

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN MARCOS, TEXAS AMENDING CHAPTER 22, CEMETERIES, OF THE SAN MARCOS CITY CODE BY, AMONG OTHER THINGS, CORRECTING TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS IN VARIOUS SECTIONS AND AMENDING SECTIONS 22.013 AND 22.014; ADOPTING A FEE SCHEDULE RELATED TO THE USE AND OPERATION OF THE CEMETERY; PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF ANY CONFLICTING PROVISIONS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN MARCOS, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 22, Cemeteries, of the San Marcos City Code is hereby amended to read as follows (Added text is indicated by underlining. Deleted text is indicated by strikethroughs.):

Sec. 22.001. Definitions.

In this chapter:

Block means a group of multiple contiguous lots.

Caretaker means the person employed by the city or by the city's cemetery maintenance contractor to oversee the operation and maintenance of the cemetery. Unless otherwise stated, the caretaker may delegate his duties and authority under this chapter to an authorized representative.

Cemetery means the San Marcos Cemetery.

Columbarium means a structure at the cemetery with niches for the placement of funeral urns.

Crypt means an area of the city-owned mausoleum for the interment of one person in a casket, or cremains for up to 12 persons.

Decoration means any item that is not a monument.

Ecofriendly means the interment of a deceased person in the soil in a manner that does not inhibit decomposition but allows the body to be naturally recycled.

Lot means a parcel of property defined as a lot on the official plat maps of the cemetery, intended for the interment of up to two persons in caskets or up to six cremains.

Monument means a headstone, gravemarkergrave marker or similar permanent object of stone, bronze, or concrete that serves as a memorial to a person

interred in the lot upon which the monument is located.

Niche means a space in a columbarium intended for the placement of a funeral urn containing the remains of one person.

Section means a group of contiguous multiple blocks.

Sec. 22.005. Purchase of certificates for the right of interment in lots, mausoleum crypts, or niches.

(a) All purchasers of certificates for the right of interment in cemetery lots, mausoleum crypts, or columbarium niches must first select from the available lots, crypts or niches at the cemetery. Such certificates may be purchased from the city. The placement or use of private mausoleums at the cemetery is prohibited.

(b) Upon payment of the entire purchase price for a certificate for the right of interment in a designated lot, mausoleum crypt or columbarium niche, the city will issue the certificate which reserves the cemetery lot, crypt, or niche for use by the purchaser or the purchaser's heirs, successors or assigns.

(c) Each certificate for the right of interment will be issued to only one person including a designated representative under subsection (d).

(d) When there are two or more purchasers of a certificate for the right of interment in a lot, crypt, or niche, the purchasers may designate one or more persons to represent the purchasers regarding the certificate and file written notice of the designation with the city. In the absence of a notice, the city is authorized to permit an interment in a lot, crypt, or niche at the request or direction of any registered co-purchaser of the property.

(e) All cemetery certificates for the right of interment will grant to the purchaser only the right to use the lot, crypt, or niche for interment of only human remains, subject to the requirements of this chapter.

(f) The price for each certificate for the right of interment in a lot, crypt or niche is established by the city council according to the number of lots, crypts or niches reserved for use by the certificate.

(g) A person desiring to purchase a certificate for the right of interment may pay the total purchase price or choose to set up an account with the city and pay the purchase price over an extended period of time according to the terms set out in this section. However, the city reserves the right to refuse interment in any lot, crypt or niche for which the full purchase price has not been paid. A certificate for the right of interment will not be issued for any lot, crypt, or niche until the full purchase price has been paid.

(h) A person desiring to pay the purchase price over time must enter into

an agreement with the city. This agreement will provide that the city will, in a default, refund the entire amount paid by the purchaser, less an administrative fee established by the city council.

(i) A person desiring to pay the purchase price over time will be required to pay an initial deposit of at least 10 percent of the cost of the certificate. The remaining balance shall be paid within 12 months of the initial deposit. Purchases of eight or more certificates must be paid in full at the time of purchase. Purchases of 10 or more certificates are not permitted unless approved by the San Marcos Cemetery Commission.

Sec. 22.006. Transfer of lots.

(a) The purchaser of a certificate for the right of interment in a lot, crypt or niche may transfer the certificate only by a written instrument.

