

## **City of San Marcos**

### **Guiding Principles for the 89th Legislative Session**

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The City of San Marcos recognizes the need for an active state legislative program to ensure the interests of the City's residents and businesses are protected and enhanced. The City Council has created a focused legislative platform, which reflects the core values found in the City Charter's statement of Goals and the Comprehensive Plan Vision Statements. As directed by the City Council, the City will participate in the 89th Texas Legislative Session (2025) process through monitoring and actively advocating for or against legislation when appropriate to support or safeguard the interests of the City.

The following "Guiding Principles" serve as direction for staff and the City's legislative advocates on key issues.

#### **Preemption & Local Control**

- Oppose legislation that would erode municipal authority, impose unfunded mandates, or provide for state preemption of municipal authority in any way.
- Oppose legislation that would remove city authority to plan and zone in city limits and city ETJ, leading to a lack of thoughtful, effective long-term planning services ultimately being more expensive and less efficient for all citizens.
- Support legislation to amend Section 361.096 (a)(1) of the Texas Health and Safety Code to allow local regulation of the use of disposable packages and containers for the purposes of environmental protection, preservation of endangered species, flood prevention, and to promote the health and safety of wildlife and livestock.
- Oppose legislative action that interferes with the ability of the City to determine how best to effectively operate local programs, services and activities or negatively impacts a municipally owned electric utility's ability to provide low cost services to its communities.
- Support the continuance of the City's ability to advocate on behalf of community through trade associations and consultants.

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- Support legislation to amend Section 3000.002 of the Texas Government Code to modify regulations regarding building products, materials or methods.
- Advocate to change the application of area median income (AMI) standards used by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) to ensure they accurately reflect local economic conditions. Support efforts to evaluate and address the impact of state and federal requirements on the accessibility of low-income housing for residents.
- Advocate for measures requiring prior consent from local governing bodies before any agency or entity can remove themselves from the tax roll, protecting fiscal stability.

### **Revenue and Finance**

- Oppose legislation that would impose another revenue and/or tax cap of any type, negatively expand appraisal caps, erode the local sales tax base, impose additional state fees or costs on city services, amend current taxing authority without replacing lost revenue with a fixed revenue stream, or erode the ability of a city to issue debt.
- Support legislation that will exempt more costs from the newly imposed 3% cap which would assist the City's ability to deliver public safety, infrastructure, and other critical services.
- Support legislation that would simplify the effective tax rate calculation for notice purposes only and make beneficial amendments to the equity appraisal statute.
- Support legislative action that broadens the use of state cable franchise PEG (public, educational, government) funds for municipal operations.
- Support legislative action that enables local officials to access resources to provide quality police, fire, emergency management and medical services, and community efforts.
- Support legislative action to allow utilization of revenue from the Hotel Occupancy Tax to maintain our unique and beautiful river basin.

### **Land Use**

- Oppose legislation that would erode municipal authority, including: annexation, eminent domain, zoning, regulatory

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takings, tree preservation, building codes, and short-term rentals.

- Support legislation to enhance cities' ability to protect historical, cultural and natural resources and property values by implementing development standards.
- Support the maintenance of cities' ability to regulate lot sizes.

### **Economic Development**

- Support the developments on and near the San Marcos Regional Airport, FM 110, and adjacent railroad which will provide intermodal freight capacity and a key link to national transportation infrastructure as well as bring thousands of jobs to the area.
- Increase action to promote strategic economic development and provide incentives to attract and retain businesses and that supports a strong local economy.
- Support the maintenance of economic development incentives, including those that stimulate the local economy, promote job creation, and attract primary employers. This includes film incentives and legislation that grants local elected officials flexibility to offer targeted tax relief aligned with community needs.

### **Workforce Training**

- Support the increase of funding for workforce housing for workers who are the backbone of the City of San Marcos, strengthen and enhance veteran housing programs, and increase the availability of affordable housing for all.
- Support legislative funding for workforce training and programs including skills development funding and customized training to employ veterans and civilians, including career transitioning and second career adults.
- Support legislative funding for programs pertaining to small business education and entrepreneurial ideas.
- Support legislation that builds more equitable, accessible, and affordable childcare systems.

### **Water Resources & Environmental Protection**

- Support legislative action to: protect the City's authority to utilize

reclaimed water; encourage protection and preservation of spring flows supporting the pristine San Marcos River; protect the City's investment in water infrastructure for current and future use; sustain the goals of the Alliance Regional Water Authority (formally the Hays Caldwell Public Utility Agency); and promote and develop alternative energy sources.

- Support legislation that provides funding incentives to promote cooperative planning of wastewater treatment plants, ensuring guidance on regionalization by TCEQ is codified in statute, while preserving the City's discretion to determine its ability to serve.

### **Transportation**

- Support legislative action to increase, while protecting the environment, funding for better connectivity and to better keep pace with the City's priority infrastructure repair, maintenance and construction needs for air, highway, transit, pedestrian, and rail transportation.
- Support legislative action that would allow for greater flexibility by cities to fund local transportation projects.
- Oppose legislation or rules that would erode the authority of a city to be adequately compensated for the use of its rights-of-ways.
- Support legislative action to fund the San Marcos Regional Airport.

### **Electricity**

- Support legislation to ensure the state's electrical grid is reliable and costs are fairly distributed.
- Support legislative action that allows municipally owned electric utilities to better provide reliable and safe electricity at reasonable prices while supporting local communities.
- Support legislation that preserves the authority of municipally owned utilities in cities with populations under 100,000 to make payments or contributions to their general funds, supporting essential municipal services such as public safety, roads, parks, libraries, and other community services, while respecting legal requirements for fund use.

### **Education**

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- Support legislative action to fully fund and strengthen P-16 education, including funding for Texas State University's five-year strategic plan and full day pre-k program.
- Support legislative action to fund youth health initiatives and Citywide Out-of-School Time programs.
- Support legislative action to increase funding for adult education and literacy.
- Support legislative funding for Texas Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) for babies and toddlers with developmental delays.
- Support legislative action to fund School Safety Action Plans and the continued emergency responder training provided by the Texas State Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) program.

**Mental Health:**

- Support legislative action to coordinate and expand the delivery of mental health care services.
- Support state resource funding to address core issues of homelessness such as mental health, poverty, and drug addiction.

**Technology**

- Support legislation relating to cybersecurity for information resources that would prohibit political subdivisions from making ransomware payments.