

# 2022 Collaborative Advocacy Engagement Strategy

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## SUMMARY

One of the strategic initiatives that has been identified by the members of the Tillamook Area Chamber of Commerce is to engage in public policy and ensure that business-friendly individuals are holding elected and appointed positions, enabling the Chamber to maximize its effectiveness in positively impacting the community.

While the Chamber has seen success in its advocacy efforts and community perception, the potential to be more efficient with our resources can be gained through the 2022 Collaborative Advocacy Engagement Strategy.

This engagement strategy outlines the objectives and methods followed by the Chamber regarding education and awareness, policy engagement, candidate involvement, and potential endorsements. We believe it is necessary to grow the Chamber's influence in local decisions and provide value to our members and members of the community.

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## OBJECTIVES

The strategy should maintain and align with the following objectives:

- 1) Create awareness among members and public regarding non-business-friendly public policy.
  - 2) Position the Chamber as an influencer in matters of policy that impact the local community.
  - 3) Act as a resource to elected or appointed officials, or those seeking election or appointment.
  - 4) Position the Chamber as a credible source of information, ideas, and resources for which important decisions impacting the community are made.
  - 5) Actively advocate for fair and equitable policy to achieve progress in focus areas.
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## FOCUS AREAS

### **Workforce Development**

One of the biggest challenges facing local businesses as we emerge from the pandemic is workforce development and securing a pipeline for the next generation of employees. Many of our industries are faced with an aging workforce, limited access to students entering the workforce, and a reduction of opportunities for the future workforce to become aware of the opportunities in our community.

### **Regulation & Taxation**

The Chamber supports a fair and equitable tax system that stimulates growth, innovation and job creation while minimizing compliance costs and administrative burdens on businesses. The Chamber also supports sound regulatory systems that allow for businesses to operate free of undo hardships. Land use regulations should support economic development and regional vitality. Good stewardship of public funds is essential to our local economy operating efficiently.

## **Housing**

Tillamook County is facing a severe shortage of affordable housing units. Our community's housing shortage is multifaceted and has been exasperated by the number of people moving to Oregon, higher construction costs, inadequate infrastructure and land-use regulations restricting the creation of housing units. The Chamber is committed to working with the local governments and community partners to create missing middle workforce housing in our community.

## **Transportation**

The Chamber supports investment in an efficient, sustainable, and well-maintained transportation system, which is vital to the health of our region's economy and environment. We will monitor and advocate for transportation services that enhance community livability and support regional economic development including, efficient public transit, multi-modal transportation, and responsible transportation system planning.

## **Economic Development**

The Chamber supports state and local government investments into programs and projects that spur on economic development within the region. This includes the protection of funding sources such as lodging taxes, lottery dollars, and urban renewals being applied to economic development within Tillamook County.

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# **PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS**

## **General Advocacy**

The Chamber regularly engages in discussions that are political in nature. The following type of activities are most often carried out by staff on a regular basis and include:

- Recommending policy language that aligns and supports the Chamber's focus areas.
- Supporting community improvements that have minimal effect on our membership.
- Statements regarding that there may be support/opposition coming if a policy moves forward.
- Non-directive information or notice to our membership or community.

## **Policy Engagement**

The Chamber regularly receives inquiries and notices from members, business groups, and the Oregon State Chamber of Commerce. Any member of the community can request the Chamber engage in or take a position on a public policy by making that request using the Chamber's Policy Engagement Form. The Chamber's Executive Director or board members may also bring policy forward to the full board for position recommendation. Policy engagement is at the sole discretion of the Board.

Policy engagement examples include:

- Active support or opposition to public policy that has a significant effect on our membership.
- Stated support of opposition for public projects that have a significant impact on our membership.
- Call to actions of the local business community.

## **[Policy Engagement Request Form](#)**

## **Political Action Committees**

The Chamber does not make financial contributions to political action committees of candidates or specific policy measures. The Chamber board may decide to make financial contributions to PAC's that broadly support the focus areas of the Chamber such as the Defend Small Business Pac of the Oregon State Chamber of Commerce.

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## **CANDIDATE PROCESS**

### **Candidate Outreach**

The Chamber is committed to providing accessible and equitable opportunities to all candidates running for positions. The Chamber board of directors may choose to engage or opt out in any political race that aligns with the Chamber's focus areas during a special, primary, or general election.

On races that the Chamber engages in, the Chamber will send an inquiry and questionnaire to all filed candidates of contested races to welcome them into conversation about goals and focus for the position they are seeking and how that aligns with the Chamber's focus areas.

The purpose of this inquiry will be to inform the candidates that the Chamber is gathering information for voter education and potential endorsement and that the completion of this questionnaire will be required for inclusion in any education materials or endorsement considerations. Generally speaking, the Chamber will not inquire with candidates running uncontested. However, candidates of uncontested races may request endorsement by filling out a Candidate Engagement Questionnaire.

The Chamber board in its sole discretion may choose to inquire further with candidates through additional written questions or interviews if it is determined that more information is needed to make any decision.

### **Candidate Questionnaire**

The Chamber board will approve all questions presented prior to any inquiry being sent to candidates. All questions should focus solely on the candidate's leadership in the focus areas of the Chamber. The questionnaire will be posted on the Chamber's website for public viewing.

### **[Candidate Engagement Request Form](#)**

### **Candidate Forums**

Chamber members should have the opportunity to engage with candidates for local office. The Chamber may host opportunities for engagement through community forums, social media forums, or other opportunities wherein members can ask candidates questions.

### **Public Relations**

Should the Chamber opt to endorse any candidate, the candidate and members shall be notified at the same time. The level of public relations surrounding each endorsement is an ongoing development and will be determined over the next few election cycles.

If the Chamber opts to not endorse any candidate, it may provide voter education with information gathered from returned questionnaires. All voter education materials are to be approved by the Chamber board of directors.

### **Candidate Process Timeline**

Inquiry and Questionnaire – Mailed 5 days after filing deadline  
Questionnaire Return Deadline – 7-10 business days after mailing  
Chamber Endorsement Notice – No later than 30 days prior to election.

### **Endorsements of Current Elected Officials**

The Chamber board may choose an expedited process for endorsing incumbents and/or current elected officials seeking a different office. An expedited process is to be based off their historical alignment and support of the Chamber’s focus areas and can be made outside of the Chamber’s candidate process.

If an incumbent and/or current elected official wishes to seek an expedited endorsement, they can do so by filling out the Expedited Endorsement Questionnaire. The Chamber Board of Directors will review completed questionnaires at the following regular board meeting and determine in its sole discretion whether to issue an expedited endorsement.

### **[Expedited Candidate Endorsement Request Form](#)**

### **Revocation of Endorsement**

At times there may be information about, or actions taken by a candidate that do not reflect the values or focus areas of the Chamber and it’s members. The Board has the authority to revoke its endorsement at any time and determine the most suitable method to communicate that decision to the membership and public.