

TRI-CITY REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2025

VOTE FOR BUSINESS



BE INFORMED ABOUT THE 2025 ELECTIONS



Policy Engagement Partners



INTRODUCTION

The Tri-City Regional Chamber represents more than 800 business members across Benton and Franklin counties. While the Chamber does not endorse candidates, it serves as the foremost advocate for local businesses by advancing policies and positions that strengthen the regional economy and enhance quality of life.

The 2025 Vote for Business Guide is the region's only voter guide focused specifically on business issues. Its goal is to inform Chamber members and the broader business community about candidates' positions on local business priorities.

This year's guide features candidates in the primary elections for the cities of Kennewick, Pasco, Richland, and West Richland, as well as commission races for the Ports of Benton and Kennewick.

All candidates in contested races were given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire. Responses are unedited, listed alphabetically, and truncated if they exceeded the 130-word limit. If a candidate chose not to participate, that is noted in their profile.

Following the primary election, candidates will have another opportunity to share their views in the 2025 Vote for Business Candidate Forums, which will feature video interviews ahead of the November general election.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

City of Kennewick

City Council

Position 1, Ward 1

Tina Gregory	4
Jason McShane	5
Austin Miller	6

Position 3, Ward 3

Warren Hughs	8
Douglas Perez	9
John H. Trumbo	10

Position 4 At Large

Gloria Tyler Baker	12
Brad Klippert	13
Danielle Schuster	14

City of Pasco

City Council

District 3, Position 3

Leo A. Perales	16
Bryan Verhei	17

District 6, Position 6

Melissa Blasdel	18
Calixto Hernandez	19

City of Richland

City Council

Position 3

Pat Holten	20
Sandra Kent	21

Position 4

Donald Landsman	22
Jordan Lee	23
John Maier	24

Position 6

Kurt H. Maier	26
Kyle Saltz	27

Position 7

Colin Michael	28
Tony Sanchez	29
Joshua Short	30
Ryan Whitten	31

City of West Richland

Mayor

Fred Brink	32
May Hays	33

City Council

Position 3

David Cole	34
Robert Harvey Perkes	35

Position 4

Richard Bloom	36
Braden Slougher	37

Port of Benton

Commission

District 1

Roy Keck	38
Bill O'Neil	39

Port of Kennewick

Commission

District 2

Raul Contreras Gonzalez	40
Tammy Kenfield	41



collaboration.

The Chamber understands the importance of collaborating and building coalitions. By working together, we can build a better tomorrow.

Local leaders and influencers work together at www.tricityregionalchamber.com



Catalyst. Convener. Champion.

© 2025 W.A.C.E.
Western Association of Chamber Executives



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 1, WARD 1



Tina Gregory

tinagregory@frontier.com

Incumbent

Yes ___ No ☒ (open seat)

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

I am honored for the opportunity to represent you. As a Kennewick resident for 45 years I have established deep roots in the community. I started a local landscaping business 30 years ago "with boots on the ground". I later partnered in the development and management of a local storage facility. Both businesses have been profitable and I believe this is a good example of being responsible in my bookkeeping. I believe in conservative values and have a strong passion for listening and assisting local residents with their various needs. I've attended council meetings and participated in public comments since 2021. I believe these experiences have shaped me into someone who will be a valuable asset. I see the incredible potential of this area, but know the risk of being taxed out of ownership. It's often said that "local action has national impact," I believe this is true. [truncated]

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

Cities can listen to citizens. Local action can have national impact.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

Huge role; they can listen to citizens and actually interact with them when they come in to council meetings with concerns. Follow through to completions. Have incentives for small business.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

Taxing out of ownership. Too many restrictions & regulations. Small business are the backbone of America. They need help not more restrictions & taxes.



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 1, WARD 1



Jason McShane

jasonmcshane10@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ____ No ☒ (open seat)

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 1, WARD 1



Austin Miller

austinmillerkennewick@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ☐ No ☒ (open seat)

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

I have worked for and with local businesses since I was in high school. I started my own small business in 2014 that continues to operate today. By profession, I am also an economist and a policy analyst.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

As our region grows, we will be faced with new challenges that require creative solutions. Growth doesn't have to mean crowding or sprawl. With smart planning, we can make it easier for each part of the region to meet the needs of its residents. We can have neighborhoods with their own character, resources, and gathering spaces, all working as part of a stronger whole.