(b) The transferee must register the transfer of the certificate with the city. All transfers are subject to section 22.005. The city may refuse to register a transfer if the purchase price for the certificate has not been paid in full. In the event a transfer is requested when the purchase price has not been paid in full, the person receiving the certificate will assume full responsibility for such payment prior to receiving a certificate for the right of interment.

Sec. 22.007. Repurchase of certificates by city.

A the purchaser or holder of a certificate of a right of interment may apply with the city to sell the certificate to the city. The city may, at its option, repurchase certificate at the price designated by the city council and on file in the city clerk's office at the time of original purchase.

Sec. 22.008. Reserved.

Sec. 22.009. Cemetery maintenance.

(a) The city will provide for the general care and maintenance of the cemetery.

(b) The cemetery perpetual care fund maintained by the city is dissolved, subject to such funds being reallocated within the city's budget for cemetery purposes.

(c) Such care and maintenance **includes** the cutting of the grass at reasonable intervals, the cleaning of the lots and the care and pruning of the trees and shrubs that may be placed along the walks, roadways and boundaries. Care and maintenance by the city does not include the maintenance, repair or replacement of any gravestones, monuments or memorials; the planting of flowers or ornamental plants; the maintenance or doing of any special or unusual work in the cemetery; or

the construction or reconstruction of any damaged marble, granite, bronze or concrete work on any lot.

(d) Any activity done by a contractor for the person having the lawful right of use or maintenance of a lot, or their representative, that is not part of the city's general care and maintenance will require a permit. Such permit will require payment of a fee as established by the city council.

Sec. 22.010. Interments.

(a) A completed application for interment in the cemetery must be filed with the city before excavation begins for a burial or before remains are placed in the mausoleum or columbarium.

(b) The applicant must specify the exact location of the burial space to be used. When for any reason an in-ground burial space cannot be opened where specified, the caretaker may direct the burial space to be opened in a location in the cemetery deemed by the caretaker to be best and proper, notifying the mortuary, so as not to delay the funeral.

(c) The mortuary performing interment services must secure the gravesite, must provide for the immediate cleaning of the gravesite and must remove all debris, fill or equipment resulting from or used by the mortuary.

(d) The mortuary performing interment services, for any casketed or shrouded remains, must use an outside burial container made of concrete, metal, poly, or other material approved under state law.

(e) The maximum number of burials allowed per lot is:

- (1) Two casketed burials, or four shrouded burials (stacked);
- (2) One casketed burial, or two shrouded burials, and six cremations; or
- (3) Six cremations or ten cremations within one outside burial container.

(f) The maximum number of placements per columbarium niche is one cremation.

(g) The maximum number of placements in a mausoleum crypt is:

- (1) One casket; or
- (2) Twelve cremations.

(h) Ecofriendly burials must be placed in biodegradable coffin or shroud, but will be interred with a concrete outside burial container.

- (1) Embalming is not permitted if the burial is to be considered ecofriendly.

Sec. 22.013. Curbing.

(a) The person having the lawful right of use or maintenance of a cemetery lot must apply to the city and obtain a permit before installing or constructing curbing of any type within the cemetery.

(b) No curb permit may be issued before the purchase price for the lot or certificate associated with the lot to be curbed has been paid in full. **No curbing of any type is allowed in the Dixon Addition, Section I, of the cemetery.**

(c) Any number of lots may be curbed so long as the purchase price and perpetual care fees for the lots has been paid.

(d) Curbs must be flush with existing terrain, must be constructed entirely of steel reinforced concrete, marble, or granite and must conform to the following specifications:

(1) *Concrete curbing.*

a. Curbing will be 18 inches wide along exterior lot lines in the cemetery property; six inches is to be within the lot; 12 inches is to be outside the lot.

b. Curbing will be six inches wide along interior lot lines and must be placed within the lots being curbed.

c. Curbing will be four inches deep.

d. One reinforcing iron size three rebar will be installed along the entire length of the curbing.

d.e. **Dixon Addition, Section 1, curbing will be centered on the common boundary of the burial and must be 6 inches wide on all sides.**

(2) *Granite and marble curbing.*

a. Curbing will be four inches in width and must be placed within the lots being curbed.

b. Granite or marble used for curbing must be mortared with a bonding agent of the same color as the granite or marble and designed for the purpose of bonding granite to granite, or marble to marble.

c. Curbing will be six inches deep.

