

# 25 Reasons to Believe in Texas' Future

Texans have long understood that the future is not something we wait for, but **something we shape**. Progress comes from deliberate choices to build, invest and show up for one another.

At Texas 2036, **we focus on the data and long-term decisions** that turn momentum into lasting opportunity for more Texans.

As 2025 comes to a close, here are **25 facts** showing a Texas that is growing, building and preparing for what comes next.

## I. A Strong Economy, Built by Texans

*Texas' economic strength is driven by people, businesses, and communities across the state.*



### 1. Texas Helps Power the Global Economy.

Texas has the second-largest economy of any U.S. state, with a gross state product of about \$2.77 trillion in 2024, accounting for roughly 10% of the national economy. If Texas were a country, its economy would rank among the Top 10 largest globally. In recent years, Texas' real economic output has grown faster than the national average, creating both opportunity and responsibility to translate that growth into affordability, mobility and stability for Texas families. ([Office of the Texas Governor](#)).

### 2. Texas Is Growing, Powered by Families and Young People.

Texas is a state full of families and young people, shaping what comes next. A baby is born in Texas about every 90 seconds, and nearly one in four Texans is under 18. More than half of the population is made up of Millennials or Gen Z, and Texas is one of only two states with a median age under 36, an important advantage for the state's long-term future. ([Texas 2036](#)).

### 3. Texans Believe They Can Find Opportunity and Good Jobs in Texas.

Texans may not agree on everything, but most remain optimistic about what comes next. A majority of Texas voters say the Texas economy will outperform the nation over the next four years, and nearly two-thirds say they are confident they could find a good-paying job here, according to the 9th Texas Voter Poll released this fall. ([Texas 2036, 9th Texas Voter Poll](#)).

### 4. More People Are Choosing Texas as a Place to Build Their Lives.

Texas continues to lead the nation in population growth, adding nearly 563,000 residents between July 2023 and July 2024. That growth reflects sustained opportunity and strong communities, and underscores the responsibility to ensure Texas remains a place where families can put down roots and build a future. ([U.S. Census Bureau](#)).

### 5. Businesses Keep Choosing Texas to Grow and Expand.

Companies across industries are choosing to grow in Texas. The state now leads the nation in Fortune 500 headquarters, surpassing New York. Since 2020, nearly 200 corporate headquarters have relocated or expanded here. Those investments bring jobs, local spending and long-term stability to communities across the state, from major metros to surrounding regions. ([Business Insider](#)).

### 6. Texas Boasts One of the Nation's Largest and Fastest-Growing Workforces.

Texas has more people working than ever before, with more than 15 million Texans in the labor force. Recent job gains and labor force growth continue to outpace national trends, expanding opportunity across communities and supporting jobs that help families build stability over time. ([Texas Workforce Commission](#)).

### 7. Small Businesses And Entrepreneurs Keep Texas Moving Forward.

Across the state, Texans are starting businesses at record levels. Texas is now home to more than 3 million active business entities, which is more than double the number a decade ago. In 2023 alone, Texans launched more than 400,000 new businesses, most of them small, locally owned enterprises that create jobs, spark innovation and strengthen communities. ([Office of the Texas Governor](#)).

### 8. Texas Agriculture Feeds Families and Sustains Rural Communities.

Texas has more farms and ranches than any other state, with over 230,000 operations covering about 125 million acres. That rural footprint supports family farms, ranching traditions and local economies from the Panhandle to the Rio Grande, while sustaining food production and jobs that reach from small towns to major cities. ([Texas Department of Agriculture](#)).

### 9. Texans Invest in Their Communities With Time, Talent and Resources.

When communities need support, Texans don't wait. Texas consistently ranks among the top states for volunteerism, with nearly three in 10 Texans giving their time through organizations. Texans also give generously, particularly during times of crisis and during the holidays, supporting food banks, disaster relief efforts, schools and local nonprofits across the state. That willingness to invest locally with time, skills and financial resources strengthens communities, fills gaps during emergencies and reflects a deep civic culture that underpins Texas' long-term resilience and growth. ([Axios Austin](#)).

## II. Preparing Texans for the Future

*Texas is investing in our people from early learning to research universities.*



### 10. Texas Made a Historic Investment in Students, Teachers and Schools.

In 2025, Texas lawmakers approved about \$8.5 billion in new investments to support students, teachers and schools across Texas, one of the largest education investments in recent state history. The package included teacher and staff pay raises, expanded support for early learning and special education, and investments in school safety. ([Texas 2036](#)).

**11. Students Are Showing Real Progress in Reading.**

This year's state test results showed measurable gains in reading across multiple grade levels. While there's more work to do, these improvements demonstrate that statewide advances are possible and highlight why continued focus on early literacy, strong curriculum and supporting teachers matters for students' long-term success. ([Texas 2036](#))

**12. Texas Is Giving Students a Head Start on College.**

Texas has widened the on-ramp to college and career by encouraging more students to take dual credit while in high school. State data shows dual credit enrollment climbed to nearly 250,000 Texas students by fall 2024, a 36% increase in just five years. That growth signals an important shift in how Texas prepares young people, bringing college and workforce-oriented courses closer to home and earlier in life. ([Texas A&M University System](#))

**13. Community Colleges Are Creating More Opportunities Close to Home.**

Community colleges remain one of Texas' most powerful engines of opportunity. In fall 2025, public two-year colleges enrolled 776,432 students, serving as a primary gateway to education and workforce training across the state. As Texas shifts to an outcomes-based funding model, these institutions are being asked not just to enroll students, but to help them gain credentials that lead to jobs, stability and economic mobility. ([Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#))