That kind of intentional growth requires collaboration. By sharing leadership and resources at both the neighborhood and regional level, we can grow in a way that's more sustainable, more inclusive, and better for everyone. Cities, counties, and ports can pool their strengths to address housing shortages, promote public health, and build infrastructure that supports small businesses and long-term resilience.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

I am excited to see Kennewick embracing more mixed-use development. These are neighborhoods where people can walk to get groceries, a haircut, or other locally available goods and services. I think we should continue this trend by allowing more small commercial zoning spaces in and near our residential spaces. This should include new developments, but we can also find ways to reuse buildings and land in older neighborhoods.

This kind of development offers more opportunities for small businesses because they no longer have to fight for space in the same busy shopping zones. It also helps ease traffic on major roads and supports stronger, more connected communities.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

The economy doesn't work the way that it used to. More and more people in our community are having to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. People are often starting businesses out of necessity, rather than passion or inspiration. I think that understanding this puts us in a better place to support our friends and neighbors in Kennewick.

We should invest in organizations that offer business training, shared workspaces, and tools for people starting out. We should also encourage local entrepreneurs to work together and learn from one another. If one person succeeds at opening a salon, or a new food truck, or a business selling homemade jewelry online, then we all win.



community.

We are devoted to making our community a great place to live, work and raise families. Everything we are and everything we do is in the service of a stronger community.

Unite for the greater good at www.tricityregionalchamber.com



Catalyst. Convener. Champion.

© 2025 W.A.C.E.
Western Association of Chamber Executives



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 3, WARD 3



Warren Hughs

hughslc@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ___ No ☒

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

I have worked for 20 years in the Tri-Cities manufacturing sector. I started with Bogert Manufacturing. I have since worked at Columbia Energy, Lampson, and now Progressive Machine. I also own and operate my own antique store and art business in Kennewick. I have over 10 years of Management experience in the manufacturing sector.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

Specifically in Kennewicks 3rd ward which includes the Historic Downtown there are many opportunities for multi agency economic cooperation. There is currently an opportunity for the county, the city, and the Port to collaborate on filling the need for an economical community theater right in the heart of downtown. Downtown Kennewick and the port have a unique opportunity to work together supporting incubator spaces for small manufacturing and industrial startups. The SOCO Creative District provide a unique opportunity to attract state funding and grants to support our growing arts tourism industry in downtown. Downtown Kennewick and downtown Pasco also have many opportunities to collaborate over the bridge. It serves the interests of all to invest creativity in the extensive existing infrastructure in our downtowns where we can expect the best return for dollars spent. [truncated]

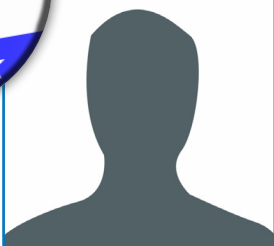
3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

We have a vital role in identifying the ways we can support our citizens in their entrepreneurial efforts. The next 10 years will be a period of economic reinvention and Tri-Cities with its nationally recognized high density of exceptionally intelligent people is perfectly positioned to be a leader in what the new economy looks like. The City and the Port have a stewardship responsibility to invest today's resources wisely for tomorrow. There is no better investment than in the American entrepreneurial spirit. The jobs of the future will be producing unique local goods, services and experiences. Small startup industries growing the jobs of the future. It is critical to identify and support the needs of this new wave of economic vitality in our region. Proactively is always more efficient than reactivity.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

The high cost of living in our region and a deficit in skilled trades labor.

The City can help reduce the cost of living primarily with helping to plan high density housing. High density housing should be planned in such a way that it is well connected with the community and with regional transit options. The City of Kennewick just passed code amendments for middle housing which is a great way for multi generational homes to invest in their future build developing ADUs on existing lots. I believe it is critical as we begin to look at this period of increased public development that our municipalities codes are exceptionally clear and enforced in a consistent manner. Invest upfront in ensuring code information is readily available and crystal clear will save millions in miscommunication and misunderstandings later. [truncated]



Douglas Perez

dougperezforkennewick@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ____ No ☒

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 3, WARD 3



John H. Trumbo

johntnews@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ☒ No ☐

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

As a longtime, now retired, newspaper reporter, I see local businesses as the heartbeat of a community. They are often our neighbors, friends in social settings and church, and want to be valued as supporters of the community. Local businesses deserve to be considered vital members of a city or town. They often are the face of who we are to visitors and outsiders. As a reporter I enjoyed doing downtown walkabouts to visit with the business owners, just to let them know I appreciated them. Still do. Shop local.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

Collaboration can be difficult. The Tri-Cities (including both counties) have tended to be a bit parochial. Crossing boundaries and sharing the wealth, so to speak, is crucial if we are to succeed in impressing statewide leadership that we are important enough to warrant their attention and help, ie cash. It might be good if ports and cities combined efforts to put on show'n'tell events similar to Kennewick's open house the first Tuesday every August. And why not bring in schools, too? Government can always use more appreciation, that's the point of public relations. Ben Franklin Transit knows this. Tip: where is the booth at the BF fair where we can share the city and ports vision/goals for our community?

