

# South Sound

CHAMBER CONNECTIONS

## STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

2019-20

# THOUGHTS FROM THE CEO



Rebecca Martin, CCE, IOM  
Greater Federal Way Chamber CEO

You hear me talk about working together for the greater good quite a bit. It's the name of our collaboration project for a reason. Economic success will only be ours if we engage in open, constructive public discourse.

A critical determinant for investment decision-making is based on the climate for

doing business. To have a strong business environment and to be successful in the very competitive game of economic development, we must practice the principles of respect and collaboration in our conversations around growth.

Economic prosperity is only achieved when we work together for goals that reach beyond our personal position. When we draw boundaries, we define ourselves and protect our own spaces and ideas. We need to be open minded and not use unfair or mean-spirited devices of exclusion.

It's not always going to be a celebration of ideas but we can be prepared to reframe conflict so that it doesn't impede economic progress. Sometimes moving a new idea forward can create conflict. Nobody likes to lose. When a conflict is approached in a scenario where one side wins and the other loses, that conflict is likely to continue.

We need to remember to separate the person from the disagreement. It is the issue, not the individual, with which we wrestle. When a group confrontation begins, take a moment to pause, breathe, regroup, and rephrase. Work towards resolutions that minimize loss for all parties and move those win/lose scenarios to win/win solutions.

The path to winning is the path that is built upon a strong, diversified business base. This is the way to progress. This is the way to economic prosperity. This is the Federal Way.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becca".

 **GREATER FEDERAL WAY**  
Chamber of Commerce

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# HOMELESS TASK FORCE CHAIR FOLLOWS UP WITH CHAMBER BUSINESSES



Businesses who requested follow-up as part of the Chamber's *Impact on Business Homelessness Retention Survey* were contacted by Sharry Edwards, Chair, City of Federal Way Homeless Task Force. They shared stories about how people who are experiencing homelessness are sleeping in areas outside of their businesses and leaving behind garbage, needles and human waste.

She sat in the lobby of the McDonalds on 320th with the manager for nearly two hours and watched and experienced what the employees and customers are exposed to. People would take turns panhandling on the corner, then walking back to the parking lot gathering in a group, then to the nearby woods. As they make their way in and out of the wooded areas, people with backpacks and large amounts of personal belongings were walking up to customers and up to those in the drive-thru asking for money. The employees have mentioned they call the police several times a day to have those threatening customers and staff be removed.

Most all businesses told the same story about calling the police to have these individuals removed only to be given a "no trespassing" order, however, these are not seen as worthwhile as the people persistently return. There was also a great consensus the problem has been getting worse over the last two years, costing more money with security measures, which lead to loss of revenue and employee turnover.

Business leaders expressed interest in wanting to be part of the solution or part of the discussion on how to help these people." They explained they believe that the people causing these problems are drug addicts based on their behavior and witnessing the open use as well as dealing that occurs in their parking lots. They want to emphasize that they understand that this creates a challenge when it comes to a community trying to help the crisis of homelessness. One business owner near Pacific Hwy and 312th stated that heroin use is on the rise and, "killing our kids and our society".

The following is a list of information, ideas and requests for me to take back to the Task Force for consideration:

Garbage cans and containers are a problem. The more containers you have, the more of a problem you will have. The main issue being that people dig through cans and containers looking for things of value and leave the trash on the ground causing a mess. McDonalds reduced their problems considerably by removing all of the exposed garbage cans outside their business and keeping only the minimum required by the franchise. Lakehaven Utility said wherever they have had dumpsters, they have ended up with problems all around them for this exact reason confirming that the trash problem is not helped by adding cans and containers.

Understanding panhandling is a constitutional right. Businesses state they feel that they should have rights, too. Businesses expressed frustration that anyone can stand outside of their businesses with signs and which result in having their customers feel uncomfortable. Almost all the businesses asked me why the City doesn't have any rules to protect their enterprise that do not infringe on their rights. One suggestion included rules that a person could panhandle but not within 100 feet of a business, school, or residence. Another point that arose was requiring panhandlers to obtain permits to place signs that ask people to give to charity. There was also some discussion about the personal safety of the panhandler and how can begging vs working be defined. If they are working, then shouldn't their personal safety be a concern as well as their responsibility to pay taxes on the money?

In reference to the Washington State Department of Licensing Labor and Industries website in regards to 'flaggers,' there is a list of requirements to protect their safety that include the need to wear orange protective helmets and clothing.

