



# Beaverton Area Chamber of Commerce 2024 Legislative and Local Priorities

Economic Growth | Inclusivity | Collaboration | Fiscal  
Responsibility | Transparency

The Beaverton Area Chamber urges the Oregon Legislature, Metro, Washington County, City of Beaverton and each Washington County-area Chamber of Commerce to consider and coordinate with our guiding principles and engage our members in policy conversations and decisions in 2024.

## WHO WE ARE

The Beaverton Chamber is the independent, significant voice of the Beaverton area's growing business community, which is considered a significant part of the economic engine of Oregon. We are a member-driven organization, proud to represent and serve more than 6,000 small businesses, large employers and nonprofits operating in the Beaverton area, ranging from local restaurants and auto repair shops to the world leader of sports apparel. The businesses we represent are make Beaverton an economically prosperous, safe, healthy, inclusive and innovative place to live, work and play.

## OUR LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FOCUS

The Business Advocacy Council actively monitors and participates in legislation activation, policy review and efforts and initiatives that may cause commercial impact locally, regionally and at the federal level. We ask our representatives at the state legislature, city, county, regional bodies and Congress to **do no harm**. We are asking policymakers and officials to contemplate very seriously any action, be it regulatory enactment, tax incursion or fee increases, and to view any action through the lens of a Main Street business owner who has finally gotten over the difficulties caused by Covid only to see the possibility of a looming economic downturn. Our businesses have yet to absorb all of the new fees/taxes already passed so we respectfully ask for a pause on new taxes and fees. The Tax Foundation's most recent State Business Tax Climate Index ranks Oregon as 28<sup>th</sup> in overall taxes but ranks Oregon as the 49<sup>th</sup> state for Corporate Taxes and 41<sup>st</sup> for Individual Taxes. The burden to businesses and the people they employ is real and can threaten long term viability in our community. According to BLS and ASU, Oregon ranks as the 44<sup>th</sup> state in job growth through November 2023. According to Census Bureau population estimates Oregon has experienced net migration out of the state in both 2022 and 2023. Oregon is one of only 8 states in the country that saw population decreases. We must stop these trends and support a thriving business community to assist in funding everything we collectively desire to build together to make our community the best it can be. We will be advocating for more workforce training programs to create a deeper pool of potential employees for local business. Lastly, we will continue to help local businesses and organizations coordinate with governments and non-profits to tackle the houselessness in Beaverton.

## OUR VALUES

Our mission is to promote business prosperity and a healthy, equitable, inclusive and diverse community in greater Beaverton area by providing information, services and advocacy for our members.

### OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

<b>Economic Growth</b>	Promote policies that enable businesses of all sizes to thrive and grow.
<b>Inclusivity</b>	Engage and listen to business stakeholders on policies that impact how employers operate.
<b>Collaboration</b>	Develop policies collaboratively with a willingness to consider alternative paths and compromise agreements.
<b>Fiscal Responsibility</b>	Prioritize State and local spending based on intended outcomes and results to create a more balanced, stable budget.
<b>Transparency</b>	Encourage open and transparent communication between all stakeholders to create an environment of trust and collaboration in working toward the common good of our community.

#### CONTACT:

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## Small Business Support

Some small businesses are struggling under the imposition of state and jurisdictional requirements and current and potential taxation.

<b>Support</b>	Help facilitate new and current programs to support small businesses the encourage employee recruitment and retention.
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<b>Oppose</b>	Any new regulations, legislation, and policy that would be detrimental to existing businesses and discourage the creation of new businesses and organizations.
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## Local Funding to Address Homelessness

<b>Support</b>	Support city and county efforts that increase allocations and disbursements to address homelessness and supportive housing services, including providing local jurisdictions temporary flexibility with non-discretionary funds.
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<b>Support</b>	Support local businesses and organizations initiatives to reduce homelessness.
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## Transparent Accountability

<b>Support</b>	Open and transparent accountability of the fair, efficient and effective use of all tax dollars levied on businesses and the employees they employ.
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<b>Oppose</b>	Funded programs not being delivered effectively, efficiently, and timely for those services and programs the voters have agreed to fund.
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## Tax Policies and Economic Development

Tax policies must consider research, data and the voices of the business community and show a direct result in Oregon's business climate. Economic development tools, tax increases and tax credits have a direct impact on employers - their ability to stay in business, hire new employees and expand.