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

The city and port have had relatively good communication and partnerships in recent years, but there needs to be more cross communication between the councilmembers and commissioners. I am talking face-to-face as in joint meetings. There has been too much effort on partnering between the execs alone, sans council and commission members being involved. Let's be open and transparent.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

Oviously homelessness and vagrancy. Stagnancy in Downtown Kennewick also. While Kennewick has been eager to help businesses elsewhere, Downtown Kennewick struggles. City Hall has long held Southridge and the Vista Entertainment District as the "apple of their eye." Historic Downtown Kennewick Partnership has tried with events, special promotions such as the Christmas Parade, Classy Chassy and others which are helpful, but how so for the downtown storefront businesses? Growth south and west is partly to blame, but now it's time for city-led initiatives to prove we care. We need a new city hall and it should not go south or west. Downtown Kennewick matters. As for homelessness and vagrancy, Kennewick addresses that issue on a weekly basis. We are on it.



connection.

The Chamber excels at bringing together leaders and influencers from throughout the community to build the teams that make things happen.

Build strong business relationships at www.tricityregionalchamber.com



Catalyst. Convener. Champion.

© 2025 W.A.C.E.
Western Association of Chamber Executives



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 4 AT LARGE



Gloria Tyler Baker

gctylerbaker@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ___ No **X** (open seat)

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

As a business owner in the Tri-Cities for over 45 years and now working as a business consultant. I have a good understanding of what the small business owners face on a daily basis. Hiring employees, daily operations, financial responsibilities, taxes and keeping their businesses in a good position for future growth. If elected, I am pro-business, I also believe in keeping our cities safe and secure, this is important to our business owners and citizens.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

The cities all need to work together with the ports and counties on making the process easier to navigate through the sometimes "red tape" that each entity may have. They all need to work together and co-op on the mutual regional projects for future growth.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

The cities and ports need to support each other for our growth opportunities and to make sure that our infrastructure is on the same growth trajectory. As long as we have a stable infrastructure, we can have sustainable growth, good jobs, with a safe and secure place to live, which I think is important to all citizens.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

Small businesses face many challenges, but usually it is attaining capital, having the experience and labor force needed to maintain their productivity and success. I also believe that many small business owners really have "no idea" what they were getting into when they start out. I think we could have better access for business education for these new entrepreneurs with giving them all the "tools" to help them be successful and thrive instead of fail, which we all see too often.



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 4 AT LARGE



Brad Klippert

klippertforkennewick@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ___ No **X** (open seat)

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

I served for 14 years in the House of Representatives for the 8th Legislative District which includes the City of Kennewick

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

I think it would be absolutely fantastic if Richland, Pasco and Kennewick could work collaboratively together to install 3 Modular Nuclear Reactors right next to the Columbia Generating Station to provide the abundant energy resources we will need for the future. Three so that when one reactor is down for maintenance the other two can still be operating and generating needed power.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

Make Kennewick one of the most business-friendly cities in the state and the nation. Successful businesses provide jobs for our residents and produce revenue for our economy.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

Extraordinarily high business taxes is a huge hurdle for businesses in Washington state. We must do everything we can to keep business taxes as low as possible. Successful businesses produce greater revenue!

Regulations in Washington state are piled high and thick. We must do everything we can to remove as many regulatory hurdles as possible out from in front of our businesses to do everything we can to ensure their success!



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 4 AT LARGE



Danielle Schuster

danielle.s.schuster@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ☐ No ☒ (open seat)

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



culture.

We are unwavering in our commitment to improving the health of the business community AND the community as a whole, and we see that the two are inextricably connected.

Help build a vibrant, diverse community at www.tricityregionalchamber.com



Catalyst. Convener. Champion.

