



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

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May 28, 2026

TO: Sarah Bannister, Secretary
Washington State Senate

Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk
Washington State House of Representatives

FROM: John Ryser, Acting Director *John Ryser*

SUBJECT: Local Revitalization Financing Program Report

RCW 82.32.765 requires the Department of Revenue to issue an annual report on the Local Revitalization Financing (LRF) program, adopted by the Legislature in 2009. This program provides state support to local jurisdictions and finances public improvements in revitalization areas to encourage businesses to locate and/or expand in those areas.

As noted in the report, 18 revitalization areas were originally sponsored by 17 local governments.

- Seven of the 18 revitalization areas were eligible to impose the local sales and use taxes on July 1, 2010; the rest were eligible to impose them on July 1, 2011.
- Eleven sponsoring local governments imposed the taxes.
- Two jurisdictions withdrew from the program, and five jurisdictions forfeited their award amounts totaling \$2.28 million.

The report is available under [Other Reports](#) on our website at [Statistics & Reports](#).

If you have questions about this report, please contact Kathy Oline, Assistant Director of Research and Fiscal Analysis, at (360) 534-1534.

Attachment

cc: Members, Senate Ways and Means Committee
Members, House Finance Committee
Members, House Appropriations Committee
K.D. Chapman-See, Director, Office of Financial Management
Kenneth Martin, Policy Director, Office of the Governor



Local Revitalization Financing Program

2026 Report to the Legislature

Program Overview

In 2009, the Legislature adopted 2SSB 5045, Chapter 270, Laws of 2009, creating the Local Revitalization Financing (LRF) program. The program helps local governments finance public improvement projects to encourage private development within a revitalization area. The program requires the Department of Revenue (Department) to make a report available to the public and the Legislature by June 1 each year. The report summarizes information provided by the sponsoring local governments. This report covers Calendar Year 2025 activity for the LRF program, as required by RCW 82.32.765.

Evolution of the LRF Program

Original Enactment

The original statute outlined the LRF award amounts for demonstration and competitive projects. The statute listed the demonstration projects and jurisdictions eligible to apply for additional funds on a competitive, first-come basis.

The first round of projects included:

- Seven demonstration projects with award amounts totaling \$2.25 million.
- Six competitive projects with award amounts totaling \$2.5 million.

2010 Amendment

In 2010, the Legislature amended the LRF statutes to increase the maximum state contribution for demonstration projects from \$2.25 million to \$4.2 million. The legislation allowed six jurisdictions to resubmit applications for approval in 2010. Five jurisdictions resubmitted applications. The city of Newcastle chose not to resubmit the application for its possible \$40,000 award. This brought the total LRF award amounts for demonstration projects to \$4.16 million.

2015 Amendment

In 2015, the Legislature amended the LRF statutes to eliminate the requirement to issue bonds for demonstration projects or for any city receiving a project award of less than \$150,000.

2016 Amendment

In 2016, the Legislature amended the LRF statutes, providing that local governments approved for a project award before January 1, 2011, but that did not impose the LRF sales and use taxes by December 1, 2016, would forfeit the project award unless they sent the Department a letter by July 1, 2016, stating their intent to impose the tax by July 1, 2022. Any forfeited funds would be available for new LRF applications. All local governments that had not imposed the LRF tax submitted letters to avoid forfeiture of their project awards.

The state granted 18 revitalization areas LRF awards totaling \$6.66 million per fiscal year. Seven jurisdictions with revitalization areas did not impose the LRF tax. Their award amounts total \$2.28 million. Forfeited award amounts will be available for future LRF applicants. Bullet sample text.

Original LRF Projects and Award Amounts

Sponsoring Local Government	Revitalization Area	Date LRF imposed or estimated year to impose tax	LRF Award Amount
2009 Demonstration Projects			
Auburn	Auburn Revitalization Area	7/01/2010	\$250,000
Bremerton	Park Plaza Revitalization Area	7/01/2010	\$330,000
Spokane	Spokane University Revitalization Area	7/01/2011	\$250,000
Tacoma	The Link Revitalization Area	7/01/2016	\$500,000
University Place	Towne Center Revitalization Area	7/01/2011	\$500,000
Vancouver	Columbia Waterfront Revitalization Area	7/01/2011	\$220,000
Whitman County	Paradise Creek Revitalization Area	Withdrawn	\$200,000
2009 Competitive, First-Come Projects			
Bellevue	Bellevue Revitalization Area #1	7/01/2013	\$500,000
Clark County	179 th Street Revitalization Area	Forfeited	\$500,000
Federal Way	Federal Way Village LRA	Forfeited	\$100,000
Kennewick	Southridge Revitalization Area	7/01/2011	\$500,000
Renton	Port Quendall	Forfeited	\$400,000
Wenatchee	Wenatchee Waterfront Revitalization Area	7/01/2013	\$500,000
2010 Demonstration Projects			
Lacey	Lacey Gateway Towne Center	Withdrawn	\$500,000
Mill Creek	East Gateway Planned Urban Village Revitalization Area	Forfeited	\$330,000
Puyallup	River Road Revitalization Area, Phase 1	Forfeited	\$250,000
Renton	South Lake Washington	7/01/2019	\$500,000
Richland	Richland Revitalization Area for Industry, Science, and Education	7/01/2013	\$330,000

