



A PBA AFFILIATE

Portland Metro Chamber Strategic Plan 2023-26

The Portland Business Alliance is an affiliation of three highly synergist corporate entities; the Portland Metro Chamber (the Chamber), Downtown Portland Clean & Safe, and the Charitable Institute, that share a collective mission, vision and values.

The Portland Metro Chamber (the Chamber) is the 501c6 membership-based advocacy organization. The mission, vision and values are those of the Alliance. The priorities of the strategic plan for the Portland Metro Chamber are intended to support the mission of the Chamber: To create opportunity and advance well-being for all who live and work in the greater Portland and SW Washington region. And to achieve the vision of the Chamber: A healthy and resilient business ecosystem.

Who we serve, our community: We serve the members of the Portland Metro Chamber.

1. Advocacy

The Chamber will strive to maintain collaborative relationships with elected officials and public-sector staff when advancing policy on behalf of those we serve. We will support our fellow business advocates by working to keep relationships within the association network productive. The Chamber should consider partnering with non-business association organizations to strengthen the civic fabric and provide business community leadership and support to issues not traditionally considered directly business related, when appropriate.

A. Downtown & Central City Reactivation Advocacy

(Downtown is the 213-block district, and Central City is the greater commercial center of the city)

Advocate for urgent re-activation of Downtown & Central City as a thriving, 24/7 neighborhood where families, employers, and employees increasingly choose to live, work, play, and connect by:

- *Supporting Downtown Portland Clean & Safe by advocating on the organization's behalf through:*
 - *Holding the city accountability for basic services as outlined in the city's commitments to basic maintenance.*

- Advancing annual policy objectives as determined by the board and staff of Downtown Portland Clean & Safe.
- Advocating for public policies, investments and execution that provide for a well maintained, clean, safe, and diverse downtown by:
 - Improving public-right-of-way infrastructure.
 - Reducing unsheltered homelessness.
 - Reducing crime.
 - Activating high traffic Downtown parks for all.
 - Developing incentive packages and cut through red-tape to spur diverse street-level commercial activity.
- Encouraging office employers to bring employees back downtown by:
 - Participating in focused campaigns to build culture around return-to-office.
 - Participating in supporting public and private employees returns on an organization-by-organization basis including incentives and other inducements.
- Expanding and attracting the employer community to restore economic vibrancy.
- Advocating to densify housing in the Central City to grow the residential population.
- Supporting Downtown reputation recovery by advancing positive earned media with a special emphasis on the travel, tourism, and hospitality sectors in support of increasing visitor-ship.

B. Taxes

Advocate for Oregon and regional revenue policy that enhances our regional competitiveness, noting that we are in effect the highest income tax county in the nation.

Strive for accountable return on investment for taxpayers that deliver quality public service to facilitate both, economic growth, and solutions to key community challenges.

- Reforming taxes to retain, grow local companies and attract business and talent.
 - Execute regional tax alignment agreed on and voted by the three governments in 2022.
 - Evaluate Oregon and Washington business tax alignment.
 - Support development of conducive tax policy for industry and talent clusters.
 - Maximize member participation in oversight and accountability functions for voter approved tax measure.

C. Additional Advocacy Focus

Quality of Life: *Ensure accountability from the regional governments for restoring livability with an emphasis on the City of Portland, but also the region, through the delivery of quality basic services, advocating for:*

- Ensuring accountability to the adopted plans to reduce unsheltered homelessness across the region as promised to voters in the Metro Supportive Housing Services measure.
- Funding policy that achieves accountable and effective community safety levels at national standards in staffing across the justice system (police, sheriff, district attorney, defenders, corrections, and probation) that results in reduced crime.
- Improving garbage and waste removal services with a special focus on commercial corridors and the Central City, along with mass transit, and arterial and interstate roadways.
- Changing regulatory and funding policies that lead to massive increases in housing production through inter-jurisdictional investment and improvements in permitting and regulatory frameworks to achieve deeper affordability and boost the purchasing power of local wages.

Economic Development: *Engage in economic development strategy and implementation, as well as project support through:*

- Participating in the strategy developed in *Advance Portland* where the Portland Metro Chamber is identified as an implementation partner and where the plan aligns with other elements of this plan.
- Facilitating the State of Sport Taskforce is in alignment with *Advance Portland's* focused cluster strategy, and the regional *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* (CEDs).
- Supporting economic development projects of significance, especially those with housing components, such as but not limited to 82nd Avenue, Broadway Corridor, OMSI, Rose Quarter, and others.
- Developing the East Multnomah County Strategy through the East County Cares Act Initiative, East County Economic Analysis, and East County Economic Development Agenda previously approved by the board.
- Developing a higher education collaborative group to develop a responsive workforce.
- Continuing to support recredentialing efforts at the state level to provide access to diverse immigrant communities.

Infrastructure: *Be a leading voice for investment and maintenance of a modern infrastructure system, necessary for economic vitality, with a focus on freight movement and the once-in-a-generation opportunity for the I-5 corridor through efforts to:*

- Securing local funding match and federal resources to replace the I-5 Bridge with a higher capacity crossing to accommodate a growing region.
- Implementing Rose Quarter redevelopment to alleviate costly congestion and support a vibrant community around the interchange.

- Monitoring and supporting appropriate alternative modes of transit – bicycle, walking friendly, dedicated bus and transit improvements, to enhance mobility.

Charter Reform: Influence positive charter reform outcomes for city government by:

- Working to advance a streamlined and effective government structure.
- Establishing a small business service bureau and/or office with a focus on equitable economic prosperity through the business ecosystem to foster and encourage the founding and growth of business owned by people of color.

Climate Change: Engage the private and academic sectors as active partners around climate change policy that strengthens the economy and meets emissions goals.

- Committing to a private-sector council with the City of Portland’s Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

Federal: Continue to lead Portland and Oregon’s federal business advocacy with our state-wide organizations. The Chamber should continue to lead these efforts and seek partnership with additional Pacific Northwest business associations with emphasis on:

- Strengthening the federal advocacy efforts through the annual Washington, D.C. fly-in.
- Participating and supporting the Cascadia Innovation Corridor.

D. Elections

It is critical that the business community advance our values during elections with candidates and ballot initiatives, especially with the upcoming change in both the city and county elections systems, implemented in the 2024 election cycle.

- Establishing new partner organization dedicated to supporting pragmatic, solution-oriented leaders through research, training, and broad coalitions.

2. Member Engagement and Program Services

Build a value-added membership that fully reflects the diverse Portland-Metro community and emphasizes small businesses.

- Broaden engagement to fulfill our external brand position of “Building Bridges” by:
 - Bringing forward the ‘Portland Metro Chamber’ name.
 - Executing on supportive rebranding.
 - Completing membership dues restructure.
- Grow small business membership and engagement to attract and retain small business members through:
 - Easing opportunities for the “average” small business to participate in advocacy opportunities.
 - Setting goals for small business growth in membership.
 - Exploring micro lending as a potential program offering through the Charitable Institute.

- Building on pre-existing program of small business management cohorts by expanding offerings with the Small Business Development Center.
- Continue to actively inform members on policy positions by communicating where we stand and the process behind decisions.
- Civic Engagement
 - Establishing growth goals in Leadership Portland class size, alumni engagement, and pipeline to civic engagement on boards, commissions, and task forces.
 - Establishing assessment metrics that will facilitate goal setting for the program.