

STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

2023





The Greater Federal Way Chamber of Commerce is a community-based organization focused on economic development and supported by membership and public/private partnerships. Membership is comprised of business enterprises, civic organizations, educational institutions, nonprofits, and community organizations. As the voice of business along the Seattle-Tacoma business corridor, the Chamber represents businesses, employing an estimated 20,000+ workers in the South Puget Sound region. Our vision is to create a prosperous economy in the greater Federal Way area of the South Sound region.

Strategically vital to international trade and commerce in our state, Federal Way is the 5th largest city in King County and 11th largest city in the State. The Chamber's regional scope also includes Pierce County, the State's second largest labor market behind King County.

The business community in the greater Federal Way region recognizes that we are part of an economic interdependent region and state, with diverse needs and interests, and that no one area can progress without another. The Chamber recognizes that funding these priorities will require a mix of funding sources and encourages the legislature to explore options that do not unfairly burden the business community, spreading tax revenues fairly across businesses and individuals with an accountability for those taxes.

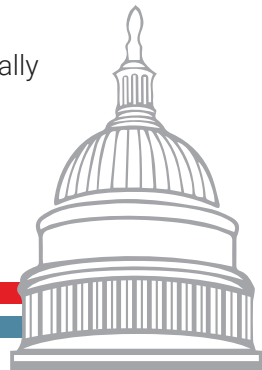
The Chamber supports the following 2023 legislative priorities:



BUSINESS CLIMATE AND GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS:

The greater Federal Way region is engaged in a constant national and global competition for our precious employers and revenue generators. The south Puget Sound position as a key competitor in a global economy mandates that policies be embraced which stimulate economic competitiveness and do not burden our private sector businesses to balance a deficit.

1. With economic development in Federal Way and the South Puget Sound region as a core programming function, the Chamber looks for continued funding for initiatives that support business growth and development, particularly in recovery efforts for business retention and expansion, labor shed and workforce development strategies, talent gap and alignment, as well as regional economic development strategies with Federal Way as a hub for business connection.
2. With its uniquely diverse workforce, the Federal Way region is uniquely positioned to support entrepreneurial opportunity through Centers for acceleration, incubation, and Innovation. The Chamber seeks funding to build ecosystems within a culturally responsive lens that integrate across industry sectors to create, connect, support, and grow innovation as a small business model.
3. Recognizing that visitor and hospitality trends locally and within the regional corridor are destination amenities related to maintaining and growing a talent pipeline, the Chamber seeks funding support to align talent recruitment strategies



to destination management efforts tied to visitation and workforce.

4. The Chamber understands the importance of high-speed internet service in maintaining our region's economic competitiveness. The Chamber supports continued investments in developing high-speed broadband service for every community in the State and the expansion of Federal Way broadband connectivity.



WORKFORCE/EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT:

The Chamber believes our elected officials should work to protect business and individual economic prosperity by adequately funding the K-12 community and technical college system to prepare the workforce of tomorrow with STEM and career connect learning, particularly as it related to the workforce development and entrepreneurial business support for underserved populations in South King and North Pierce counties.

1. The Chamber recognizes that childcare is a critical workforce issue as well as a growth industry, particularly in Federal Way which the WA State Childcare Collaborative Task Force has identified as a childcare desert. The Chamber recognizes that childcare is an integral component of business infrastructure and supports a balanced approach in ensuring the development of affordable and accessible childcare industry in the greater Federal Way area.
2. The Chamber seeks for legislators to address Washington's constitutional obligation to comply with the court order to fund basic K-12 public education as preparation for an educated workforce. As we look to create a competitive regional balance, the Chamber encourages our legislators to address the issue of

regionalization which places South King County in an inequitable funding position. Additionally, the Chamber urges our legislature to address the funding inequities impacting the Federal Way Public School system, which receives approximately \$10 million less each year than other districts in our region as a result of the current regionalization model.

3. The Chamber supports the annual funding for the Higher Education Center (HUB), a partnership with Federal Way Public School District, Highline College, and the University of Washington Tacoma, which will bring additional education and training opportunities to the Federal Way area. In addition to support for the HUB, the Chamber encourages the legislature to invest in our community and technical colleges by funding the supplemental capital request, which includes funding for design and construction for Highline's new Welcome Center for Student Success, which will be located a short walk from the new Light Rail station opening across from Highline's campus.
4. The business leaders at the Chamber support funding to prepare students for college and careers in high need/high demand fields at community and technical colleges. This includes fully funding preschool to help build a strong foundation for the youngest students in the Federal Way District, as well as investing in learning recovery efforts to sustain academic programs that are critical to lessening the learning loss caused by the COVID-19.



TRANSPORTATION:

As an economic hub in the South Puget Sound region, transportation along its business corridors is critical for our economic vitality, creating sustainable jobs, and moving goods to and from one of the largest distribution centers in Washington.



1. The Chamber supports the exploration of developing and/or enhancing a multimodal transportation strategy that moves people, services, and goods with easy access along east-west and north-south corridors within the South Puget Sound region. Connecting consumers to the marketplace that includes both King County and Pierce County is a critical component in the retention and attraction of business and its workforce to our area.
2. The Chamber supports efforts to complete the Puget Sound Gateway project (SR 167/SR 509), which will alleviate congestion on south King County and north Pierce County roads. The Puget Sound Gateway project will enhance freight mobility in and out of the Port of Tacoma as the Northwest Seaport Alliance launches the expansion of their maritime cargo operations.
3. The Chamber recognizes the necessary investment of mass transit / light rail to meet the growing demands of a growing residential and business community. We welcome Sound Transit's investment in South King County and support ongoing planning for the Federal Way Transit Center station area and the Tacoma Dome Link Extension station in south Federal Way as economic development drivers which meets commuter needs. In addition, the Chamber encourages development with low impact on the state's designated Commercial Enterprise Zone in Federal Way.

Adopted by the Board of Directors, December 15, 2022

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