**14. More Texans Are Earning Degrees and Credentials That Lead to Work.**

Texas is expanding access to education and workforce credentials across the state. In 2025, colleges and universities awarded more than 320,000 degrees and certificates, one of the highest totals in state history. At the same time, Texas has reformed postsecondary education in prisons to help incarcerated Texans earn degrees, credentials and even occupational licenses before release. These efforts strengthen communities, support workforce needs and help more Texans return to society prepared for stable employment and opportunity. ([Education Data Initiative](#), [Texas 2036](#))

**15. Texas Universities Help Turn Research Into Real-World Jobs.**

Texas is home to 16 top-tier (R1) research universities, placing the state among national leaders in university research and development. That strength drives innovation, attracts federal and private funding and supports high-wage jobs across fields like energy, medicine and engineering. ([Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#))

## III. Progress Made For Our Future

*Texans are making long-term investments that will shape the state for generations.*

**16. Texans Voted to Safeguard the State's Long-Term Water Supply.**

In November, voters passed Proposition 4, dedicating \$1 billion per year to the Texas Water Fund to repair aging infrastructure and secure long-term water supplies. The measure passed with broad bipartisan support, reflecting a shared commitment to protecting Texas' water future. ([Texas 2036](#))

**17. Texas Is Expanding Energy Capacity and Markets for a Growing State.**

Texas produces more energy than any other state, providing about a quarter of the nation's domestically produced primary energy. Texas leads the country in oil and natural gas production, generates more electricity than any other state and ranks No. 1 in wind power. That scale reflects abundant natural resources, a competitive energy market and sustained investment across fossil fuels and renewables. In 2025, Texas lawmakers backed major investments in power generation and grid planning to help ensure energy capacity and markets keep pace with rising demand statewide. ([U.S. Energy Information Administration](#))

**18. Texas Is Building More Homes for a Growing Population.**

After years of rapid increases, Texas home prices have begun to level off. At the same time, the state continues to lead the nation in new home construction — accounting for about one in six new homes built in the U.S. In metros like San Antonio and Austin, markets are now among the nation's strongest for buyers, reflecting increased supply and improved affordability. ([Zillow](#))

**19. Many Texans Continue to Have Access to Affordable Health Coverage.**

Because of legislation passed in 2021, more affordable plans are available to Texans on the ACA Marketplace. Early 2026 Marketplace open-enrollment data shows record sign-ups, with close to 1.3 million Texans enrolled since Nov. 1, which is a 17.4% increase over the same period last year. ([Texas 2036](#))

**20. Texas Is Making Major Investments to Keep People and Goods Moving.**

Texas has launched a decade-long transportation plan with more than \$146 billion in investments to expand highways, improve congestion and safety and keep people and goods moving as the state grows. These record-level investments will help strengthen commerce, reduce delays and connect communities statewide. ([Office of the Texas Governor](#))

**21. Texas Is Strengthening Its Position as a Place to Do Business.**

Texas has taken practical steps to stay competitive, including attracting stock exchanges such as TXSE, NYSE Texas and NASDAQ Texas, and establishing the Texas Business Court, a specialized court designed to handle complex commercial disputes. The court offers companies headquartered in Texas a strong alternative to Delaware, strengthening the state's financial and legal foundation for long-term growth. ([Texas Judicial Branch](#))

**22. Texas Is Modernizing Its Regulatory Environment.**

Texas recently advanced reforms to make its regulatory system more transparent, accountable and effective for a growing state. Updates to the Sunset review process strengthened public input and performance evaluation. And the creation of the Texas Regulatory Efficiency Office established a dedicated effort to identify and reduce unnecessary regulations. Together, these changes support economic growth while ensuring that regulations better serve Texans. ([Texas 2036](#))

**23. Voter Investments Are Giving Texans More Access to State Parks.**

In 2023, voters approved a historic \$1 billion investment in Texas state parks, expanding and improving access to outdoor spaces across the state. As park visitation continues to increase with new state parks coming online in the future years, this investment helps ensure Texans have more places to hike, camp, hunt, and recharge — now and for generations to come. ([Texas 2036](#))

**24. Texas Is Preparing for the Jobs of the Future: Chips, AI and Cyber.**

Texas is investing in advanced semiconductor manufacturing, cybersecurity and research infrastructure that power high-wage jobs and long-term competitiveness. From new chip production and the Texas Cyber Command to growing investments in quantum research and advanced computing, these efforts position Texas as a national leader in the technologies shaping the next economy. ([Texas Economic Development & Tourism Office](#))

**25. Texas Is Building on Its Leadership in Space.**

Texas is investing in the future of space through the Texas Space Commission, which has awarded roughly \$126 million in grants to 22 aerospace and space innovation projects that support commercial spaceflight, manufacturing and research. These efforts build on Texas' historic role in human spaceflight at NASA's Johnson Space Center and help position the state as a hub for next-generation technology and high-wage jobs. ([Texas Space Commission](#))

## What Comes Next: 2026 and Beyond

This year reminded us that progress in Texas is not guaranteed. It comes from people showing up, making hard choices and keeping the long view in mind.

None of this was inevitable. Voters, business leaders and policymakers **made decisions this year that will shape Texas** long after the headlines fade.

As Texas moves ahead, growth alone is not enough. The work is to **ensure opportunity lasts and reaches more people** in more places. As we look toward 2026, we wish you a happy, healthy and safe holiday season.

**Happy holidays, Texas.**