

POLICY & ADVOCACY



Opportunity Austin is committed to supporting businesses through strategic advocacy and policy initiatives. By engaging in key areas such as transportation, energy, water, and workforce development, OA ensures the Austin region remains a dynamic and thriving environment for businesses to grow and succeed.

Transportation

I-35 Expansion

Opportunity Austin engages on transportation issues through its Infrastructure Council, advocating for roads and other mobility options that ensure efficient, safe, and timely movement of goods and people. As Austin undertakes the multi-billion dollar expansion of I-35, Opportunity Austin is involved at every level of the policy-making process.

Electric

Texas Energy Fund (low-interest loans)

The legislature passed SB 2627 in 2023, creating the Texas Energy Fund to promote the development of gas-fired power plants. The fund provides low-interest loans for constructing new plants and rehabilitating older ones. This program was approved by voters via Proposition 7 in November 2023.

Water

Texas Water Fund

In 2023, the legislature passed SB 28, establishing the Texas Water Fund, and SB 30, dedicating a \$1 billion supplemental appropriation. Voter approval in November 2023 secured funding. At least \$250 million is dedicated to developing new water sources, with the remainder for various projects, including infrastructure rehabilitation. Texas may also receive an estimated \$2.5 billion over five years from the federal infrastructure bill passed in 2021.

Broadband

Texas Broadband Infrastructure Act

In 2023, Texas voters approved Proposition 8, creating the Broadband Infrastructure Fund with \$1.5 billion. This money will primarily support the Next Generation 9-1-1 Service Fund and the Pole Replacement Program. Texas also received \$3.3 billion from the IIJA.

Workforce

HB8

In 2023, the legislature reformed community college funding to focus on completion and outcomes. The bill allocated \$683 million, tying funding to student outcomes such as credentials awarded and successful transfers to four-year colleges.

Infrastructure Academy

An initiative by the City of Austin, the Infrastructure Academy addresses the talent pipeline for \$25 billion in infrastructure spending in the Austin area. It will be a training hub supporting community-based programs, aiming to train or upskill 4,000 workers annually for careers in infrastructure-related fields.