© 2025 W.A.C.E.
Western Association of Chamber Executives



CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 3, POSITION 3



Leo A. Perales

leo4council@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ☒ No ☐

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

As a Pasco City Councilmember, I've worked closely with small businesses, developers, and tradespeople to identify and eliminate regulatory barriers that slow growth. I've successfully championed policy changes that support street vendors, eliminated costly programs like the rental inspection ordinance, and delivered \$370,000 in CDBG funds for downtown businesses impacted by the Lewis Street Overpass. My background in development and inspection work across the Tri-Cities also gives me firsthand knowledge of the burdens businesses face. I've used that insight to push for smarter zoning, streamlined permitting, and utility connection reforms that protect affordability and encourage reinvestment.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

The City and Port of Pasco have developed one of the most effective city-port partnerships in Washington, working together over the past decade to advance critical infrastructure that strengthens our economy, enhances safety, and supports freight mobility. Major collaborations include the US 12 / A Street Crossing, which improves industrial access near the tank farms and grain terminals, and the \$31 million Road 76 Overpass, which eases congestion at Roads 68 and 100 while improving multimodal connectivity. Regional coordination on US 12 Phase 8 demonstrates how joint city, county, and port planning can deliver transformative results. These projects reflect a shared vision, leveraging inter-local agreements, coordinated funding strategies, and regional advocacy to create long-term value for businesses, residents, and the broader Mid-Columbia economy. This model is key to sustaining Pasco's growth.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

The City and Port must serve as catalysts and protectors by creating the conditions for job growth and ensuring local residents benefit. I've led efforts to modernize ordinances, streamline permitting, and invest in infrastructure that supports both new and existing businesses. Our work on projects like the Road 76 Overpass improves access to key job centers, while investments in Broadmoor lay the foundation for long-term expansion. I support Community Workforce Agreements that prioritize local hire and apprenticeships, helping workers build lasting careers. By reforming zoning, SEPA, and impact fees, we've made it easier for businesses to grow and stay in Pasco. The City and Port also collaborate on national recruitment via ICSC and promote economic resilience through our sister city partnership with Colima, Mexico.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

First, the high cost and unpredictability of development remain major hurdles. While Pasco has made progress, I've pushed for deeper reforms like adjusting SEPA thresholds, reviewing developer fees, and improving our transportation analysis process to make it easier to build while ensuring infrastructure is properly funded.

Second, the skilled labor shortage continues to limit growth. That's why I support policies that prioritize local hiring and apprenticeships on public projects. By partnering with local trades programs and using Community Workforce Agreements, we can build a strong workforce pipeline for careers in construction, utilities, and industry without requiring a four-year degree. Our public investments should not only support economic growth, but also help create stable, family-wage jobs for Pasco residents.



CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 3, POSITION 3



Bryan Verhei

bryanverhei@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ___ No **X**

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

As a real estate broker-owner in the Tri-Cities, I work closely with small business owners, tradespeople, and property investors every day. I understand the challenges of making payroll, navigating regulations, and planning for long-term stability. Serving on the board of Tres Rios Community Land Trust has also deepened my understanding of how public policy intersects with private investment. I know that strong local businesses are essential for a thriving community, and that they need clear rules, reliable infrastructure, and a stable, fairly-compensated workforce to succeed.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

Cities can lead regional progress by coordinating with counties and ports on infrastructure, housing, and workforce development. Aligning land use planning helps manage growth, preserve neighborhood character, and expand housing options. Cities can also partner on public services like transit, water, and emergency response to improve efficiency and equity. Joint efforts to support local hiring and fair labor standards ensure public investments strengthen our communities. When cities work together, they can share resources, avoid duplication, and bring more stability and opportunity to the region.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

The City should focus on creating the conditions where local businesses and workers can thrive through smart zoning, strong infrastructure, and clear, consistent policies. We should support workforce development programs that connect residents to good jobs, especially in the trades and green industries. I support using project labor agreements, local hire provisions, and apprenticeship requirements on public projects to ensure our investments create lasting value. Economic growth should mean more than new buildings, it should mean more stability, opportunity, and fair wages for the people who live here.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

Two major challenges are the rising cost of living and the shortage of skilled workers. When housing costs outpace wages, it gets harder for businesses to attract and keep employees. I support expanding middle housing and investing in infrastructure to keep our region livable and connected. At the same time, we need to grow our skilled workforce through strong partnerships with unions, schools, and training programs. Helping people build careers in the trades and technical fields supports families and strengthens our local economy from the ground up.



CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 6, POSITION 6



Melissa Blasdel

melissaforpasco@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ☒ No ☐

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

As a lifelong Pasco resident, I'm proud to serve the community where I was raised. I've seen firsthand both the opportunities and challenges that come with growth. With an extensive background in hospitality and years of experience serving on numerous local boards, I've been deeply involved in shaping our city's future. I'm honored to currently represent the citizens of Pasco as the City Councilmember for District 6.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

By working together, we can strengthen economic development, improve infrastructure, and ensure that the benefits of growth are felt across our entire region. "We all share a common goal: to make Pasco the best place to live, work, and do business—together. With forward thinking we can continue to make Pasco the shining star."

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

The City and Port each play a critical role in supporting economic growth. The City must invest in smart infrastructure, support small businesses, and ensure our workforce is equipped with the skills needed for tomorrow's jobs. The Port can drive industrial development, trade, and transportation expansion. Together, they can create a strong foundation for long-term economic opportunity. As a councilmember, I'm committed to championing policies that support local entrepreneurs, attract living-wage employers, and create pathways for residents to grow their careers right here in Pasco."

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

Our infrastructure must keep pace with growth. Reliable transportation, modern utilities, broadband access, and affordable housing are critical to attracting and retaining both businesses and their employees. I support targeted infrastructure investments that prepare us for long-term economic success.

Public safety is foundational. Businesses thrive when their employees and customers feel safe. That means continuing to invest in community policing, first responder staffing, and outreach programs that build trust between public safety departments and the communities they serve.



CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 6, POSITION 6



Calixto Hernandez

calixhernand@aol.com

Incumbent

Yes ___ No **X**

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

In my local District, I have seen how the downtown area businesses are not supported by the City. They are more focused on other parts of the Pasco, mainly the west side area. I want to help build a coalition with the City Council and downtown business owners to listen and understand what the downtown business community needs in order to thrive in the current market.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

Cities, counties and ports have different and unique responsibilities. However they share the same goals, economic development, infrastructure, economic development, environmental issues and public safety. I believe that by working together on regional planning, transportation, housing and land use, all three entities can have a greater impact on community improvement and way of life.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

The City and Port of Pasco can work together on their shared goals by prioritizing/developing workforce housing and transportation infrastructure to support employees/employers. Support/promote equity by focusing on traditionally underserved communities and industries.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

One challenge is economic uncertainty. I would work with the Council and Port Authority in creating investment in infrastructure to include roads, the airport and other local services to create jobs that will help the local economy. I would also work to provide grants, loans and other financial incentives to local businesses.

A second challenge is vandalism and safety. Working with law enforcement to enact data-drive-policies to enact crime prevention programs that will align with residents' needs and community priorities.



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 3



Pat Holten

holten4richland@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ____ No **X**

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

As a consumer, I understand the needs of the community, what draws us to certain businesses, and what needs are unmet. Our son has operated a small business and we have seen the many challenges.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

It is imperative that cities, counties, and ports work together to find solutions. I know most of our elected officials and have good relationships with them. I work well in finding common ground with people.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

Availability of water is a limiting factor to growth. Because of Richland's abundant water supply, we will continue to grow. I would work to streamline permitting and licensing requirements, encourage business, especially our nuclear businesses, and work to create infrastructure that supports our business while also supporting quality of life for our residents. Supporting our sense of community by supporting our great parks and community events helps draw and retain businesses. Having the new Costco in Richland will be a great advantage, but it is also critical to be communicating with smaller businesses like Safeway, Yokes and Winco, to ensure that the city is not needlessly harming them.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

The biggest challenge facing Tri-City-City businesses is overregulation by the state and federal governments. It is important to work with state and federal legislators to change legislation that is impeding our businesses. Our other challenge is build new housing and businesses that are supported by good transportation and support mixed uses. I live in the old section of Richland that is very diverse in housing and small business. I see the value or retaining and developing mixed uses, but also the challenges as people like to shop at Costco and order online.



