



# 2026 BUSINESS PRIORITIES

Since 1978, the Gilbert Chamber of Commerce has proactively served as the business advocate to strengthen the business climate in Gilbert.



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## OUR POLICY PILLARS



A thriving business community drives community and economic growth by creating jobs, generating income, and fostering innovation. Our policy pillars focus on promoting a business-friendly environment, reducing regulatory barriers, ensuring fair and reasonable tax systems, and fostering a positive relationship between businesses and their community. Generally, policies impacting business can be categorized within these four policy pillars:

- Business Growth
- Infrastructure
- Positive Business Environment
- Prepared Workforce

## OUR MISSION

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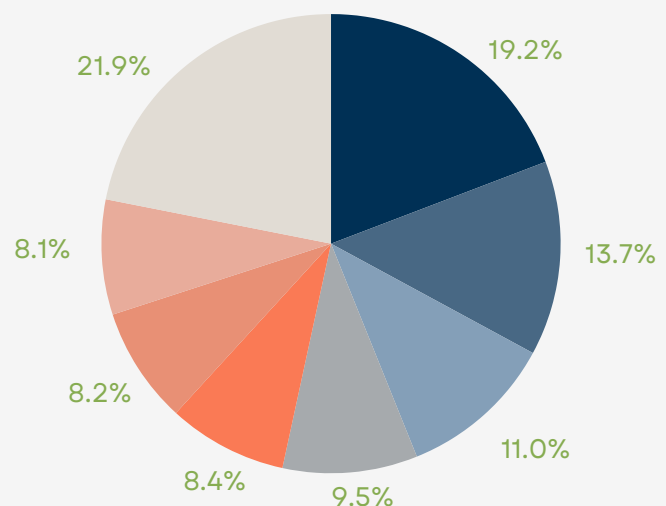
## OUR PURPOSE

We represent the interests of our business community, provide access to resources, and foster meaningful connections so that business professionals have a place to belong and enjoy economic growth and success.

## OUR PASSION

Representation. Resources. Access. Connections. Belonging. Growth.

## REPRESENTATION BY INDUSTRY



\*Other categories in order of percent representation include Community and Civic Organizations; Arts, Culture and Entertainment Venues; Government and Education; Retail, Shopping, and Wholesale; Advertising and Media; Automotive and Marine; Lodging and Travel; Manufacturing and Production; Public Utilities and Environment; Legal; Technology and Computers; Pets and Veterinary; Transportation; Home and Garden; Sports and Recreation; Religious Organizations; and Industrial Supplies and Service.



**BUSINESS GROWTH**  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
POSITIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT  
PREPARED WORKFORCE



# BUSINESS GROWTH

## *THE GILBERT CHAMBER SUPPORTS...*

- Economic development funding and programming to uphold and further expand Gilbert's competitive position for business attraction, retention, expansion, and tourism marketing, including appropriate economic development tools and regulatory flexibility to attract and expand high-wage jobs within the community.
- Job growth that attracts new and retains existing businesses to create jobs and increase employment opportunities for Gilbert's diverse workforce, especially in the Town's employment clusters.
- Streamlined entitlement and/or tenant improvement processes like the "Taking Care of Small Business" program.
- Historic preservation, arts, and culture to support economic and tourism drivers and growth strategy.
- Reasonable regulation of signage and promotional displays that enhance the visibility of businesses.
- Accessibility to businesses impacted by road construction and/or closures, and provision of timely notification before such construction and/or closures.
- Education and training for businesses on how to participate in the Town of Gilbert's bid process and how to establish themselves as credible vendors.
- Tourism and Shop Local initiatives to support Gilbert-based businesses, increase market share, and generate tax revenue.
- Use of the town's Open Data platform to ensure interactive and transparent opportunities for feedback from businesses and residents.
- Stable commercial rents and accessible space for small and emerging businesses, including mitigation of long-term retail vacancies.
- Access to training, resources, and expertise for businesses in all phases of growth and development - from ideation through exit.





BUSINESS GROWTH  
**INFRASTRUCTURE**  
POSITIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT  
PREPARED WORKFORCE

# INFRASTRUCTURE

## THE GILBERT CHAMBER SUPPORTS...

- Negotiations to pursue more significant contributions from other Colorado River Basin states, strong negotiation of Water Exchange Agreements with regional partners, and modifications to Bartlett Dam.
- Water conservation initiatives that responsibly protect our community's water supply while preserving businesses' operational needs and limiting their expenses related to mandated conservation efforts.
- Investments in energy efficiency measures and incentive programs that help businesses and residents reduce average energy demand per user.
- Partnerships that modernize infrastructure, promote renewable technologies, and foster sustainable energy practices without compromising reliability or affordability.
- Strategic planning and investments in the Heritage District, prioritizing business accessibility, connectivity, circulation, walkability, and expansion of public parking options.
- Innovative transportation solutions, such as public-private partnerships, to improve the movement of people and goods, foster job creation, connect employees to job centers, and enhance economic development.
- Regional transportation needs assessments and funding options, as well as advocacy of these projects, in partnership with the East Valley Chambers of Commerce Alliance and East Valley mayors.
- Attention to infrastructure and amenity gaps within aging areas to ensure all corridors remain desirable locations for businesses to invest and provide quality employment opportunities.
- Continued redevelopment of the Northwest Redevelopment Area.
- Regular and ongoing assessment of long-term maintenance and replacement costs, including reasonable financial options to support and enhance Town infrastructure.
- Technological investments to ensure streamlined business processes and internal efficiencies.
- Continued investment in Mesa Gateway Airport as an East Valley economic driver.