The business owners Sharry met with would like to see the formation of a larger coalition to address these issues and all expressed wanting to help and be involved with solutions in the future especially related to keeping their businesses safe. All in all, the discussions were all very interesting and businesses would like to see the City and this Task Force seriously address this issue with new innovative ideas.

# Welcome TO THE CHAMBER NETWORK



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# MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

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*50+ years*

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*40+ years*

Federal Way Library  
Highline College

*30+ years*

Eagle Tire & Automotive  
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*20+ years*

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*15-20 years*

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*5 - 9 years*

BECU - The Crossings  
Comfort Inn Federal Way  
Historical Society of Federal Way  
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*1 - 4 years*

Benson Filter Maintenance LLC  
The Chopped Leaf  
Fastsigns of Federal Way  
Federal Way Senior Center

LaVida Massage of Federal Way  
The Pipe Guys  
Washington State Employees  
Credit Union - WSECU



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## PSE TEAMS UNVEIL NEW ARTWORK IN FEDERAL WAY

Puget Sound Energy's transformer box adjacent to Town Square Park has taken on a new look. The Federal Way artwork is part of PSE's ARTility project, which is aimed at reducing maintenance on PSE assets by covering them with art.



"This transformer has been tagged with graffiti in the past, and our hope is that having this beautiful art displayed on the box will prevent that type of activity in the future," said Leslie Myers, PSE Outreach Manager. "It's wonderful to highlight our renewable efforts in this art piece as we focus on reducing our carbon footprint 50 percent by 2040."

# MEMBERS *Makin'* IT HAPPEN



**BEING A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL WAY CHAMBER HELPS MY BUSINESS GET EXPOSURE WITHIN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY.**

- Greg Garcia, City Light Financial, Inc. & Chamber Board Member





Contributing Photographer: LaRaye Rushing



# STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

2019-20



*The Greater Federal Way Chamber of Commerce is a membership-driven organization comprised of business enterprises, civic organizations, educational institutions and individuals. As the voice of business along the Seattle-Tacoma business corridor, the Greater Federal Way Chamber represents 400+ businesses, employing an estimated 25,000+ workers in the South Sound region. Our vision is to create a prosperous economy in 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 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 accountability for those taxes.*

**The Greater Federal Way Chamber of Commerce supports the following 2019-20 legislative priorities:**

## **BUSINESS CLIMATE AND GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS:**

1. Puget Sound is engaged in a constant national and global competition for our precious employers and revenue generators. Puget Sound's efforts to retain its 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.
2. Noting that 35% of Chambers across the country are engaged in economic development activities and recognizing that business growth and development is a core function of the Greater Federal Way Chamber, the Chamber looks for funding support in initiatives that delineate the Chamber as an economic development partner in business retention, attraction, and expansion efforts in Federal Way and the South Puget Sound region.
3. The Greater Federal Way Chamber recognizes that destination management is an economic engine incorporated into the program of work at Chambers of Commerce, 21% nationally and 68% in the Pacific Northwest-- and therefore encourages support of the Greater Federal Way Chamber of Commerce for developing this industry segment. And, as is a best practice nationally and regionally, the Chamber seeks funding support for inventory development and marketing efforts as part of its work in destination management for visitation and workforce.
4. Recognizing that the issue of homelessness has many layers, and understanding the impact these issues have on our business climate, The Greater Federal Way Chamber of Commerce encourages the state to provide funding support to local jurisdictions working with community stakeholders to address this community challenge. As per the results of our survey, *Impact of Homelessness on Business Retention*, the Chamber strongly believes funding for such efforts should be earmarked for local delivery service within the City limits.

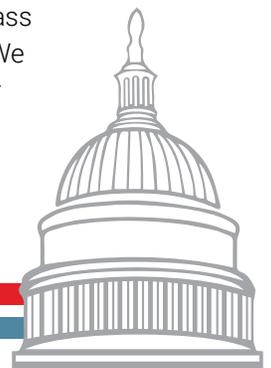
## EDUCATION/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