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 3



Sandra Kent

votekent2025@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ☒ No ☐

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 4



Donald Landsman

Donald4Richland@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ___ No **X** (open seat)

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

As a decades long Richland based resident, I have come to understand how vital local businesses are to our economy and identity. I've supported family-owned shops, listened to business owners' concerns, and seen how high taxes and red tape hold them back. I believe in lower taxes, fair zoning, and streamlined permitting to foster growth. With a background in service and fiscal responsibility, I'll champion business-friendly policies 've lived and worked in Richland since 1977 and understand how vital local businesses are to our economy and identity. I've supported family-owned shops, listened to business owners' concerns, and seen how high taxes and red tape hold them back. I believe in lower taxes, fair zoning, and streamlined permitting to foster growth. With a background in service and fiscal responsibility, I'll champion business-friendly policies that help Richland thrive.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

Cities, counties, and ports can collaborate by aligning infrastructure planning, sharing economic data, and jointly pursuing state and federal funding. Coordinated efforts on transportation—like roadways, freight corridors, and bridges—can reduce costs and improve efficiency. Regional strategies for workforce development, housing, and emergency services can ensure balanced growth and resilience. Ports play a key role in commerce; working together with local governments helps expand trade, attract investment, and support industrial development. Collaboration also strengthens our voice in Olympia and Washington, D.C., making it easier to advocate for major projects and protect local interests. By breaking down silos and focusing on shared priorities—like water access, energy, and sustainability we can build a stronger, more connected, and competitive region that benefits everyone.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

The City and Port should partner to attract businesses, streamline permitting, and invest in infrastructure. I'd support job training programs, expand industrial zoning, and pursue pro-growth policies that retain employers, encourage innovation, and keep family-wage jobs rooted in our community.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

Two key challenges are workforce shortages and rising costs. To address this, I'd support reducing regulatory barriers that slow hiring and business expansion. I'd also promote policies that encourage affordable housing and infrastructure development, helping businesses attract and retain employees. A stable, business-friendly environment is essential to long-term economic strength.



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 4



Jordan Lee

leeforrichland@tuta.com

Incumbent

Yes ____ No **X** (open seat)

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 4



John Maier

JMaier@disroot.org

Incumbent

Yes ☐ No ☒ (open seat)

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



The Chamber is credibility.

We enjoy a well-deserved reputation as a trusted pillar in the community, earned through years of consistent and reliable professional performance.

Get your business thriving at www.tricityregionalchamber.com



Catalyst. Convener. Champion.

© 2025 W.A.C.E.
Western Association of Chamber Executives



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 6



Kurt H. Maier

khm@americanimperium.com

Incumbent

Yes ☒ No ☐

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 6



Kyle Saltz

[KyleSaltzForRichlandCityCouncil@
yahoo.com](mailto:KyleSaltzForRichlandCityCouncil@yahoo.com)

Incumbent

Yes ____ No **X**

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

In one facet or another I have been running and operating a bar and restaurant inside Richland for the last 11 years for the local Veterans of Foreign Wars. Through rising costs, inflation, and even Covid I have continually run a successful and profitable bar/restaurant. Which 100% of all profits went back to the community helping Veterans and their families. Running a successful 501 C3 such as the VFW has given me several different aspects for business. A solid appreciation of sweat equity, flexibility to change to match the constantly evolving market, and understanding the community needs. My background as a counterintelligence agent helped me understand the importance of interpersonal relationships. We are only as strong as our bonds and relationships.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

By committing to joint marketing efforts to promote specialized industries to come into our city. For example, marketing for clean nuclear energy in our region which could bring investors and builders which can provide jobs for our community for decades to come.

We can look into is streamlining regulatory processes. That can simplify procedures and standards through multiple jurisdictions. This will reduce red tape and unnecessary wait times.

Finally by open and active communication and data sharing between all levels we can make the best choices for land use and logistics planning.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

We should be in the forefront of promoting clean zero waste nuclear energy. By promoting a positive economic environment in which businesses will want to invest and build we can create jobs for the next 20-30 years. We must look to reduce impact fees and ways in which we try to fleece investors and businesses. As if we create an unfriendly environment these investors will move elsewhere.

We should support local small businesses and make it easier to create a business in Richland. It can be difficult starting or even running a business when there are too many regulations, additional fees, wait times, and slow bureaucracy on the part of the city/port. We need to be efficient as possible in running our government.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

One of the greatest challenges I see facing businesses is the continual rising costs to operate a business. We have seen the rising costs of food and other products. This starts a trickle effect to the consumer "you." Businesses must raise their fees just to keep their lights on.

How we address this is by creating an environment in which businesses can succeed. Ensuring we the local government is proacting in permitting and licenses. By eliminating and or reducing impact fees and regulatory fees so it does not impact small businesses especially.

Crime is another challenge to businesses. As our population continues to rise new our crime rate will as well. City council policy, judicial coordination, and problem oriented policing can help curb crime and keep Richland safe.



