

CITY OF AIRWAY HEIGHTS 2019 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



Highland Village Housing Project Funding

The City requests \$5.5 million in capital budget funding for the Highland Village Housing project in Airway Heights. Highland Village is an integral part of the Fairchild Air Force Base (FAFB) Preservation and Community Empowerment Project initiated in 2012. That project is the result of over four years of collaborative work by the City of Airway Heights, Spokane County, Greater Spokane Incorporated and Habitat for Humanity as well as a number of other local organizations and non-profit housing developers. The goal of the project is twofold: to reduce the density in the APZ 2—a zone located at the end of the main runway at Fairchild—in order to maintain the current and long-term existence of Fairchild, the Inland Northwest’s largest employer, and to develop safe, affordable alternative housing for the residents now living in APZ 2. Currently, housing conditions in APZ 2 are substandard, and there are also health and safety risks due to FAFB overflight operations. Highland Village will help 150 low to moderate income households obtain alternative housing outside of APZ 2.

US 2 Alternate Route Funding

The City of Airway Heights respectfully requests \$3 million in transportation funding for a US 2 Alternate Route to relieve traffic congestion on US 2 and establish an important east/west connection through the City. US 2 is the only highway used for east/west travel in the City and is a major commuter route for the greater Spokane area. Expected land use growth of the Fairchild Air Force Base, the Kalispel and Spokane Tribes, and the new Amazon fulfillment center (as well as other future unknown incoming developments) will also continue to add more traffic to this corridor, further impacting mobility along this stretch of highway.

When there is heavy traffic on US 2, the City of Airway Heights’s local road network experiences the overflow. The US 2 Alternate Route will allow the state system and local network to function more efficiently – a goal consistent with and supported by identified strategies in the WA State Department of Transportation’s US 2 Route Development Plan and Corridor Sketch Initiative for the area. The City has secured \$500,000 in design funds for the project and is respectfully seeking \$3 million in state transportation funding for construction.

Promote Water Sustainability

The City supports a joint request from the WA State Department of Correction (DOC) and City of Airway Heights for \$1.943 million in funding to convert non-potable water uses to reclaimed water in the City. The largest irrigation user in Airway Heights is the DOC facility, where DOC uses 25 million gallons of water each year for irrigation. This represents 12% of the City’s summertime water demand. Converting this use to reclaimed water will make the same volume of water available for drinking water to City residents. Eliminating this demand from the drinking water system will provide water for 360 new households and reduce the demand upon the City’s potable water system. In view of the impacts to the City’s water supply by PFOA chemicals last summer, the City strongly supports reserving potable water for potable demands and using reclaimed water for approved applications like irrigation.

Military Benefit Zone

Washington State has the sixth highest regional concentration of military presence in the United States. In addition to providing an integral role in national security, the state’s military installations constitute a significant economic contributor. The City supports legislation that would expand financing tools for military communities to support and encourage private economic development. Military Benefit Zones would improve the viability of existing businesses in the zone, encourage new private development, reduce traffic congestion, and support the needs of housing, services, and the overall quality of life for military personnel and families.

The City supports the 2019 Association of Washington Cities’ Legislative Agenda