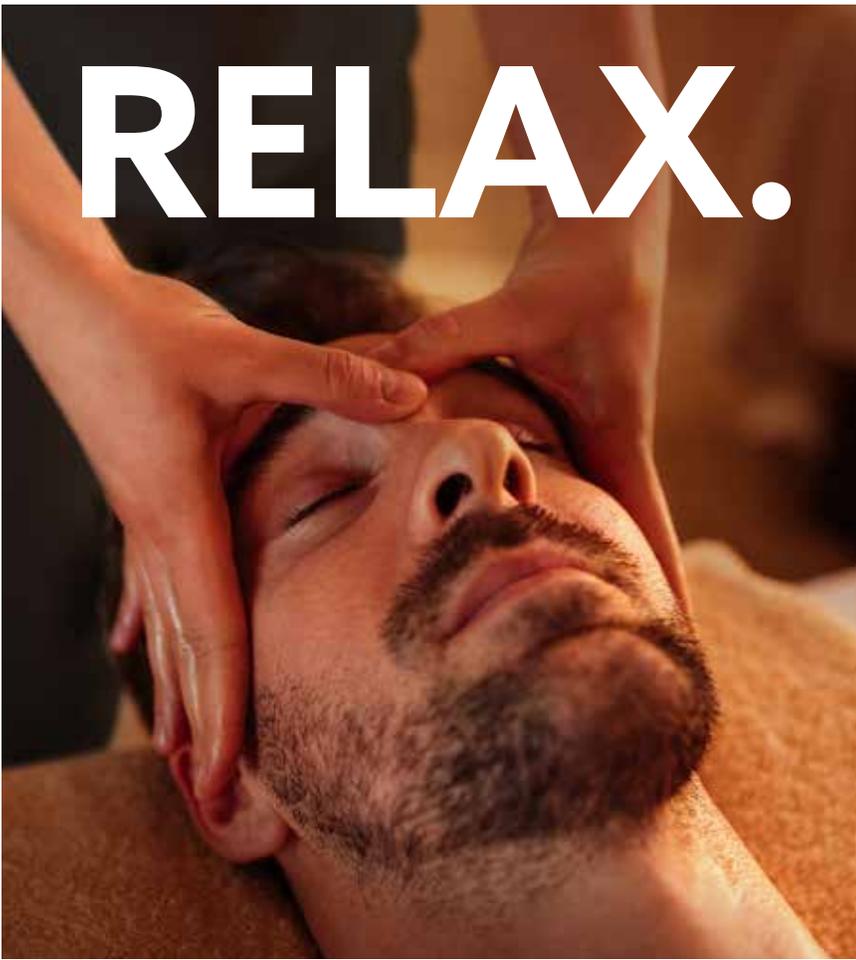
1. The Greater Federal Way Chamber seeks for legislators to address Washington's constitutional obligation to comply with the court order to fund basic K-12 public education as preparation for an educated workforce. As we look to create a competitive regional balance, The Greater Federal Way Chamber encourages our legislators to address the issue of levy rollbacks in order to decrease reliance on local levies which place South King County in an unequitable funding position. Additionally, the Chamber urges our legislature to address the funding inequities impacting the Federal Way Public School system, which receives approximately \$30 million less than other districts in our region as a result of changes in levy collection and the regionalization factor in state funding formulas. If nothing changes, this will result in an approximately \$10 million deficit by 2020, creating a disadvantage for our future workforce.
2. The Greater Federal Way Chamber supports the annual funding that was requested by the City of Federal Way in December 2017 and approved by the legislature in March 2018 to fund on an annual basis the Higher Education Center, a partnership with Federal Way Public School District, Highline College, and the University of Washington Tacoma, which will bring additional education and training options to Federal Way.
3. The Greater Federal Way Chamber believes our elected officials should work to protect business and individual economic prosperity by adequately funding the community and technical college system. Further, as employment forecasts show strong growth in health care related jobs, the Greater Federal Way Chamber supports full funding of the Allied Health Building at Highline College to enhance the workforce opportunities of the South Sound region.
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, including support for English language learners and funding resources for technology infrastructure which prepares all students for the workforce.

## TRANSPORTATION:

1. The Greater Federal Way 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 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. We encourage the state legislature to continue to support transportation initiatives which merge the infrastructure needs of highways, mass transit, bridges, ferries, and transportation corridors. Any legislation should recognize our need to move both products and people in a manner that enhances our economic capacity. The Greater Federal Way Chamber encourages legislators to protect our many years of investment by adequately funding current maintenance and operations needs along with expanding our transit network for future growth opportunities. Legislation should include recognition of key corridors such as I-5, the completion of Puget Sound Gateway Project (SR 167 and SR 509), and other interconnecting mass transit and structural improvements.
3. As an economic hub in the South 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. The Greater Federal Way Chamber of Commerce continues to support the funding and construction of Phase II of the Triangle Improvements for the I-5- SR 18 / SR 161 interchange areas to ease congestion and improve traffic flow in the Federal Way area.
4. The Greater Federal Way Chamber of Commerce recognizes the necessary investment of mass transit/ light rail to address the 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 meet commuter needs.

*Adopted by the Board of Directors, Dec. 18, 2018*





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