



ABILENE CHAMBER

DAILY BUSINESS BRIEF

Skimming the daily updates for your business so you don't have to.

SURVEY REQUEST - SHARE YOUR PERSPECTIVE

A recent spike in cases of COVID-19 has caused Governor Greg Abbott to “pause” further opening of the state of Texas and even instruct certain businesses to close again. In order to help the Chamber update its perspective of the views of our members, please share your opinion on preventing another economic shutdown, the use of masks in businesses, and our community’s ability to ensure our hospital systems aren’t overwhelmed.

[Survey link](#)

ABILENE MAYOR APPLAUDS PRIVATE SECTOR FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE

Abilene Mayor Anthony Williams is applauding the city’s private sector for helping to curb the curve of COVID-19.

Williams, in a Facebook live video on Monday evening, detailed how businesses and event organizers are responding to the spread of coronavirus.

Williams pointed to First Financial Bank, who is now requiring all 1,500 of its employees to wear masks, and United Supermarkets who is also requiring masks for employees and enacting new measures, as examples for the private sector.

Despite the City of Abilene not enacting a mandatory mask ordinance, Williams said private companies can still step up to enforce actions.

[Read more.](#)

ABILENE CITY COUNCIL EXTENDS DISASTER DECLARATION ENDS STREET MAINTENANCE FEE WAIVER

The Abilene City Council extended the local Declaration of Disaster last Thursday. A primary reason for continuing the declaration is to maintain eligibility for federal and state funds in response to slowing the spread of COVID-19 in compliance with the current state order. Mayor Anthony Williams shared a press statement from Governor Greg Abbott calling for individual support of health and safety recommendations in order to prevent another round of potential closures. “The governor up to this week has not allowed counties or municipalities to have requirements that go beyond his orders. That has changed this week. so now that we have the authority to do some things, we want to evaluate and pause.”

City Council members voted to let the waiver for Street Maintenance Fees expire as economic growth begins to increase. Waiving that fee for two months saved residents and businesses nearly \$900,000 combined according to city officials. The Department of Public Works will adjust the amount of projects scheduled in the next fiscal year budget to accommodate the loss to the special fund.

The City Council also approved a new Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan for CityLink during Thursday's meeting. As part of that plan CityLink will evaluate where to put new bus stop shelters that meet disability requirements. Director of Public Transit Don Green says the department has received new funds for this need.

"CityLink received a very generous CARES Act grant and I have asked CityLink to put aside some of that funding to go toward additional shelters. I think within the next year we will see an increase in the number of shelters." Green added that disability access includes choosing locations with specific sidewalk or ramp layouts in order to meet those requirements.

MANUFACTURING REGAIN FOOTING AFTER EPIC DECLINE

Texas factory activity rebounded strongly in June, according to business executives responding to the Texas Manufacturing Outlook Survey. The production index, a key measure of state manufacturing conditions, climbed from -28.0 to 13.6, indicating moderate expansion in output following three months of record or near-record declines.

Other measures of manufacturing activity also pointed to a rebound in growth this month. The new orders index advanced 34 points to 2.9, its first positive reading in four months, with nearly a third of manufacturers noting an increase in orders. The growth rate of orders index pushed up 25 points but remained negative at -5.8. The capacity utilization and shipments indexes also returned to positive territory.

[Read more.](#)

LAST DAY TO APPLY FOR LEADERSHIP ABILENE CLASS OF 2021

Since 1979, the Abilene Chamber of Commerce has helped the community invest in local talent through comprehensive leadership development offerings designed to connect and grow strong leaders.

Today by 5:00 pm is the last day to submit applications for the Chamber's storied Leadership Abilene program.

The Chamber's Leadership Abilene program meets once a month from September through May to learn about Abilene's unique strengths and challenges. The class is limited to participants over the age of 21. An anonymous selection committee reviews the applications and strives to balance the class composition regarding industry, gender, age, and ethnicity.

This year's planning committee is working hard to deliver a better program in conditions no one saw coming. Their focus will be on leading and breaking through post pandemic community challenges and emerging as outstanding mentors, leaders and human beings.

For more information on the program, please reach out to staff liaison [Veronica Fuentes](#). You can find an application for the [program here](#).

WHAT WE'RE READING

Senators want answers on meat exports vs. domestic shortages

"Probing into meat shortages; relief for small meat plants; China wants COVID-free import guarantee; trade agenda addressed."

[Read more.](#)

There's a Contest Brewing Over How to Price U.S. Crude Oil

"Two companies have released price benchmarks for oil in the U.S., challenging West Texas Intermediate crude as the standard indicator of the cost of the commodity"

[Read more.](#)

You don't want to miss these upcoming event for your business.

6/30 WATER STORYTELLING ZOOM MEETING 10:00 AM - Kenneth Jorgensen, Ph.D. (Aalborg University) "Water Agency" Mogens Sparre, Ph.D. (Aalborg University, Chairman of the Danish Water Association Nord, and Chairman of Blokus Water Plant) "Clean Water is a Living Condition". [More info.](#)

6/21 VIRTUAL SUMMIT: POWERING FORWARD - TEXAS OIL AND NATURAL GAS A free virtual summit hosted by the Texas Oil & Gas Association, on July 21st at 11:30 a.m. CT. The summit will feature distinguished industry leaders who will discuss the future of the energy landscape in Texas and what is needed for our state to continue in its role as the Energy Capital of the World. See below for details on how to [register](#).

MORE FROM THE CHAMBER:

- [Fun things to do this week in Abilene](#)
- [Abilene Chamber CEO Appointed to Texas Association of Business Board of Directors](#)
- [Abilene Chamber Now Seeking Nominations for Citizen of the Year](#)
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