Program Funding

LRF allows cities and counties to create “revitalization areas.” The Department administers the LRF program. The program allows the following for financing local public improvements within the revitalization area (RA):

- Increases in local sales and use taxes revenues generated within the area.
- Increases in property tax revenues generated within the area.
- Additional funds from other local public sources.
- A state contribution through a state-shared local tax.

The state contribution funds the local government sponsoring the LRF area through state-shared local sales and use taxes (commonly called the “LRF tax”). State-shared local sales and use taxes credit the local taxes against the state sales and use taxes; therefore, it does not increase the consumer's sales and use taxes rate. Instead, the LRF tax shifts revenue from the state general fund to the sponsoring local government.

To impose the LRF tax, a local government must apply to the Department. The Department then approves the state contribution, known as the LRF award. The sponsoring local government must issue bonds to finance public improvements in the revitalization area. A 2015 law exempted Tacoma and Federal Way from the requirement to issue bonds. Except for the demonstration projects approved in 2009, the sponsoring local government must show that the combined state sales and use taxes and property tax increments from the preceding calendar year are at least equal to the LRF award approved by the Department.

The rate for the LRF tax may be as high as 6.5 percent, less any existing rates credited against the state sales and use taxes and any tax revenues for performance audits. However, the rate must not exceed the rate that would allow the local government to receive its entire annual state contribution within ten months.

The amount of LRF local matching funds committed by the sponsoring local government in the preceding calendar year limits the amount of LRF tax revenue distributed each fiscal year.

The state contribution must match funds from local public sources dedicated to either:

- Paying the bonds.
- Paying for public improvements in the revitalization area on a pay-as-you-go basis.

The state contribution continues for 25 years or until the bonds are paid, whichever is sooner.

Demonstration projects awarded in 2009 allowed local governments to impose the LRF tax as early as July 1, 2010. The first-come projects awarded in 2009 and the demonstration projects approved in 2010 allowed local governments to impose the LRF tax as early as July 1, 2011. The LRF program limits the annual state contribution to \$4.16 million for demonstration projects and \$2.5 million for competitive projects. Each project receives up to the approved award amount each fiscal year.

Local governments estimate and report annually to the Department the increase in state and local sales and use taxes in the revitalization area. At least every three years, local governments must review and update these estimates. After award approval, local jurisdictions must estimate the state benefit from revitalization areas. The state benefit includes increases in state property taxes and state sales and use taxes received since approval of the revitalization area.

Report Requirements

The law requires the Department to annually summarize and report the information provided by local governments (RCW 82.32.765). Local jurisdiction reporting requirements include:

- The local property tax allocation revenues received in the preceding calendar year are broken down by sponsoring local government and participating taxing districts (local jurisdictions do not receive the local property tax increments until the second calendar year after award approval).
- The estimated state property tax allocation revenues the state received in the preceding calendar year (local jurisdictions do not receive the state property tax increments until the second calendar year after award approval).
- The local sales and use taxes and other revenues from local public sources, dedicated by any participating local government and used for the payment of bonds and public improvements within the revitalization area on a pay-as-you-go basis, in the preceding calendar year.
- The local sales and use taxes dedicated by the sponsoring local government, as it relates to the sponsoring local government's local sales and use taxes increment, used for the payment of bonds and public improvements within the revitalization area on a pay-as-you-go basis in the preceding calendar year.
- All other revenue from local public sources, broken down by type and source, used to pay for bonds and public improvements within the revitalization area on a pay-as-you-go basis in the preceding calendar year.
- The names of businesses located within the revitalization area due to the public improvements undertaken by the sponsoring local government and financed in whole or in part by LRF.
- An estimate of the cumulative number of permanent jobs created in the revitalization area as a result of the public improvements undertaken by the sponsoring local government and financed in whole or in part by LRF.
- An estimate of the average wages and benefits received by all employees of businesses located within the revitalization area, attributable to the public improvements undertaken by the sponsoring local government and financed in whole or in part by LRF.
- A list of public improvements financed by bonds and the anticipated date when bonds retire.
- Proof that the sponsoring local government complies with the conditions of the LRF program.
- Every three years, updated estimates of the state and local sales and use taxes increments received since the project's approval by the Department.
- Any other information required to enable the Department to fulfill its legal duties.

