

STATE OF THE CITY SPEECH – 2025

Intro

Thank you all so much for taking the time to join me as we reflect on 2024 as well as look into what we have planned for 2025 here at the City. I always look forward to these speeches and especially the Q&A portion which we will get to after the speech. First of all, I want to thank everyone in attendance, and all of the staff who made this possible.

I also want to thank our City Council who work so hard and diligently to better the lives of everyone here in Mukilteo. I am so appreciative to have a good working relationship between the executive and legislative branches. (Recognize any in attendance)

CGI Digital

Mukilteo is a special place, and that is something I wanted to highlight. So, in 2024, we partnered with a company called CGI Digital to create a few videos featuring the beautiful community that we call home, at no cost to the City. Let's take a look at the results:

VIDEO PLAYS

City Snapshot

For the first slide here I wanted to give a quick City Snapshot. I have been proud to call Mukilteo home for the past 29 years. Our estimated population currently sits at 21,011, which ranks 14th in Snohomish County. Our population has been relatively flat over the last number of years, especially in comparison to some other cities in our region. The small-town feel of Mukilteo is what attracted me and so many others to this wonderful community, and I think it is important that we retain that.

2024 Recap

Mukilteo made significant strides in 2024. Across every department in the City, we've seen great progress and a shared commitment to enhancing our community's quality of life. From public safety to public works, fiscal responsibility to recreation, here are just some of the many accomplishments that demonstrate Mukilteo's dedication to excellence.

Public Safety

Our Police Department's achievements in 2024 underscore their critical role in keeping Mukilteo safe. Mukilteo PD responded to 24,364 incidents, which annually averages to 1433 incidents per patrol Officer, they also conducted over 4,000 traffic stops.

Overall, crime is down 12% in Mukilteo. Despite a decrease in overall crime, 29% more individuals arrested were put in jail than in 2023, ensuring that those who cause harm are held accountable. As you can see on the chart, we saw a slight increase in assault and narcotics investigations. All other crime categories were down.

Additionally, The department is currently implementing Flock Automated License Plate Readers, enhancing public safety through innovative technology. These cameras scan license plates across jurisdictional boundaries to help identify stolen cars and other criminal activity.

The Fire Department replaced the battalion chief vehicle with a safer, more efficient model, and upgraded fire station alerting systems, reducing response times. These critical updates reflect our ongoing investment in the safety of our residents and first responders.

Mukilteo Fire and EMS responded to over 2,700 incidents in 2024! That's over 7 calls per day! I can't thank our first responders enough for all that they do day in and day out to keep our community safe.

PW

Public Works delivered on a number of infrastructure projects in 2024. Major projects completed include the 76th Street Parking Lot Paving (near the Community Garden), Harbour Pointe Pathway Repair, & Chennault Drainage Improvement which should be completed here soon. The department also completed Waste Water Treatment Plant erosion repairs and conducted a city-wide pavement rating update—a vital step in maintaining our roadways.

Sustainability and community improvements also remained a priority. The Dog Park received recycled wood chips and a paved apron to prevent potholes, and the first installment of the City Hall Vehicle Fleet Chargers were completed to support electric vehicle use. Meanwhile, a comprehensive Waterfront Parking Study was completed to better plan for future redevelopment of our waterfront – I'll speak to that in more detail shortly.

Planning

The Community Development Department also made great progress, transitioning to 100% digital permitting. This shift reduced average permit review times from over 120 days to less than 30 days, providing greater efficiency for residents and developers. The department also completed updates to the Mukilteo Municipal Code, introducing new regulations for tree retention, signage, food trucks, and permitting procedures which were approved by the City Council.

Our new parking permit program has already started to make a noticeable difference. The initiative, launched at the beginning of 2024, has streamlined parking management and contributed to a more organized and efficient parking experience for everyone involved.

The department also successfully completed the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update! This is a huge lift cities make once a decade. The document sets the policy direction and vision for how the city will look and feel in twenty years.

The City also launched a new website and mobile app in 2024. The mobile app provides a great way to submit service requests directly from your mobile device. Whether it's reporting a pothole, graffiti, streetlight outage, or any other non-emergency issue, just a few taps are all it takes to notify city staff. In addition, the app allows you to stay informed and connected with the latest news, events, employment opportunities, and more in the City of Mukilteo.

Recreation

In 2024, recreation in Mukilteo reached new heights. The Japanese Gulch Dirt Jump Park officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in spring, and the Recreation Guide expanded to quarterly editions. Youth and adult recreational activities doubled, providing opportunities for all ages. The launch of the new Indoor Playground at Rosehill Community Center and the restart of Youth Summer Sports Camps highlighted our commitment to fostering community engagement and active lifestyles.