(3) An exception to flush curbing may be granted by the cemetery

commission if adjoining lots have raised curbs.

Sec. 22.014. Decoration of lots, crypts, and niches.

(a) *Monuments.* Monuments in the cemetery are subject to the following:

(1) No memorial, monument, or grave marker, except a temporary marker placed by a funeral home, is allowed on any burial lot until the purchase price for the right of use of the lot has been fully paid and the instrument granting the right of use has been delivered to the purchaser.

(2) The person having the lawful right of use or maintenance of a cemetery lot or their agent must apply for and obtain a permit from the city before erecting a monument, except a temporary marker placed by a funeral home.

(3) Persons erecting monuments shall not leave material or rubbish on adjoining lots. Work must be completed as soon as possible, and any material or rubbish must be removed at once.

(4) Persons erecting monuments are responsible for any damage done by them to any property in the cemetery, including grass and trees. All work is subject to the control and direction of the caretaker.

(5) Wooden planks must be used for placing and rolling stone monuments on rocks or grass.

(6) Businesses are prohibited from placing their names on any monument or placing signs within the cemetery to advertise the firm or its products.

(7) The location of any proposed monuments or curbing must be identified by city staff before construction begins. It is mandatory to coordinate in advance any such installation of monuments or curbing with the city staff. Failure to notify or consult with city staff regarding any installation or failure to comply with any city ordinances herein may result in corrective measures taken at the expenses of the responsible party.

~~(8) All monuments in the Dixon Addition, Section I, must be stone, flat bronze, granite, or concrete.~~

~~(9)~~(8) All monuments placed in areas of the cemetery ~~other than Dixon Addition, Section I, from and after October 1, 2001,~~ must be all granite, marble, bronze, stone, or material approved by the San Marcos Cemetery Commission, and must have a reinforced concrete base. Any monument more than eight feet high is required to have an engineered foundation and be approved by the cemetery commission upon a finding that the proposed monument is suitable for the location based on such factors as safety, interference with maintenance, compatibility with the scale, height, massing and design aesthetic of surrounding monuments, or similar factors deemed relevant by the commission.

~~(10)~~(9) The maintenance of all monuments in the cemetery is the responsibility of the person having the lawful right of use or maintenance of the lot associated with the monument, or their surviving family members or descendants. This maintenance will include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. The cleaning of the monument^{1,2}
- b. Ensuring that the monument is seated properly^{1,2} and
- c. Repairing any damage to the monument or the structure of the monument, including replacement, if necessary.

~~(11)~~(10) In the event that a monument is in need of maintenance, the parks and recreation director will send a letter requesting such repairs to the person having a lawful right or use or maintenance of the lot or their surviving family members or descendants, if known, advising of the necessary maintenance. If such persons cannot be located, then the parks and recreation director will publish a newspaper notice of the necessary maintenance in accordance with the procedures described in V.T.C.A., Estates Code, Chapters 51 and 202. If the necessary maintenance is not performed within the time period stated in the notice, then the city may, in the interests of safety, initiate action to have the necessary maintenance performed, or have the monument removed. The finance director will bill any cost incurred by the city for the maintenance to such persons, if known.

(b) *Flowers, shrubs, trees, or decorations.* Flowers, shrubs, trees, and decorations in the cemetery are subject to the following:

- (1) Flowers, shrubs, or trees may be planted and cultivated on any lot except in the Dixon Addition, Section 1, provided that no planting or removal of shrubs or trees is allowed without first obtaining the written authorization from the caretaker.
- (2) Fresh cut flowers may be placed on any lot, in the mausoleum, or near the columbarium but they must be removed within two weeks or when, in the caretaker's opinion, they become unsightly or detrimental to maintenance. The caretaker may remove flowers not so removed.
- (3) Artificial flowers, sprays or wreaths are allowed, but they will be removed by the caretaker when they become unsightly or blow off the lot on which they were placed.
- (4) All decorations must be firmly secured or fastened to the ground or monument. Posts or poles are not allowed to be staked into the ground.
- (5) Animal feeders or animal houses are not allowed.
- (6) No items may be hung from any tree, shrub, or plant.
- (7) Glass containers are prohibited.