Program Summary

All participating jurisdictions that have imposed the LRF tax submitted the 2025 LRF Annual Report to the Department and certified compliance with the program's requirements.

Local Governments Imposing the LRF Tax

In total, 11 sponsoring local governments have imposed the LRF tax.

- Auburn and Bremerton issued bonds and imposed the LRF tax on July 1, 2010.
- Kennewick, Spokane, University Place, and Vancouver issued bonds and imposed the LRF tax on July 1, 2011.
- Bellevue, Richland, and Wenatchee issued bonds and imposed the LRF tax on July 1, 2013.
- Tacoma imposed the LRF tax on July 1, 2016.
- Renton issued bonds and imposed the LRF tax on July 1, 2019, for the South Lake Washington project.

All eligible jurisdictions received the approved award amounts for fiscal year 2025 before June 30, 2025. All participating jurisdictions should receive the approved award amounts for fiscal year 2026.

Local Governments that did not impose the LRF Tax

In total, seven sponsoring local governments did not impose the LRF tax.

- Whitman County notified the Department on March 15, 2021, that it would not proceed with LRF financing due to the sale of the property intended for development.
- Lacey stated on their 2021 annual report that the Gateway Town Center project would not be developed in time to implement the tax.
- Clark County, Federal Way, Mill Creek, Puyallup, and Renton (Port Quendall) did not impose the LRF tax by July 1, 2022, and forfeited their award amounts.

Forfeited award amounts equal \$2.28 million. Forfeited award amounts will be available for future LRF applicants.

Program Results

For calendar year 2025, LRF jurisdictions reported a state benefit of \$1.78 billion. This represents:

- The total sales and use taxes increase since the Department approved the local governments' awards of \$1.77 billion.
- The property tax increase in revenues for 2025 of \$9.4 million.

In calendar year 2025, local governments received \$4,347,658.59 in LRF tax revenue.

Report Information for Current Revitalization Areas

The table on the following page summarizes the reported LRF activity for sponsoring local governments that imposed the LRF tax before July 1, 2022.

Project	Rate of LRF Tax	State Benefit Reported	Bonds Issued Date	State and Local Property Tax Allocation Revenues*	Local Matching	Amount carried over for bond repayment and for pay-as-you-go public improvements	New Businesses located in the RA	Jobs created from new businesses	Estimated total state and local sales and use taxes increment in 2025	Fiscal Year 2025 Tax Distribution Cap	Date LRF imposed or estimated year to impose tax	LRF Award Amount
Auburn	0.0133%	\$4,164,363	05/13/2010	N/A	\$177,933	\$6,720,552	108	439	\$4,551,780	\$250,000	07/01/2010	\$250,000
Bellevue	0.0100%	\$1,381,700,000	04/2013	\$0	\$0	\$24,412,322	2,215	43,223	\$1,562,000,000	\$500,000	07/01/2013	\$500,000
Bremerton	0.0510%	\$794,854	11/02/2010	\$35,334	\$334	\$10,896,949	53	363	\$865,173	\$330,000	07/01/2010	\$330,000
Kennewick	0.0430%	\$63,427,468	03/30/2010	\$1,889,360	\$624,877	\$15,449,845	173	1,143	\$84,264,513	\$500,000	07/01/2011	\$500,000
Renton South Lake			05/28/2010 and									
Washington	0.0300%	\$29,321,179	04/09/2019	\$726,470	\$691,019	\$6,322,822	6	650	\$34,413,556	\$500,000	07/01/2019	\$500,000
Richland	0.0500%	\$54,970,572	03/20/2013	\$2,862,163	\$10,618	\$1,760,825	6	120	\$60,354,360	\$330,000	07/01/2013	\$330,000
Spokane	0.0070%	\$2,833,323	05/09/2011	\$472,936	\$251,128	\$17,940,187	86	244	\$3,701,994	\$250,000	07/01/2011	\$250,000
Tacoma	0.0140%	\$194,244,588	N/A	\$7,602,922	\$13,452,634	\$143,086,296	N/A	N/A	\$300,736,822	\$500,000	07/01/2016	\$500,000
University Place	0.2400%	\$244,864	06/30/2011	\$323,041	\$1,082,520	\$18,004,411	29	409	\$72,765	\$500,000	07/01/2011	\$500,000
Vancouver	0.0111%	\$28,076,638	06/22/2011	\$2,582,322	\$0	\$0	43	370-420	\$27,708,000	\$220,000	07/01/2011	\$220,000
Wenatchee	0.0710%	\$19,471,056	12/01/2016	\$255,802	\$401,652	\$5,149,945	55	350	\$22,178,830	\$500,000	07/01/2013	\$500,000