GREATER SPOKANE INCORPORATED IS THE SPOKANE REGION'S NEXT GENERATION BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION, transforming our business community and economy by connecting businesses to valuable relationships and resources, driving initiatives to improve our region and advocating for business with a unified voice.

GSI’s 2017 State Legislative Priority Agenda represents policies and funding to:

• Create a healthier climate for businesses to start, grow and compete
• Improve education attainment from cradle to career
• Enhance our region’s largest economic driver – health care
• Develop the transportation infrastructure to help fuel our economy
• Support civic partners who help improve our quality of life
WORKERS’ COMPENSATION REFORM
Advocate for reforms to achieve cost reduction and increased efficiency in the workers’ compensation system. The high cost of the current system is a significant hindrance to new job creation in the greater Spokane region.

BUSINESS GROWTH INCENTIVES
• Revert the Community Empowerment Zone (CEZ) sales and use tax deferral program to its original method of incentivizing the hiring of workers from areas of high unemployment.

• Extend the Washington State Public Facilities District sales-tax rebate to 40 years from 25 years and expand the rebate to include improvements, rehabilitation and expansion of existing PFD facilities.

• Renew and expand the Motion Picture Competitiveness Program, a B&O tax incentive that helps retain local talent, generates tax revenue, and promotes tourism and investments in local infrastructure.

• Expand advanced manufacturing tax incentives to include unmanned aerial systems and vehicles (UAS, UAV).

WATER AND CARBON REGULATION
The greater Spokane region is a model of collaboration for protecting the Spokane River and other natural resources. Renew funding for the Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force to encourage local solutions for reducing PCBs and other toxic chemicals. Prevent onerous requirements for water quality and carbon emissions that increase costs and stifle innovation.

TAX FAIRNESS & PREDICTABILITY
It is crucial in this budget year that the Legislature not address challenges such as the Supreme Court’s McCleary decision by shifting the tax burden to businesses already struggling with tax uncertainty, inconsistency and inequitable treatment.
GSI IS COMMITTED TO INCREASING THE POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT RATE TO 60 PERCENT BY 2025. The availability of a qualified and skilled workforce is the top factor companies consider as they look to expand or relocate. Having the right talent depends on our ability to support investments across the education continuum with a focus on career awareness and career-connected learning, STEM, and postsecondary access and completion.

**EARLY LEARNING**
Reauthorize funding that expands access to quality early learning and increases school readiness and childcare supports for parents.

- Expand ECEAP (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program)
- Increase payments for Working Connections Childcare subsidy
- Protect state reimbursement to childcare providers who are small businesses

**K-12**
Fully fund K-12 basic education incorporating technology and increased STEM skills while reducing the financial burden on local taxpayers.

- Fund full-day kindergarten and class-size reduction in grades K-3
- Provide stable funding for teacher salaries and education costs
- Support a funding fix for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that restores the program’s historical enhancement beyond basic education

**POSTSECONDARY**
Continue and expand programs and resources that provide students access to postsecondary opportunities.

- Fully fund the State Need Grant
- Continue funding for Washington State Opportunity Scholarship-STEM focused scholarships
- Expand funding for College Success Foundation — a pathway for postsecondary access
- Support expansion of high-quality STEM degrees and student success systems

**CAPITAL PROJECTS**
- Eastern Washington University Interdisciplinary Science Center, to house emerging chemistry, computer science and biomedical programs.
- Spokane Teaching Lab/Clinical Research renovation on the WSU Health Sciences Spokane campus, to meet the demands in clinical research and active learning education.

EDUCATION
Improve education attainment from cradle to career
HEALTH CARE
Enhance our region’s largest economic driver

GSI’S VISION 2030 INITIATIVE, in partnership with the business, health care and education sectors, is working to address the shortage of physicians, dentists and other health sciences careers in the region, grow the life sciences industry and improve access to health care for low income and underserved areas.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL EDUCATION
• Fund the inaugural class of 60 medical school students for the newly accredited Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine at WSU Health Sciences Spokane.
• Fund the University of Washington School of Medicine/Gonzaga University Regional Health Partnership’s expansion of the WWAMI medical education program in Spokane to 80 students per class from 60.
• Secure second-year bridge funding for the University of Washington’s Regional Initiatives in Dental Education (RIDE) program, in partnership with Eastern Washington University, to add second-year dental training in Spokane.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE
• Prevent cuts to Medicaid managed care rates, which will drive some health care providers to withdraw from accepting Medicaid patients and reduce access to care.
• Improve access and increase investment for behavioral health care and substance abuse strategies to address the mental health crisis.