- (8) Unfilled vases will not be allowed to remain on a lot unless permanently affixed to a monument.
 - a. Unfilled vases will be removed from lots on the first day of the month and held for the lot owner for one month.
 - b. After one month, unclaimed vases will be disposed of at the caretaker's discretion.
- (c) In addition to monuments, lots may have benches of marble, granite, concrete, or material approved by the cemetery commission. Any other structural amenities, which must also be primarily of marble or granite, must have the approval of the cemetery commission before being placed on the lot.
- (d) Unapproved items will be removed by the caretaker and disposed of at the caretaker's discretion. Weathered and unsightly items will be removed during the spring and fall cleanup.
- (e) The caretaker is authorized to enforce the provisions of this section.

SECTION 2. The fees related to use and operation of the cemetery set forth in Exhibit A, attached hereto and made a part hereof, are approved and adopted.

SECTION 3. In codifying the changes authorized by this ordinance, paragraphs, sections and subsections may be renumbered and reformatted as appropriate consistent with the numbering and formatting of the San Marcos City Code.

SECTION 4. If any word, phrase, clause, sentence, or paragraph of this ordinance is held to be unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the other provisions of this ordinance will continue in force if they can be given effect without the invalid portion.

SECTION 5. If any word, phrase, clause, sentence, or paragraph of this ordinance is held to be unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the other provisions of this ordinance will continue in force if they can be given effect without the invalid portion.

SECTION 6. All ordinances and resolutions or parts of ordinances or resolutions in conflict with this ordinance are repealed.

SECTION 7. This ordinance will take effect after its passage, approval and adoption on second reading.

PASSED AND APPROVED on first reading on March 7, 2023.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED on second reading on March 21, 2023.

Jane Hughson
Mayor

Attest:

Elizabeth Trevino
City Clerk

Approved:

Barbara Quirk
Interim City Attorney

Exhibit A

“Cemetery Fee Schedule”

Pricing changes every Jan
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Cemetery Lot Fees

Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Level 1	\$2050	\$2100	\$2150	\$2200	\$2250	\$2300	\$2350	\$2400	\$2450	\$2500	\$2550
Level 2	\$2550	\$2600	\$2650	\$2700	\$2750	\$2800	\$2850	\$2900	\$2950	\$3000	\$3050

Residents-Level 1 – Residents of San Marcos or a person that owns property inside the zoned city limits of San Marcos.

Non-Residents-Level 2 – Any person not living in the zoned city limits of San Marcos.

Columbarium Niche – Tier 1

Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Level 1	\$1800	\$1850	\$1900	\$1950	\$2000	\$2050	\$2100	\$2150	\$2200	\$2250	\$2300
Level 2	\$2250	\$2300	\$2350	\$2400	\$2450	\$2500	\$2550	\$2600	\$2650	\$2700	\$2750

Columbarium Niche – Tier 2

Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Level 1	\$1400	\$1450	\$1500	\$1550	\$1600	\$1650	\$1700	\$1750	\$1800	\$1850	\$1900
Level 2	\$1750	\$1800	\$1850	\$1900	\$1950	\$2000	\$2050	\$2100	\$2150	\$2200	\$2250

Columbarium Niche – Tier 3

Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Level 1	\$1000	\$1050	\$1100	\$1150	\$1200	\$1250	\$1300	\$1350	\$1400	\$1450	\$1500
Level 2	\$1250	\$1300	\$1350	\$1400	\$1450	\$1500	\$1550	\$1600	\$1650	\$1700	\$1750

Other Fees:

Columbarium Niche Opening/Closing Fee - \$120.00

Ossuary Placement - \$150.00

Ossuary Memorialization 12x12 Inscription - \$300.00

Sheet Bronze Urn - \$210.00

Archival Fee for buried cremains within Cemetery Lot - \$50.00

Serenity Garden Plaque & Name Archival - ~~\$200.00~~ \$225.00

Name Archival Fee only - \$50.00

Podium Plaque in Chapel - ~~\$100.00~~ \$75.00

Payment Plan Administrative Fee - \$50.00

Memorial Bench (Bench, Concrete Foundation and Plaque)- ~~\$3,200~~ \$700.00

Memorial Bench Plaque (Cemetery Chapel Only) - \$350.00