



ROUND ROCK  
CHAMBER

# AGENDA FOR ECONOMIC VITALITY



OCTOBER 2024

# PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES

**ROUND ROCK IS WELL KNOWN FOR ITS SUPPORTIVE AND PROACTIVE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT, AND THE CHAMBER IS DEDICATED TO KEEPING IT THAT WAY.**

The entire community thrives when the local economy is strong, providing opportunity for all. As such, our public policy efforts focus on issues that ensure Round Rock stays optimally situated for business success, economic opportunity, and an exceptional quality of life.

Round Rock businesses play an active role in shaping the climate of the community through participation in the Chamber. As a trusted convener for policymakers and the business community, the Chamber works diligently to facilitate meaningful, proactive communication where opportunities and challenges can be evaluated, discussed, and executed with a unified voice.

The Agenda for Economic Vitality is a vehicle for the Round Rock Chamber to express its broad and prevailing positions on vital public policy issues at the local (📍), state (🗺️), and federal (🏛️) levels.



## TAX POLICY

The Chamber is committed to a stable, pro-growth, and predictable tax climate that supports economic growth and creation of jobs.

### PROPERTY TAX

- Support policies that affirm municipal authority to provide and fund necessary services and infrastructure to meet the needs of their growing communities. 📍 🗺️

### SALES TAX

- Support policies that ensure municipalities have the authority they need to plan for and fund future growth. 🗺️
- Support continued use of a locally approved 1/2 cent sales tax collected by cities to fund infrastructure improvements and economic development initiatives. 📍 🗺️
- Oppose efforts to change assessment of sales tax from origin basis to destination basis. 🗺️

### FRANCHISE TAX

- Support revenue neutral reductions to eliminate the franchise tax. 🗺️

### FEES

- Monitor new proposed fees and their potential impact to our community's economic growth. 📍 🗺️

# REGULATION

The Chamber is committed to ensuring regulations that allow for optimal business operations, promote economic growth and job creation, and offer stability and certainty.

## LOCAL CONTROL

- Oppose legislation that impedes the ability for municipalities to execute policies for economic opportunities, business and community success, and quality of life improvements. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️

## DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND PROCESSES

- Support development regulations, standards, and practices that are clear, consistently applied, and provide predictable costs and timelines for developers. 📍
- Limit the ability for state agencies to alter Texas government code and legislative intent through rule-making practices, especially in areas that affect municipalities. 🇺🇸
- Support continued policies that streamline the development process and minimize procedural delays, while still ensuring that businesses maintain the safety of the work and compliance with building, construction, and zoning codes. 📍
- Support legislation that ensures that municipalities are not required to provide services and utilities to properties located outside of their municipal boundaries. 🇺🇸

## PROFESSIONAL LICENSING

- Support policies that recognize the need for professional licensing to ensure public health and safety, industry best practices, and consumer confidence, while minimizing undue burden on businesses. 🇺🇸 🏛️

## RIGHT-TO-WORK

- Support maintaining Texas' strong right-to-work laws. 🇺🇸

## REGULATORY CLIMATE

- Support policies that maintain a regulatory climate that promotes economic growth and job creation (oppose excessive fees and unfunded mandates). 📍 🇺🇸

## WORKPLACE POLICY

- Oppose workplace regulations or mandates that impose undue burdens on employers, especially small business, including mandatory higher minimum wages and paid leave. 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support policies that foster workforce recruitment efforts and oppose policies that complicate human resources administration and undermine the business community's commitment to non-discrimination. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️

## UNION DUES PAYROLL COLLECTION

- Oppose efforts that allow public employees or require private employers to subsidize or promote labor unions or similar organizations through payroll collection of dues and contributions. 🇺🇸





## INTERNATIONAL TRADE, TARIFFS, AND FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

The Chamber is committed to supporting trade and investment agreements that are fair and accountable.

- Support enforceable trade agreements that are fair, protect sensitive intellectual property and innovation, offer investment transparency, create a level playing field, and ensure due process. 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Oppose new tariffs and other barriers that threaten the competitiveness of U.S. businesses, endanger American jobs, and/or increase costs to consumers. 🏛️

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Chamber is committed to accelerating economic growth through strategic business development, business retention, and business attraction.

- Support, preserve, and expand business recruitment and expansion incentive tools that lead to measurable, new economic activity and create a positive return on investment for Round Rock and the State of Texas. 📍 🇺🇸
- Support local authority and flexibility in the use of economic development tools and other incentives to promote economic development and job creation. 📍 🇺🇸
- Support statewide economic development and tourism organizations that promote the State of Texas while assisting and collaborating with local and regional economic development organizations. 🇺🇸
- Support programs, incentives, and efforts that expand research, development, and domestic manufacturing. 🇺🇸 🏛️

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS

The Chamber is committed to establishing and maintaining a strong startup culture so that entrepreneurs and small business owners are welcomed, nurtured, and supported.

- Support policies that improve the development of entrepreneurship infrastructure, including access to community, programs, and capital for startups and small businesses (mentors, technology, access to markets). 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support funding for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Texas Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Program to support local business owners and entrepreneurs who seek access to resources to start and grow their businesses. 🇺🇸 🏛️



## EDUCATION AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT

The Chamber is committed to promoting access to affordable, high-quality education, career pathways that lead to jobs, and workforce initiatives that create a robust talent pipeline.

### CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDUCATION

- Support policies, programs, and relief for eligible childcare providers. 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support high-quality childcare options and high-quality, full-day early education programs. 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support development and expansion of childcare options for parents and guardians in high-demand employment, including those that work non-traditional hours. 🇺🇸 🏛️

### K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION

- Support efforts to evolve the state’s accountability system so that it is more holistic and recognizes outcomes outside current state assessments, such as completion of Career and Technical Education (CTE) coherent sequences and certifications, completion of college-level courses, and University Interscholastic League (UIL) academic activities. 🇺🇸
- Support CTE education and public-private partnerships that enrich learning opportunities for students and educators in order to build a robust talent pipeline for high-demand careers (skilled professions, “hot jobs,” critical workforce shortages). 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support Texas educators and initiatives for their recruitment and retention. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support efforts to continue and strengthen state and local governments’ commitment to fully funding public education. 📍 🇺🇸

## POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION: COMMUNITY COLLEGES, TECHNICAL SCHOOLS, AND UNIVERSITIES

- Support all postsecondary education opportunities (dual credit, early college high school programs, community colleges, technical schools) as important contributors to training students for jobs in the workforce and providing pathways for certification and/or further education (apprenticeships, certifications, two-year degrees). 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support policies and funding requests that recognize the necessary growth of Round Rock-area higher education institutions that are critical for developing and maintaining a strong talent pipeline. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support research development activities and investments in campuses located in Round Rock. 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support the availability and effectiveness of financial aid programs for part-time students and/or students enrolled in non-credit courses (Pell Grant). 🏛️

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

- Protect and support policies and programs that help communities attract and upskill their workforce and address the needs of employers based on timely local labor market data. 🇺🇸
- Support policies and funding for programs that incentivize employer-led internships, externships, apprenticeships, and other opportunities for students and educators. 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support policies that leverage partnerships between private industry and academia to ensure K-12, community college, technical school, and university pathways that bridge innovation and the marketplace. 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support opportunities to expand the workforce by providing innovative and alternative programs and removing employment barriers for those seeking to enter and re-enter the workforce or change careers. 🇺🇸

## IMMIGRATION

- Support immigration reforms and programs that encourage job creation, a skilled workforce, and economic growth. 🏛️
- Support policies that raise the cap on legal employment-based visa programs to enable employers to meet their workforce needs in a timely manner. 🏛️
- Support immigration reforms that safeguard a legal, stable, skilled workforce through employment-based visas, particularly Temporary Protected Status (TPS) recipients and employment-authorized H-4 dependent spouses with Employment Authorization Documents (EADs). 🏛️

# HEALTHCARE

The Chamber is committed to promoting healthcare policy that controls costs, expands access, and improves quality of life because overall health and wellness is crucial for our community, workforce, and, ultimately, our economy.

- Support policies that promote value-based, high-quality, and coordinated care. 🗺️🏛️
- Oppose cuts or delays to Medicaid, Medicare, and hospital payments. 🗺️🏛️
- Support efforts to stabilize the health insurance marketplace and to provide accessible private coverage options. 🗺️🏛️
- Promote mental health programs and efforts that enable individuals to lead meaningful and productive lives in the community while ensuring public safety. 📍🗺️🏛️



# INCREASING OPPORTUNITY

The Chamber is committed to fostering collaboration and facilitating open communications throughout our community. We act as a convener of businesses, community leaders, and constituents to ensure prosperity for all stakeholders in Round Rock.

- Support federal, state, and local programs that provide procurement opportunities and certifications for historically underutilized businesses. 📍🗺️🏛️
- Support access to the institutions and resources that power a strong, diverse business community and workforce. 📍🗺️🏛️
- Support policies that remove barriers to inclusivity and success and that increase investment in underserved areas. 📍🗺️🏛️





# INFRASTRUCTURE

The Chamber is committed to a comprehensive, proactive, and long-term infrastructure plan to ensure the economic well-being of our community.

## MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION

- Support identifying, securing, and leveraging additional funds for transportation and granting flexibility in funding local transportation projects. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support funding to expand public transit and capacity in high-volume corridors and Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support innovative transportation solutions and technologies. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️

## WATER

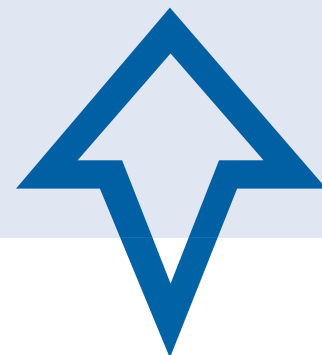
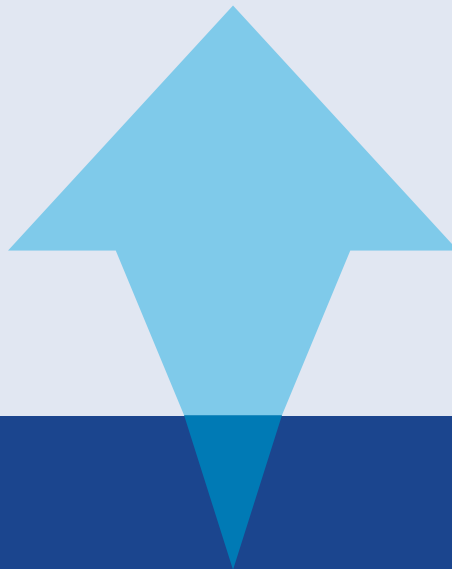
- Support comprehensive, long-term water planning, significantly increased funding, and timely implementation toward measurable expansion of statewide water resources. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️

## POWER

- Support the expansion of regional and statewide planning, strategies, and funding mechanisms that ensure grid reliability and affordability for businesses and consumers. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support increased power generation and distribution to meet forecasted increases in demand. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️

## RESILIENCY

- Support efforts to protect natural resources to ensure a continued thriving economy and dynamic community. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support policies and resources that facilitate disaster preparedness and community resiliency, including water and watershed management, fire management, flood control, and drought response. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️
- Support policies and resources that support the business community and economy for disasters and times of crisis. 📍 🇺🇸 🏛️





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