



Board of County Commissioners

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Lewis County 2024 Legislative Agenda

The Lewis County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) believes that the Legislature must act to protect public safety, protect children, lower residents' tax burden, restrict the use of drugs, make housing more affordable, and protect private property rights. The Commissioners will continue to work closely with the members of the 19th and 20th Legislative Districts, as well as statewide associations, to jointly advocate for Lewis County residents on these topics. Separately, this Legislative Agenda is focused on specific Legislative actions to enable the BOCC to more efficiently and effectively serve our residents—things Lewis County specifically must ask for to obtain action.

Key Objectives

North Lewis County Highway Interchange & Associated Improvements Funding

The Legislature pushed out the funding for the Reynolds & Harrison, Westside Connector, and other North Lewis County Highway Interchange improvements despite the commencement of some of the relevant work and the completion of the first NLCHIAI study. The County is asking that study for the interchange continue—including how to connect the interchange to the Industrial Park at TransAlta—and that all necessary funding for the study and its prerequisite local improvements be restored to the current and ensuing biennia so that this project can proceed. Otherwise, the millions of local and state dollars already invested will be wasted.

Senior Services

Last session, the Legislature approved capital dollars to refurbish the senior centers in Lewis County, but an effort to supply operating dollars to care for the County's vulnerable seniors ran out of time. The County wishes to spearhead our delegation's proposed bills HB 1702 and SB 5686 that would create a new .01% credit against the state sales tax for small rural counties to use for senior programs, which are vital to the health of rural counties' aging populations.

Bedrock Tax & Assessment Capability

The County's foundational software for assessing and collecting property taxes on behalf of the state, the county, and all special purpose districts is over 25 years old. The patches, workarounds, and staff time necessitated by this outdated software increase taxpayer costs and decrease the service the county can offer to the public. Because this system is essential to state property tax revenues, the County is seeking state funding for purchase and implementation of a new, long-term software solution.

Ryan Barrett
County Manager

Sean Swope
First District

Lindsey R. Pollock, DVM
Second District

Scott Brummer
Third District

Rieva Lester
Clerk of the Board

Southwest Washington Fair Equestrian Upgrades

The County recently completed a master plan for Southwest Washington Fairgrounds Park including a major upgrade of the equestrian facilities. Such an upgrade would dramatically improve the Southwest Washington Fair's equestrian offerings and make Fairgrounds Park a vibrant community space for year-round competitions and events. The County will seek capital funding for planning, pre-design, and construction of these upgrades, and a statutory change allowing for efficient administration of fair funds so that the County can maintain Fairgrounds Park for decades to come.

Lewis County Historical Museum Roof Replacement

The Lewis County historical museum has a leaking roof, which is beyond repair and threatens the landmark building and its significant collections. The County will seek \$250,000 for its replacement.

