

# 2025-2026 ADVOCACY PLAN

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES & LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



The Bastrop Chamber of Commerce advocates for and supports public policy that promotes a strong business climate and fosters economic development.

### Workforce Quality and Education

The Chamber **supports educational investments** and policies that ensure robust resources for all students, attract and retain quality educators, and foster a positive learning environment. The Chamber **supports greater accessibility to advanced training and higher educational opportunities**, creating a well-prepared and skilled community that positions Bastrop at the forefront of building an effective future workforce.

Invest in Student Resources: Advocate for policies that ensure equitable state funding for all schools and all students, providing them with access to essential learning tools, technology, support services, and facilities needed to thrive in both K-12 and post-secondary education.

Attract and Retain Educators: Promote competitive salaries, professional development opportunities, and support systems that attract high-quality educators, fostering a stable and innovative educational environment.

Student Achievement: Support school report card reform that places additional emphasis on student growth and recognizes additional ways to measure achievement in students beyond standardized testing.

Expand Access to Higher Education and Training: Support initiatives that increase accessibility to advanced training, technical certifications, and higher education, ensuring the community has the skills needed for the evolving workforce and economic growth in Bastrop.

### Workforce Availability

The Chamber **supports policies that address barriers to workforce participation**, such as the lack of **accessible and affordable childcare**, as well as **transportation** challenges. The Chamber also supports an increase of **income aligned and diverse housing options**, in addition to greater access to **health services**.

Accessible and Affordable Childcare: Advocate for policies that expand access to affordable, high-quality childcare services, enabling more parents and caregivers to fully participate in the workforce without facing financial or logistical burdens.

Diverse and Affordable Housing Options: Promote the development of income-aligned and diverse housing solutions to meet the needs of all residents, helping to attract and retain a skilled workforce in the community.

Access to Comprehensive Health Services: Support initiatives that expand access to affordable and quality healthcare, including mental health services, enabling a healthier workforce and reducing barriers to sustained employment.



*The Governmental Affairs Committee of the Bastrop Chamber of Commerce identifies priorities and needs of the Bastrop regional business community, establishes policy positions, and communicates with relevant governments to enhance member success and community prosperity.*

## Small Business Support

The Chamber supports policies that enhance regional resources and funding access for small businesses and entrepreneurs. The Chamber supports a **pro-business regulatory environment** to promote small business growth and innovation.

Increase Funding and Resources for Small Businesses: Advocate for policies that improve access to regional grants, low-interest loans, and other financial resources tailored to help small businesses and entrepreneurs thrive in the local economy.

Streamline Regulatory Processes: Support a pro-business regulatory environment by simplifying permitting, licensing, and compliance requirements, reducing bureaucratic hurdles that often impede small business growth and innovation.

Foster Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Promote policies that encourage innovation through tax incentives, access to incubators, and collaboration with local universities and research institutions, positioning the region as a hub for entrepreneurial success.

## Economic Development and Infrastructure

The Chamber supports increased **investment in county-wide infrastructure, including transportation, broadband, energy, water and wastewater systems, emergency services, healthcare access, and recreation facilities**. The Chamber additionally supports continued efforts to expedite permitting at the state and local levels.

Comprehensive Infrastructure Investment: Advocate for increased funding and development of transportation, broadband, energy, water, and wastewater systems, ensuring the county's infrastructure can support growing business needs, enhance quality of life, and attract new industries.

Strengthen Emergency Services and Healthcare Access: Support investments in emergency services and healthcare facilities to ensure timely responses and improved access to care, promoting the overall health, safety, and resilience of the community.

Expedite Permitting Processes: Encourage streamlined permitting at the state and local levels to reduce delays for businesses and infrastructure projects, facilitating faster economic development and improving the ease of doing business within the county.

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## Bastrop Chamber of Commerce

927 Main Street – Bastrop TX 78602 – (512) 303-0558

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