

RECOMMENDATION RESOLUTION

Veteran Affairs Advisory Committee

Recommendation Number: 2025-01RR – VAAC

Recommendations regarding Veteran Issues

WHEREAS, the Veteran Affairs Advisory Committee has identified critical issues that impact San Marcos Veterans in the areas of housing, transportation and healthcare access, and recognition of service; and

WHEREAS, the City of San Marcos and the Hays County Veterans Service Office, along with various non-profit organizations, plays a vital role in addressing the needs of the Veteran community in San Marcos by providing essential services, resources, and support; and

WHEREAS, these organizations are currently facing significant challenges in meeting the growing and diverse needs of the more than 2,587 Veterans residing in San Marcos, who rely on these services for assistance with benefits, housing, healthcare, employment, and other critical areas; and

WHEREAS, the demand for these services has surpassed the capacity of existing resources, creating barriers for Veterans seeking timely and effective support, which could have adverse effects on their well-being, reintegration, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Veteran Affairs Advisory Committee recognizes the critical need to enhance support for Veterans service organizations to ensure they are adequately resourced to address the growing and diverse needs of the local Veteran population; and

WHEREAS, Veterans are experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity due to a variety of factors including increases in rental rates, property taxes, cost of living, homeowners insurance, and home repair costs; and

WHEREAS, Veterans residing in San Marcos and assigned to the Austin and San Antonio VA Clinics face significant challenges in accessing direct and reliable transportation to and from San Marcos, often requiring multiple transfers, extended delays, and complex travel arrangements that hinder their ability to attend necessary medical appointments in a timely manner; and

WHEREAS, the lack of a seamless and efficient transportation system imposes undue stress and hardship on disabled Veterans, many of whom rely on regular healthcare visits and specialized treatments provided by the Austin and San Antonio VA Clinics to maintain their health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, the absence of direct transportation options exacerbates the physical, emotional, and logistical barriers faced by Veterans, potentially leading to missed appointments, delayed care, and diminished quality of life; and

WHEREAS, addressing this critical transportation gap aligns with the Guiding Principles of the City of San Marcos' Comprehensive Master Plan to ensure that existing and new development throughout the community has sufficient infrastructure and access to critical amenities to support and connect residents, employees, and visitors now and in the future through multiple modes of transportation; and

WHEREAS, the City of San Marcos bears the responsibility for the maintenance and preservation of the Hays County Veterans Memorial, a revered site dedicated to honoring the ultimate sacrifice made by Veterans from Hays County who were Killed In Action; and

WHEREAS, the Hays County Veterans Memorial stands as a solemn reminder of the courage, service, and dedication of these individuals, serving as a place for reflection, remembrance, and community gatherings to pay respect to their legacy; and

WHEREAS, the memorial is in need of essential repairs and ongoing upkeep to ensure its structural integrity, aesthetic appeal, and the preservation of its historical and emotional significance for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, the City of San Marcos recognizes the importance of maintaining this sacred site as a symbol of the community's gratitude and commitment to honoring the sacrifices of its Veterans and their families; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Veteran Affairs Advisory Committee recommends that the San Marcos City Council:

1. Allocate funds to hire at least one trained Case Worker specializing in Veteran issues to serve as a central point of contact, coordinate services with other Veteran service organizations, government entities, and address critical needs such as housing, health, and transportation.
2. Explore, coordinate and implement transportation solutions to ensure reliable and equitable access for Veterans traveling to and from VA health appointments in the Austin-San Antonio corridor; to include discussions with Capital Area and Alamo Area Council of Governments and other transportation solutions.
3. Establish a dedicated budget for essential repairs, improvements, and ongoing maintenance of the Hays County Veterans Memorial to preserve its infrastructure, safety, and historical significance for future generations.
4. Seek financial support from Hays County to enhance efforts to meet the needs of Veterans and to maintain the Hays County Veterans Memorial as a symbol of collective respect and remembrance.