Community engagement also saw a large increase in 2024. The City saw an average of 1,067 participants per survey conducted. Additionally, social media reach was up 196.1% on Instagram and 7.1% on Facebook.

Finance

The Finance Department introduced the ClearGov budgeting solution, transitioned to a biennial budget cycle, began implementation of the new Enterprise Resource Planning software, CentralSquare, and launched the Long-Range Financial Planning Committee, all in 2024. These initiatives ensure transparency, fiscal responsibility, and strategic planning for Mukilteo's financial future.

Budget

Moving on to the budget – I want to thank the City Council for passing the 2025-26 biennial budget largely as presented.

Many of the City's funding sources are restricted funds. So, for example, the EMS fund must be spent on emergency medical services. We cannot use those funds for a full-time employee in our Finance Department or for the construction of a new park. Where the City does have discretion on where to allocate funds is through the general fund.

Up on the screen, we have a chart showing what makes up our 2025 budgeted general fund revenues. As you can see, the bulk of the general fund comes from taxes. There's a good balance of tax revenue sources. Property taxes are the leading source, but it is important to note that cities only receive around 10% of your total property tax bill. The majority of property tax revenue goes toward schools.

On the next slide, you can see where the City spends those general fund dollars. Similar to other cities, the largest expenditure from the general fund goes towards our Police Department. It is important that the City is responsible stewards of the taxpayers' dollars, which is why I am proud to say that we have had clean financial audits through 2022, which was just recently audited. A big thank you to our Finance Department for all of their hard work!

Make no mistake, the City is experiencing some financial hardships right now. Many other cities in our region are as well. The reality is that the revenue the City is able to receive year-over-year does not keep up with our expenses relative to the rate inflation has grown.

My administration and the Council are determined to ensuring that the City remains financially solvent. Last year, the City established the Long-Range Financial Planning Committee. The Committee will play a role in shaping the City's financial future. Their primary objective is to develop a Long-Range Financial Plan for Mukilteo. It's important to note that the Committee will not make budget decisions on behalf of the City Council but will instead focus on strategic planning and analysis.

I envision the City solving these budget issues through a combination of increasing revenue through things and annexation, in addition to cutting any unnecessary spending. As your Mayor, I take great responsibility in ensuring your tax dollars are being utilized efficiently and effectively. I remain committed to balancing the City's finances and am confident in our ability to get through these financially uncertain times.

Waterfront Redevelopment

In 2024, we continued extensive conversations with the Port of Everett on the waterfront redevelopment to determine how we can both utilize each other's strengths to see this project come together. While this has admittedly taken some time, I believe the time has been well spent, and we hope to have some updates on these efforts in the near future.

Another big step in 2024 with the Waterfront Redevelopment was the completion of the Waterfront Parking Study.

The study, funded by a Washington State Local and Community Projects grant, was conducted in partnership with Walker Consultants, the Port of Everett, and the Waterfront Parking Task Force. Key findings from the study were that:

- Utilization data demonstrated a peak weekend occupancy of 105%, meaning that there were more cars parked than spaces available for high demand summer weekends.
- Existing parking inventory is diverse in location, rules, and user demand, which creates challenges in managing utilization patterns.
- Current visioning for this area considers parking structure(s) to accommodate demand, increase safety, and promote walkability.
- The Waterfront Parking Study final report identifies high level draft concepts for sizing, location, and costs of potential future parking structure(s).

We will incorporate these findings as we move towards the next phase of this project.

Annexation

The current proposed area we are annexing from the county is shown in the image on the screen. The annexation currently includes the east side of the Speedway from the Mukilteo Speedway Café to Beverly Park Road in addition to both sides of 121st Street SW. Residents are often surprised to learn that when they are eating at the Mukilteo Speedway Café, for example, they are not in Mukilteo. Our residents are generally the ones who frequent these businesses, and our emergency services are the ones who most often take calls in this area.

Over the past few years, we have been working with Snohomish County on annexing this area as it is currently in their jurisdiction. This has been one of my top priorities, and I am pleased to announce that an interlocal agreement has been negotiated. Now, it awaits approval from the Snohomish County Council, which should take place in the next month. Final approval of the annexation should happen by April.

An added benefit of the annexation will be an additional revenue stream for the City to utilize. In year one of the annexation, the City will likely have some one-time costs associated with an annexation like this. Moving forward, however, the annexation will generate anywhere from an estimated \$420,000 to \$510,000 in revenue for the City. Around \$250,000 of that will be dedicated to the general fund, while the Transportation Benefit District, Emergency Medical Services, and Surface Water Enterprise fund will also receive dedicated funds. This will play a role in helping to strengthen the City's financial stability for years to come.