BUSINESS GROWTH  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
**POSITIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT**  
PREPARED WORKFORCE



# POSITIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

## *THE GILBERT CHAMBER SUPPORTS...*

- The ability for businesses to manage the workplace and workforce without excessive local government intrusion or overbearing regulation.
- Fees and regulations that are predictable, fair, and reasonable, and that do not burden the business owner unreasonably.
- Differentiated cost-recovery ratios between support requested by the business and those mandated by the Town.
- A predictable and fair tax environment with transparent management of funds.
- Gilbert's tradition of low taxes, innovative services, and efficient Town operating expenses per capita.
- Long-term financing policies that balance bonding and general fund expenditures.
- Preservation of commercial and industrial zoning throughout the Town and careful consideration of requests for commercial downzoning to safeguard future business growth and expansion opportunities. Any downzoning requests should be evaluated and supported on a case-by-case basis.
- Priority attention to improving infrastructure in designated Commercial and Employment areas to strengthen their competitiveness and avoid long-term stagnation.
- Policies that encourage a diverse portfolio for income-aligned housing supply while protecting local control and private property rights.
- Public safety and dependable services to ensure a safe community for businesses, employees, and residents.
- Promotion of Character Areas within Gilbert to showcase its uniqueness and support of local businesses.
- Collaboration with non-profit organizations to serve the most vulnerable populations within our Town, as identified in the community needs assessment survey.
- Preservation of natural resources to ensure long-term community resiliency.



BUSINESS GROWTH  
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**PREPARED WORKFORCE**



# PREPARED WORKFORCE

## *THE GILBERT CHAMBER SUPPORTS...*

- Job creation measures to support workforce training, retention, and upskilling to meet the demands of Gilbert's employers.
- The Gilbert Chamber Foundation's workforce readiness initiatives to unite business, education, and government partners in support of career exploration, career pathways, and local employment trends and skills needs.
- Collaboration with Gilbert's education ecosystem—including public, private, and charter schools—to align student and district training, programs, and opportunities with present and future business workforce needs.
- Opportunities for certifications, credentials, micro-credentials, and degree opportunities to serve current and future Gilbert-based employees.
- The Arizona Education Progress Meter—a shared vision for meeting the state's Achieve60AZ attainment goal through the entire P-20 education continuum.

# CHAMBER LEADERSHIP

## BOARD OFFICERS:



**Dan Kovochich**  
*Chair of the Board*  
Salt River Project (SRP)



**Karen Camblin**  
*Chair-Elect*  
Guild Mortgage Company



**Matthew Harrison**  
*Immediate Past Chair*  
Deloitte



**Constance Lemere**  
*Treasurer*  
Employee Benefit Exchange Corp.



**Kevin De Rosa**  
*Vice Chair - Business Growth & Development*  
Advance Champion Supply



**Emily Staples**  
*Vice Chair - Public Policy & Fundraising*  
FASTSIGNS of Gilbert

## BOARD MEMBERS:

**Adam Baugh**, *Withey Morris Baugh, PLC*

**Mark Bergerson**, *Ensign Insurance Partners*

**Kevin Bishop**, *RCP Community Management*

**Patrick Carlson**, *APS*

**Jaime Johnson**, *Leading Edge Preschool*

**Darren McCollem**, *Banner Gateway Medical Center/ Banner MD Anderson Cancer Center*

**Mark Newman**, *Newman Realty Team Powered By Realty One Group*

**Warde Nichols**, *Arizona State University*

**Robert Pizorno**, *Legacy Member*

**David Scott**, *First Western Bank*

**Dallas Sloan**, *Colair Beauty Lounge & Med Spa*

**John Webster**, *Executive Millwork and Cabinetry Inc.*

## STAFF:

**Sarah Watts**, *President & CEO*

**Amy Gerken**, *Director, Events & Programs*

**Elaine Kessler**, *Director, Foundation & Community Impact*

**Antoinette Vasquez**, *Director, Business Development*

**Nicole Charmoli**, *Manager, Foundation & Community Impact*

**Taylor Haase**, *Manager, Marketing*

**Amber Stricklin**, *Manager, Data & Operations*

**Marty Tomljenovic**, *Manager, Events & Programs*

**Emma Breid**, *Coordinator, Administrative & Programs*

## MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

### Committee Chair

Eric Pettitt, *PETTITT WEALTH*

### Committee Chair-Elect

Morgan Hernke, *Cox Communications*

### General Committee Members

Adam Baugh, *Withey Morris Baugh, PLC*

Robin Belley, *Gilbert City Lifestyle*

Danna Bergstrom, *Bergstrom Financial Services*

Kevin Bishop, *RCP Community Management*

Susan Brechbill, *Brechbill Consulting, LLC*

Patrick Carlson, *APS*

Daryl Chester, *Jester's Billiards*

Lisa Ciolli, *First Things First*

Candice Copple, *Arizona State University*

Julie Graham, *Dignity Health*

Jasmine Holmes, *910 West*

Don Kossow, *Arizona Sign Company*

Dan Kovochich, *SRP*

Noah Mundt, *SRP*

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Luke Palmer, *Everest Air and Plumbing*

Robert Pizorno, *Legacy Member*

Delaney Russell, *Southwest Gas Corporation*

Ann Schude, *Go Gilbert*

Scott September, *CeCe's Hope Center*

Jân Simon, *Foundation Insurance Services*

Emily Staples, *FASTSIGNS of Gilbert*

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Ralph Willett, *Willett CPA*