

RESOLUTION 2020-247R

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN MARCOS, TEXAS, ADOPTING GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE CITY'S 2021 FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATIVE ACTION PROGRAM; AND DECLARING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

RECITALS:

1. The City of San Marcos works with federal and state elected officials and federal and state agencies on issues of importance to San Marcos for the achievement of the City's strategic goals.


2. The City Council recognizes the need for an active federal and state legislative action program to ensure that the interests of the City's residents and businesses are protected and enhanced and wishes to establish guiding principles for this program.

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


PART 1. The attached Guiding Principles for the 2021 City of San Marcos Federal and State Legislative Action Program are hereby approved and adopted.

PART 2. This resolution is in full force and effect from and after the date of consideration.

ADOPTED on November 17, 2020.


Jane Hughson
Mayor

Attest


Tammy K. Cook
Interim City Clerk

Guiding Principles for the 2021 City of San Marcos Federal Policy Program

Introduction:

The City of San Marcos recognizes the need for an active federal policy program to ensure that the interests of the City's residents and businesses are protected and enhanced. The City Council's federal outreach reflects the core values found in the City Charter's Statement of Goals and the City Council's Strategic Initiatives. As directed by the City Council, the City will participate in advancing the City's goals with the federal Congressional delegation and with federal agencies involved in the funding and regulation of assets and services provided by the City of San Marcos to the people of our community.

Guiding Principles:

COVID-19 Relief and Stimulus Efforts

- Support any COVID 19 or post-COVID 19 related response/recovery/stimulus efforts at the federal level. This includes assisting with the implementation of federal funds secured via Congressional legislation such as the CARES Act. It also includes positioning the City to successfully pursue additional streams of federal funding that may arise throughout the course of the current crisis. This includes Congressionally-directed funding, as well as funding that is distributed by federal and state agencies.

Disaster Recovery Efforts

- Support disaster recovery efforts by working with members of the Congressional delegation, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) officials, and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) officials on administering already obtained disaster related assistance and vital information on how the City could pursue additional federal funding through various federal programs at FEMA, HUD, the Economic Development Administration, etc. Additionally, in case of properties that experience repeated flooding to pursue alternatives that provide permanent solutions for both families and property owners, to include but not be limited to the acquisition or trades for said property(ies).
- Support future flood mitigation strategies and regional drainage solutions by working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to evaluate large scale river overflow project potential on the Upper Blanco River.

- Support federal funding solutions to develop regional partnerships to maximize solutions for both current and future flood resiliency, to create a community resilient to regional and localized flooding events, to prevent future damages from upstream and downstream development, and to improve overall storm water quality. This will include continuing to work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) about potential federal streams of funding related to watershed protection along the Blanco River.

Transportation

- Support potential federal legislative action on infrastructure to provide necessary transportation funding, while protecting the environment and advancing the economic development goals of our community, for better connectivity and to better keep pace with the City's priority infrastructure needs for air, highway, transit, pedestrian, bicycle, and rail transportation.
- Support the continued development of the municipal airport including: seeking federal funding through Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Airport Improvement Program (AIP) to help address the steadily deteriorating condition of concrete that comprises the taxiway and ramp at the airport which will also include working with TXDOT aviation; utilizing our Congressional delegation to advocate for higher prioritization of airport infrastructure needs amongst U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and FAA leadership; helping to secure vital airport operational funding through COVID-related relief bills such as the CARES Act; promoting new private flight training activity at facility; maintaining adequate staffing of the control tower through federal legislation seeking to address such shortages; and protecting funding for the FAA's Federal Contract Tower (FCT) program through the Fiscal Year 2021 budget cycle.
- Support efforts for San Marcos as the new Direct Recipient for federal and state transit funding allocated to the San Marcos urbanized area. This also includes engaging directly with the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) National and Regional Offices to explore other potential federal funding opportunities. Work in conjunction with third party transit trade groups such as the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) to promote greater transit funding in the upcoming Surface Transportation reauthorization bill. Help secure vital transit operational funding through COVID-related relief bills such as the CARES Act. Identify additional non-federal streams of funding for City's transit priorities which include, but are not limited to, an Intermodal Transit Facility.
- Support transportation infrastructure through identifying and advocating for policies in the reauthorization of federal surface transportation legislation, also known as the Federal Highway bill, which now must be reauthorized by September 30, 2021.
- Support efforts related to the further development of efficient and economical mass transit options in the Austin – San Antonio Corridor. This includes closely

monitoring federal efforts to impact transit through broader infrastructure legislation.

- Support efforts related to regional commuter rail, such as: highlighting its importance to the region and the commitment of the City to commuter rail with the Administration, the Congressional delegation, and appropriate agencies; supporting rail development policies in the surface transportation bill; and advocating for project specific federal funding.

Education and Workforce Development

- Support educational initiatives, including Pre-K through 16 education (ages 3-25), including higher education and career readiness, and out-of-school-time programs promoting youth development. This will include identifying related opportunities and challenges as Congress moves forward with the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA).
- Support adult education initiatives including facilitating partnerships with the Gary Jobs Corps and other efforts to ensure that citizens have the skills necessary for the jobs of the future. This will include working with Gary Job Corps, the national Job Corps program, and our Congressional delegation to explore ways to expand the benefits of the Job Corps program to adults beyond the current program's age parameters. This will also include identifying opportunities through the U.S. Department of Labor's national apprenticeship initiative.
- Support City's and greater community efforts to engage with U.S. Army Futures Command in Austin and seek to identify federal funding opportunities that may arise as a result.