I want to give a special shoutout to our Planning and Community Development Department who have been instrumental in getting this project moved along!

Upcoming Projects

We have some exciting projects on the way for 2025!

Our gateway and park signs throughout town are deteriorating and are in need of replacement! This project was identified as a City Council priority in 2023, and we did extensive public outreach that year to determine what the look and feel of the new signs should be. Funding is in place for the signs to go in this year! There are four Gateway signs set to go in with locations on the Speedway at the South end of town, 40th avenue, 1st and the Speedway, and lastly at West Mukilteo Boulevard. In addition, new park signs at 92nd Street Park and South Mukilteo Park are set to be installed. Up on the screen, you can see some renderings of what the signs will look like!

I also wanted to discuss the SR 525 bridge replacement. We are working closely with WSDOT on this project and while it's still early in the process, we want to ensure the planning of it aligns with certain aspects of the Waterfront Redevelopment. To give a rough overview of how long this project will take, it will be in just the design phase for the next few years. In addition to the bridge replacement, WSDOT is planning to repave a portion of the Speedway from SR 525 Spur Vic to the Mukilteo Ferry Terminal!

Lighthouse Park will be receiving some new artwork! The council allocated ARPA funds towards Lighthouse Park Art additions. Joe Gobin and James Madison have agreed to create the art which will be Welcome Figures located on the Bandshell posts. All sculptures will be designed in traditional Coast Salish style which represents our Snoqualmie, Duwamish, and Snohomish Tulalip Roots. The Welcome Figures will have orcas/blackfish and salmon. This will show the significance of protecting the orca and salmon all along the Northwest Coast and a traditional story passed down. The Welcome Figures will show significant protocols, showing no weapons and welcoming people to the territory and our shores. The sculpture shows the oral history of the relationship between man and orca.

The Police Department will be undergoing some construction here in the next few months. Thanks to a Washington State Grant, the Police Department will have a mezzanine added, which will create space for a dedicated Employee Wellness Center!

The 47th Pl W Pavement Preservation project has been coming along great! Crews completed critical improvements, including new ADA ramps, curb replacements, and a crosswalk flashing beacon between the Boys and Girls Club and YMCA. Temporary striping, including a new bike lane, is also in place. Final paving and permanent striping will resume when weather conditions allow for asphalt work. These improvements will lead to improved pedestrian access and safety along this stretch of road which has been the culprit of many resident complaints.

In addition to these projects, the City will be continuing tasks like park maintenance, sidewalk repairs, ADA improvements, Pond Cleaning & maintenance, Catch Basin Repairs, and more.

I just want to give a shout out to the great job our Public Works crews are doing keeping Mukilteo looking beautiful.

Leg Priorities

Mukilteo is looking to install pickleball courts on City-owned property in the southwest corner at 47th Avenue W and 109th Street SW (next to the Boys and Girls Club baseball field). Pickleball courts are in high demand in Mukilteo, like other parts of Washington State. This project would enhance the quality of life for Mukilteo residents by adding a missing element to our parks and recreation scene. We are hoping to secure state funding for this project in order to see it come to fruition.

City Events

Up on the screen are a few City events I wanted to highlight for this year. The curbside cleanup in coordination with Waste Management is scheduled for Saturday, May 17th! This will be the weekend following the Mukilteo Garage Sale, which is scheduled for May 10th. Be sure to have your items out by 6 AM that morning to get picked up.

Last year, we held the Earth Day Community Cleanup at Lighthouse Park. The event was a huge success! We had around 200 people attend. This year, the event will be held on Saturday, April 19th, with a similar layout as last year. This is a great opportunity to come together with your fellow community members and make a positive impact on Earth Day.

Seniors - Every Wednesday, Mukilteo Recreation is hosting a 9:30 am – 11:00 Coffee, Pastries, and Social Time for Mukilteo Seniors! Be sure to stop by for a great time!

Touch a Truck will be on Saturday, June 28th. This is my grandchildren's favorite event! Join in on the fun with cool vehicles, games and activities, prizes, and food trucks.

Get ready for Boo Bash on Sunday, October 26th, while the annual Merry Mukilteo will be held on Saturday, December 6.

Q&A

Next, we will move to my favorite portion of the speech, Q&A! Please raise your hand if you have any questions you would like answered by me or one of our directors.

Close

Thank residents for attending and being engaged:

- Boards and Commissions vacancies not an issue
- Interacting with surveys
- Attending community events