<b>Priority</b>	Any tax increase, added burdens, or adjustments to an economic development incentive must be developed in collaboration and in consensus with a broad-based business community.
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<b>Support</b>	Legislation that preserves and supports state and local tools to help businesses expand and hire new employees, including the strategic investment program, urban renewal and enterprise zones.
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<b>Oppose</b>	Any changes to economic development tools, such as the SIP or enterprise zones that are not developed in consensus with a broad base of the business community.
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## Transportation and Infrastructure Investments

Ensure the business voice is represented in decision making around strategic investments in transportation and vital infrastructure to spur job and economic development growth throughout Oregon. It is imperative that we prioritize projects in the most effective and efficient way possible.

<b>Priority</b>	Oregon legislators and policymakers should seek out opportunities to fund transportation system upgrades, maintenance, and roadway project development, including improvements planned for the I-5 interstate bridge and Highway 217. Funding vital infrastructure projects will infuse Oregon communities with badly needed investments resulting in an increase in local spending and through federal infrastructure investments.
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<b>Oppose</b>	Transportation infrastructure upgrades and potential tolling that do not contemplate future needs including adequate flow for overburdened roads that will need to accommodate mass transit, cars (electric powered and otherwise), bicycles, pedestrians, and other forms of transportation. Goods and services must be able to be delivered while ensuring consumers and employees must have adequate access to work and movement.
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### **City of Beaverton Specific Focus for 2024**

<b>Priority</b>	To effectively support the City Manager, City Staff and Council and support and enhance our partnership with the City of Beaverton, including City policy priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Protect the city’s ability to manage city operations effectively and efficiently.</li><li>• Supporting equitable strategies for funding locally needed improvements</li><li>• Ensuring housing stability and support investments in more housing options at all levels of affordability</li><li>• Support effective public safety structures and processes that serve the community across all constituencies, while acknowledging and correcting systemic racism.</li><li>• Support legislation that ensures effective and efficient deployment of resources to expand and/or improve physical and human infrastructure.</li><li>• Opposing reductions to tax-exempt programs that impact job creation and housing production</li></ul>
<b>Priority</b>	To collaborate with city leaders and staff to provide support to the economic engine of our local economy, local business owners and their employees so that we can continue to afford the investments in improving our community.

### **Washington County Specific Focus for 2024**

<b>Priority</b>	Work with Washington County and other governmental entities to support the effective business development priorities of the County. Work collaboratively with all chambers in Washington County, the Beaverton Downtown Association, diverse business organizations, and other nonprofits that have an interest in growing the economic vitality of the region.
<b>Review and/or Activate</b>	Effectively monitor/review and, as deemed appropriate, respond to current/potential Washington County proposals that may impact Beaverton businesses and residents. Field requests from BACC members and/or external parties and review.

### **Metro Specific Focus for 2024**

<b>Priority</b>	Work with Metro to encourage transparency and accountability for projects proposed and already funded. Including but not limited to services for those experiencing homelessness, transportation and other Metro services that support our local businesses and residents.
<b>Review and/or Activate</b>	To effectively monitor/review and, as deemed appropriate, respond to current/potential Metro proposals that may impact Washington County and Beaverton businesses and residents.

### **Federal and Regional Activation**

<b>Review and/or Activate</b>	To effectively monitor/review and, as deemed appropriate, respond to current/potential congressional proposals that may impact Washington County and Beaverton businesses and residents. Field requests from BACC members and/or external parties and review.
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