Neighborhoods, Workforce Housing and Sustainable Development

- Support federal initiatives that promote diverse housing choices for the community's local work force. This includes identifying best practices by engaging with Congressional offices, federal agencies, national associations, third-party groups and other municipalities.
- Support continued federal funding for the Community Development Block Grant Program; help secure vital supplemental CDBG funding through COVID-related relief bills such as the CARES Act; support workforce housing development assisting low to moderate income residents; housing rehabilitation, veterans' housing and employment programs, and increase the availability of affordable housing.
- Support Sustainable Development through the continuation of grant programs such as CDBG, HOME, Livable Communities Act, Choice Neighborhoods, energy efficiency and water conservation initiatives, and other programs that promote

innovative planning to further community development, while sustaining environmental, economic and cultural resources.

- Support federal programs seeking to address rising homelessness crises across the country. Identify related federal funds to address homelessness issues in Central Texas.

River and Environmental Protection

- Support federal action to encourage the protection and preservation of spring flows and the rivers in San Marcos; to protect the community's rare environmental resources and assets; provide new sources of funding for water infrastructure and water conservation and wastewater treatment and reuse including the WaterSMART grant program through the U.S. Department of Interior; support reasonable groundwater district rules related to the length of groundwater permits and timeframes to develop related infrastructure; protect the City's investment in water infrastructure for current and future use; and promote and develop alternative energy sources.
- Support opportunities to address wastewater reuse issues at the federal level. This includes providing support for existing targeted grant opportunities and identifying other potential funding streams or policies that impact these activities.

Economic Development

- Support Congressional action to promote economic development; identify and pursue related economic development funding opportunities through the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA); provide incentives to cities to attract and retain businesses; increase funding for workforce training and programs to employ veterans; strengthen Pre-K to 16 education; and increase funding for adult education and literacy.
- Support City and broader community efforts related to the proposed San Marcos Air, Rail, and Truck (SMART) Terminal, an intermodal industrial park that will serve the needs of light industrial manufacturing, logistics/distribution, air cargo, and aviation support businesses.

Public Safety

- Support federal grant programs that advance police and fire public safety programs and overall emergency management operations for assistance with equipment, training and personnel. This includes working with the Congressional delegation to help reduce inefficiencies in federal grant program solicitation and execution at the U.S. Department of Justice.

City of San Marcos Guiding Principles for the 87th Texas Legislative Session

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 87th Texas Legislative Session (2021) 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.

COVID-19 Relief and Stimulus Efforts

- Support any COVID 19 or post-COVID 19 related response/recovery/stimulus efforts at the state and federal level. It includes positioning the City to successfully pursue additional streams of funding that may arise throughout the course of the current crisis. This includes Congressionally-directed funding, as well as funding that is distributed by federal and state agencies.

Preemption & Local Control

- Oppose legislation that would erode municipal authority, impose unfunded mandates, or provide for state preemption of municipal authority in any way.
- 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 legislation to make beneficial amendments to Section 3000.002 of the Texas Government Code to modify regulations regarding building products, materials or methods.
- Support legislation to make beneficial amendments to Section 212.009 and subsequent sections of the Texas Government Code to modify the approval procedure for a plan or plat.

Revenue and Finance

- Oppose legislation that would impose a 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 3.5% revenue cap and provide a more workable timeline for the tax-setting process.
- 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.
- Support funding to Texas State Library and Archives Commission to leverage statewide buying power to acquire e-books and make them available statewide through TexShare digital resource programs.

Land Use

- Oppose legislation that would erode municipal authority, including: annexation, eminent domain, zoning, regulatory 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 legislative action to increase 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.

Economic Development

- Support the San Marcos Air & Rail Terminal (SMART) project 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.

Workforce Training

- 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.

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 prioritize and develop alternative energy sources.
- Support legislation to establish a formal oil and gas pipeline routing approval process in Texas to include public input and environmental considerations similar to the process managed under the Public Utility Commission.

- Support legislation requiring that prior to issuance of a new TPDES permit for small package wastewater treatment plants all regional options shall first be exhausted.

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, and other multi-modal transportation methods.
- Support legislative action that would allow for greater flexibility by cities to fund local transportation projects.
- Oppose state or federal 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 infrastructure projects at the San Marcos Regional Airport, which will also include working with TXDOT Aviation and Texas Congressional members to advocate for higher prioritization of airport infrastructure needs.

Electric Utility

- Support legislative action that allows municipally owned electric utilities to better provide reliable and safe electricity at reasonable prices while supporting local communities.

Education

- 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 continue 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.
- Support legislation to continue to fund and promote skilled labor and trade certification programs.

Mental Health & Homelessness:

- Support legislative action to coordinate and expand the delivery of mental health care services.
- Support legislation, incentives, and state funding sources for diversion and assistance programs.
- Support legislative action to expand social services to people experiencing homelessness.

Technology

- Support legislation relating to cybersecurity for information resources including keeping confidential and not subject to disclosure under the Public Information Act certain information related to a city's cybersecurity technology.

Designations

- Support legislative action to designate the City as the "Mermaid Capital of Texas".