CAPITAL PROJECTS
• New facility, equipment and technology for the Spokane County Medical Examiner’s Office to support medical education and provide critical forensic death investigation services to law enforcement.
• New dental clinics for a partnership with Providence/CHAS Health/ Washington State Dental Association to support a new dental residency program in Spokane and expand access to care.
• Essential equipment upgrades for Spokane Community Colleges health and life sciences programs that simulate technology-rich environments in the health industry.
TRANSPORTATION
Develop the infrastructure to fuel our economy

OUR FIRST JOB IS TO PROTECT FUNDING for the region’s most significant transportation project, expansion of U.S. 395 (North-Spokane Corridor), keeping any project savings in our community.

POLICY PRIORITIES

• Secure permanent funding for road maintenance and preservation.
• Limit the use of unreasonable hiring requirements and mandatory project labor agreements.
• Allow for flexibility when utilizing alternative delivery methods such as design-build.
• Advocate for the Joint Transportation Committee's recommendation for analyzing and funding road-rail intersection improvements for safety, community impacts, and freight mobility.
• Pass legislation to ensure compliance with the federal Real ID Act of 2005, which states must do by January 2018, so Washington residents can continue using their state driver's licenses at airport security and for access to some federal government facilities.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

• Bridge installation at Barker Road/SR 290 as part of “Bridging the Valley,” a series of projects aimed at separating vehicle and train traffic in Spokane Valley.
• Road straightening and widening at Bigelow Gulch Road and Forker Road to address severe safety and congestion issues and support regional freight mobility initiatives.
• New passing lanes on SR 904 (Betz Road to I-90), US 395 (Half Moon Road to Stevens County line) and SR 290 (Barker Road to Idaho state line) to ease congestion and improve safety.
• Improved Spokane Transit Authority stations at Spokane Falls Community College and Spokane Community College to accommodate passenger growth, boost rider safety and enhance the campus and community environment.
• Repair and resurfacing of suspension bridges and wooden bridges in Spokane’s Riverfront Park.
COMMUNITY PROJECT PRIORITIES
Support civic and community partners who help improve our quality of life

• Martin Luther King, Jr., Family Outreach Center – new facility to increase the quality and capacity of serving children and seniors.

• Airway Heights recreation complex – featuring indoor and outdoor sports facilities and multi-generational activities.

• Mt. Spokane Guest Lodge – to accommodate safe, enhanced, year-round use.

• YWCA of Spokane Family Justice Center – to provide coordinated services to victims of family violence.

LEGISLATIVE ENDORSEMENTS
Greater Spokane Incorporated endorses these programs and projects of our community partners who are pursuing state funding during the 2017 legislative session.

• City of Spokane’s integrated clean water plan (funded through the state Model Toxics Control Act), WA 291 and U.S. 195 safety improvements, East Central Community Center Dental Clinic construction.

• City of Spokane Valley Appleway Trail Park construction.

• Spokane Symphony (funded in part from the Washington State Arts Commission).

• West Plains Rail Project, to expand economic development opportunities at Spokane International Airport and address rail safety issues in the City of Cheney.

• City of Medical Lake funding for police services provided to Eastern State Hospital, Lakeland Village and Washington Department of Social and Health Services campus.

• Spokane Public Schools’ Teacher Pipeline Improvement Project to address the teacher shortage and Charter School Incentive Grant to help school districts with the cost of authorizing charter schools.
ABOUT GREATER SPOKANE INCORPORATED’S WORK IN GOVERNMENT AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Greater Spokane Incorporated is the Spokane region’s next generation business development organization. GSI works year-round with business, civic, and community partners to provide a GREATER voice on behalf of employers and the community at the local, state, and federal level.

STATE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS REPRESENTING SPOKANE

Jay Inslee
Washington State Governor (D)

Andy Billig
3rd District Senator (D)

Mike Padden
4th District Senator (R)

Michael Baumgartner
6th District Senator (R)

Brian Dansel
7th District Senator (R)

Mark Schoesler
9th District Senator (R)

Timm Ormsby
3rd District Representative (D)

Bob McCaslin
4th District Representative (R)

Jeff Holy
6th District Representative (R)

Joel Kretz
7th District Representative (R)

Mary Dye
9th District Representative (R)

Marcus Riccelli
3rd District Representative (D)

Matt Shea
4th District Representative (R)

Mike Volz
6th District Representative (R)

Shelly Short
7th District Representative (R)

Joe Schmick
9th District Representative (R)