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 7



Colin Michael

ColinForRichland@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ____ No **X** ____

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 7



Tony Sanchez

tonysanchez4change@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ____ No **X**

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

I've a long history of working for and with small business owners. I understand that business owners are responsible for the livelihood of many families, and the core of a community.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

Collaboration between regions is done best when each region's expertise and resources are leveraged to achieve a common goal.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

The City and Ports should make it easy for small businesses to do business. Maybe small tax relief for employee-owned businesses.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

The tariffs, the funding cuts to federal jobs & science research pose significant hurdles for everyone in town.



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 7



Joshua Short

short4richland@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ____ No **X** ____

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 7



Ryan Whitten

electryanwhitten@protonmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ☒ No ☐

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

I was involved in hospitality and sales in a small business before my current career.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

Recently, the Port of Benton and the City of Richland swapped land in a deal that benefitted both parties. Some land that would be better for the development of retail and residential units was swapped for land that included rail lines (that the city wants no part in maintaining) and other areas that would be better for the Port's use. Agreements like these serve both parties' needs.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

Facilitating business as much as possible. We should not be over incumbering businesses with taxes and regulations that do not serve the safety of the citizens or services of the City. Ultimately, businesses are what bring in money to the area and facilitating their growth can expand the budget of the city without raising taxes, bring in better jobs, and a higher quality of life for our residents.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

Energy availability and poor tax climate. As coal and natural gas plants are taken offline without their capacity being replaced our ability to provide consistent baseload power is diminished, as demand continues to increase. If we cannot provide the power needed to build new manufacturing or data centers we will miss out on those opportunities. Likewise, high taxes and over-regulation pushes businesses out as well. These are problems well above the City Council, but utilizing our lobbyists for state legislature and our relationship with BFCOG we can advocate for better policies.



MAYOR



Fred Brink

ftbrink@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ___ No **X** (open seat)

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

In addition to my eight years of experience as a city councilmember for West Richland, I continuously seek to understanding our local business landscape by meeting with business owners, attending Chamber of Commerce meetings, promoting city ordinances and zoning which does not impose undue burdens on prospective businesses in our city. I also work closely with our city's Community and Economic Development Director to find opportunities to promote business promotion.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

The Tri-Cities Regional Chamber already advocates for regional priorities to develop a long-range, community-driven economic vision. Continuing to work closely with the Ports of Kennewick, Pasco, and Benton to identify additional economic growth areas, including workforce development and infrastructure investment will help achieve shared goals and promote our region's economic progress.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

Our local cities and ports can accelerate economic growth by streamlining permitting and offering development-ready sites for businesses. Continued infrastructure investment in roads, broadband access, and viable public transit will also support commerce and workforce mobility. As mentioned earlier, workforce development is another key ingredient which may be enhanced by working with trade schools and employers to align training with in-demand skills. Quality and affordable housing and public safety will also help attract skilled talent to our region. Finally, local business incentives will help generate positive economic growth.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

Rising costs and economic uncertainty related to the impacts of tariffs and other actions at the federal level have created concern. Continuing to express these business concerns and the potential impact of this economic uncertainty to our federal and state elected leaders is necessary.

Labor Shortages & Skills Mismatch

Our local labor market shows some signs of plateauing in certain areas, with employers having difficulty finding workers who match their needs, particularly in certain trades and in clean energy. One potential solution is to continue working with Tri-Tech, Columbia Basin College and local unions to build pipelines into high-demand fields such as advanced manufacturing and renewable energy.



MAYOR



May Hays

MayHays4Mayor@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ____ No **X** (open seat)

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 3



David Cole

davidcoleforwrcitycouncil@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ___ No **X** (open seat)

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

Commissioner-WR Salary Commission; Vice Chair- WR Citizens Group;

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

Identify areas of overlap and eliminate duplication, consider whether goals are valid functions of government or are better served by private entities.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

Increase influence in setting legislative priorities in Olympia to resist the impacts of out-of-control taxes and destructive spending.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

Housing availability required develop family-friendly communities and attracting talent needed to sustain a thriving business climate.



