

Town Business Liaison Committee (TBLC)**Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report****Introduction**

The Town Business Liaison Committee (TBLC) is an advisory body to the Town Council and serves as a bridge between the Town of Vienna's government and its vibrant business community. Established in 1982, the committee's objective is to foster collaboration, promote economic growth, and support local businesses. Over the years, the TBLC has evolved to align with the Town's needs, as reflected in recent updates to its bylaws and mission.

In the fiscal year 2025, July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, the TBLC prioritized the advancement of policies to support economic development, business community engagement, and business recognition. This report highlights the committee's accomplishments, ongoing initiatives, and future goals and objectives.

Membership and Meetings

The Town Business Liaison Committee (TBLC) is composed of nine dedicated individuals representing a diverse cross-section of Vienna's business community and residents. Members work collaboratively to advance the committee's mission. In FY 25', the TBLC was chaired by Jen Morrow, owner of Bards Alley Bookstore, with support from Vice Chair Tracy McCarty (Feb 2024 – current). This year, the committee renewed three members to their 2nd term: Preeti Penati of Studio 76 (Business), Rev. Brenda Burns of Vienna Assembly of God (Business), Tracy McCarty (Resident).

The TBLC held ten regular monthly meetings on the second Thursday of each month, except July and August, throughout FY 25', maintaining a consistent schedule to address ongoing projects, new initiatives, and collaborations. Highlights from these meetings include Legacy Awards, policy feedback to Council and staff, and updates on the Town's economic development initiatives. The committee also reviewed new business licenses monthly, ensuring outreach to new business community members.

FY 2025 Accomplishments

The TBLC achieved several milestones during this fiscal year, reflecting its commitment to Vienna's business community:

- **Business Recognition:**
 - Finalized and implemented updated criteria for the Robert Leggett Outstanding Service Award and the Carole Wolfand Community Service Award. These awards recognized exemplary contributions by local businesses and employees.
 - Supported the Economic Development Department's programming during Economic Development Week 2025, including the annual Business Legacy Awards Ceremony. Over 50 businesses were honored for 20 or more years in Vienna.

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- **Community Engagement:**
 - Hosted a business engagement effort for Church Street businesses to talk about ways to improve business access during largescale community events such as Viva Vienna, the Church Street Stroll, etc. This resulted in an updated MOU with the Rotary Club for Viva Vienna. Town staff also updated internal policies to align with any resulting changes. Businesses have been receptive to the actions taken by the Town and the feedback has been positive.
 - Actively participated in ribbon-cutting ceremonies throughout the year, showcasing the committee's commitment to fostering a welcoming business environment.
 - During Economic Development Week 2025, TBLC members joined business retention visits to Trouseau, Caboose Brewing, Evolution Fitness, Bards Alley Bookstore, Family & Child Therapy, and Solution-Focused Therapy Services to better understand their needs and discuss how the Town can support their growth.
- **Marketing and Outreach:**
 - Supported marketing campaigns led by the Economic Development Department, including Restaurant Week and Economic Development Week. Members engaged with these efforts through social media and in-person outreach.
 - Distributed welcome postcards to new business license holders, fostering a culture of welcoming and inclusivity.
- **Policy Contributions:**
 - Wrote letter of feedback on the FY 2026 Capital Improvement Plan including support for the acquisition of property in the Church Street area for partnership with NOVA Parks, moving forward Streetscape improvements to FY 2028, and including Façade and Interior Improvement Program as a new CIP item that was previously found or located in the operating budget requests.
 - Through significant outreach efforts to restaurant owners and managers, the committee was able to provide significant feedback on the impact of the proposed meals tax.
 - Provided feedback on the town's parking study, contributing to improved infrastructure planning.
 - Actively supported updates to Vienna's comprehensive plan, emphasizing economic development priorities.
 - Members met one on one with Town Council members to discuss ongoing initiatives and any impact to the business community.

Looking Ahead: FY25-26 Goals

As the TBLC continues its mission to support and strengthen Vienna's business community, the committee has identified areas of focus for upcoming Fiscal Year 2025 - 2026:

- 1) Provide ongoing feedback on Town policies which affect the business community, to include:
 - a) Comment on the Comprehensive Plan mainly focused on the Economic Development and Land Use chapters

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- b) Suggest next steps on how to address the results of the parking study
 - c) Analyze current outdoor dining permitting process
- 2) Support Economic Development Department Initiatives, to include:
- a) Develop the scope of a Streetscape Plan
 - b) Expand marketing and outreach efforts
 - c) Programming for Economic Development Week and Small Business Saturday
- 3) Enhance committee operations through continued engagement with Town Council
- 4) Engage with home-based businesses to determine the need for support or programming

By pursuing these goals, the TBLC aims to reinforce its advisory role to the Town Council and be a champion for Vienna's vibrant business community. The committee looks forward to a year of growth, collaboration, and success.