critical need to invest in a swift transition to clean energy while reducing energy costs for low-income people and the most vulnerable individuals in our communities. This work centers the protection and well-being of BIPOC communities and builds resilience and stability to withstand future crises by:

- Supporting legislation led by frontline communities that moves the state to full, just and equitable decarbonization of Oregon's energy sector, including: advancing **100 percent clean and renewable electricity statewide**; investing in **community-based energy development**, developing **energy resilience and low-income programs**; reforming **utility regulation**; and establishing **labor standards and living-wage jobs** for a just energy transition.
- Supporting legislation to allow cities to adopt the **REACH Code as the mandatory building energy code** within a city's jurisdictional boundaries to support reaching net zero energy and carbon goals for new construction in the City of Portland.
- Increasing state infrastructure funding for **levee repair and accreditation** and recapitalize the **Brownfield Redevelopment Fund** to support projects in the Portland Metro area that center environmental justice, increase community resilience, prioritize frontline communities, and support environmental restoration and remediation.

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Local authority is critical to the City of Portland's ability to nimbly and effectively respond to the need of city operations and within the Portland community, consistent with the City's principles and values. In order to expand and enhance the City of Portland's ability to address policy issues locally and manage the administration of its programming with adequate resources, the City will actively pursue:

- Improve traffic safety by expanding **local speed setting authority** and providing more capacity for the use of **automated traffic enforcement through fixed photo radar**; and explore opportunities to reduce bias and expand traffic safety enforcement by allowing qualified, trained nonsworn individuals to review citations initiated by fixed photo enforcement.
- Clarifying state statute to ensure **attorney-client privilege** is treated the same in the public sector as in the private sector.
- Statutory authorization for **federal background checks for Revenue Division employees** to achieve compliance with Internal Revenue Service guidelines and ensure efficient revenue collection.
- Establishing **flexibility in the Homebuyer Opportunity Limited Tax Exemption program** to extend construction period eligibility by up to an additional two years.

The City of Portland will strongly oppose efforts to limit its authority to develop and enforce local ordinances and voter-approved measures, manage its bureaus and their functions, and raise local revenue. The City will actively advocate against restrictions of local authority, including:

- Regulation of emerging technologies, including transportation network companies and autonomous vehicles;
- Tenant protections and relocation assistance;
- System development charges;
- Water, wastewater, and stormwater systems;
- Climate action;
- Local elections law, including publicly financed elections; and
- Franchise fees and right of way management.

It is the policy of the City of Portland that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any city program, service, or activity on the grounds of race, color, national origin, disability, or other protected class status.

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