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 3



Robert Harvey Perkes

bob4west@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ☐ No ☒ (open seat)

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 4



Richard Bloom

bloomon@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ☒ No ☐

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

Having been active in small businesses supporting Hanford, I understand the importance these businesses have responding to the site needs in a timely, cost-effective manner.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

Working together and sharing resources are the best way to promote regional progress.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

The city government should get out way of developers. Eliminate unnecessary delays in approvals.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

I think the challenges facing developers and fixed site businesses are different. Developers face administrative burden imposed by the city while fixed site businesses face issue with staffing. As a council-member I have consistently opposed unnecessary burdens on development, As a Ben Franklin Transit board member I encourage service focused on the working community.



CITY COUNCIL POSITION 4



Braden Slughter

info@VoteBraden.com

Incumbent

Yes ____ No **X**

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



COMMISSION DISTRICT 1



Roy Keck

ReelectRoyKeck@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ☒ No ☐

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

Over the past seventeen years as Port of Benton Commissioner, I've worked directly with local businesses to modernize lease agreements, improve infrastructure, and ensure fair market practices. My 35-year career in the nuclear power industry has given me deep insight into regulatory compliance, workforce development, and the importance of innovation. I've led initiatives to attract advanced energy companies, supported value-added agriculture, and championed infrastructure upgrades that reduce costs and improve efficiency for local enterprises. These experiences have equipped me to understand the unique challenges our businesses face and to advocate for policies that foster long-term growth and sustainability.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

Collaboration is key to regional success. Cities, counties, and ports must align on infrastructure investments, workforce development, and economic diversification. I believe in forming regional coalitions that share data, coordinate grant applications, and jointly market our region to attract new industries. For example, by working together on transportation upgrades and broadband expansion, we can improve access and connectivity for all. I've already helped lead efforts to modernize our rail system and attract clean energy jobs—initiatives that benefit the entire Tri-Cities area. Continued collaboration will ensure we build a resilient, future-ready economy.

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

The Port should be a catalyst for economic development—investing in infrastructure, supporting innovation, and creating an environment where businesses can thrive. I've prioritized upgrading our railroads, modernizing leases, and attracting advanced energy companies. To create and retain quality jobs, I will continue to support industries like small modular reactors, hydrogen fuels, and value-added agriculture. I'll also advocate for workforce training partnerships with local colleges and ensure our policies support both startups and established businesses. By focusing on long-term planning and strategic investment, we can build a stronger, more diverse local economy.

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

Two major challenges are outdated infrastructure and workforce shortages. Many of our transportation and utility systems need modernization to support current and future business needs. I've already led efforts to upgrade our rail infrastructure and will continue advocating for smart investments in roads, broadband, and utilities. The second challenge is ensuring we have a skilled workforce. I support expanding technical education and partnering with local schools and colleges to align training with industry needs. By addressing these challenges head-on, we can create a more competitive, business-friendly environment that supports sustainable growth.



COMMISSION DISTRICT 1



Bill O'Neil

BillONeil4Port@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ____ No **X**

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



COMMISSION DISTRICT 2



Raul Contreras Gonzalez

raulcontrerasforportofk@gmail.com

Incumbent

Yes ____ No **X** (open seat)

NO RESPONSE SUBMITTED



COMMISSION DISTRICT 2



Tammy Kenfield

tammykenfield@yahoo.com

Incumbent

Yes ___ No **X** (open seat)

1. What experiences or background have prepared you to understand and support the needs of local businesses?

I was born and raised here in Kennewick Washington. I graduated from Kennewick high school and Beauty school. I then went to work for Regis corporation as a manager and supervisor for 15 years and then successfully ran my own salon downtown Kennewick for 22 years where we ended closing our doors due to a fire, and now my husband and I are opening a fit body Boot Camp to service the community and health and wellness. So in summary being a business owner myself, I think I understand the needs a small businesses as well as franchises.

2. In what ways can cities, counties, and ports in our region collaborate to achieve shared goals and promote regional progress?

By working together, I believe we can achieve many successful ventures that will help grow and develop our communities communication, education and cooperation would be three of the major components to make our region successful

3. What role do you think the City/Port should play in supporting economic growth, and what actions would you take to help create and retain quality local jobs?

I believe by working together, the cities imports can create many jobs and successful ventures for the local communities by incubator companies hiring from within using local talent and resources first before outside sources to make sure that our community grows

4. What do you see as the two most significant challenges facing businesses in the Tri-Cities, and how would you address them to help build a strong and thriving local economy?

I believe some of the challenges facing new business owners is information having local sources that can help small businesses with their business plans. Growth development, and financial planning is essential in starting and maintaining a successful business, getting local banks, accountants educators, and using them as resources and connecting them with potential small businesses I think would be a very good first start