



Economic Development Issue Brief

Enhance economic development tools and programs that foster business development in cities

SB 6499: Building better ecosystems
SB 6530/HB 2896: Transpo accounts

Economic development opportunities vary greatly across the state. Some communities have commercial or industrial areas that have deteriorated or lack the needed infrastructure for critical development, and others lack access to adequate broadband services. AWC supports expansion of current programs and funding, such as the Public Works Trust Fund, and will engage key legislators and stakeholders to identify tools that can help foster vital economies in all corners of our state.

Strong cities need:

Economic development tools that support infrastructure investments and recognize the unique characteristics of each city and town, such as authorization for value capture and tax increment financing, and continuation of the local infrastructure financing tool;

Support for the Community Economic Revitalization Board's (CERB) \$30 million request to fund public infrastructure that facilitates private business development and expansion in Washington communities;

State funding and technical assistance that result in a skilled, educated workforce to ensure future job growth and the retention of businesses and industries in cities and towns;

Financial support for economic diversification in cities adversely impacted by unique local conditions or due to the elimination or downsizing of public or private employment opportunities;

A balanced regulatory environment that enables employer retention and job growth while protecting the economic and employment values of our natural resources; and

Tourism recognition and promotion.

More details

Cities and towns are the economic engines of our state. Sixty-five percent of Washington's residents live within cities or towns. In addition, businesses in Washington State's metro areas generate 96 percent of the state's gross domestic product. The ability of cities to provide municipal services and to maintain and enhance community viability depends upon a healthy local economy. Cities need economic development tools that assist in maintaining, expanding, and diversifying local economies. These tools must include appropriate state infrastructure programs and flexible local options, and each city should have equal access to such tools. The Legislature must recognize the importance of cities to the state's economic health and partner with cities when advancing economic development objectives.



Cities drive Washington State's economy

96% of gross state product

86% of all retail sales

69% of job generating businesses

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