

Chapter 22 CEMETERIES¹

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, gravemarker 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 cremains of one person.

Section means a group of contiguous multiple blocks.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19; Ord. No. 2022-93 , § 1, 10-18-22)

Sec. 22.002. Reserved.

Sec. 22.003. Rights reserved to city; use of roadways.

(a) Under this chapter, the rights perpetually reserved to the city are the right to:

¹Editor's note(s)—Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, adopted June 18, 2019, amended chapter 22 in its entirety to read as herein set out. Former chapter 22, §§ 22.001—22.015, pertained to similar subject matter. See Code Comparative Table for complete derivation.

Cross reference(s)—Cemetery board, § 2.251 et seq.

State law reference(s)—Cemeteries, V.T.C.A., Health and Safety Code § 713.001 et seq.

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- (1) Enlarge, reduce, replat or change the boundaries or grading of the cemetery, including changing the locations of or removing or regrading roads, drives or walks.
 - (2) Lay, maintain and operate, alter or change pipelines and gutters for sprinkler systems or drainage.
 - (3) Use cemetery property for cemetery purposes.
 - (4) Ingress and egress over lots for the purposes of maintenance and passage to or from other lots.
 - (5) Close any road, walk or drive at any time.
 - (6) Designate the location of any flowers, shrubs or trees planted or cultivated on a lot pursuant to section 22.014(b) of this chapter.
- (b) It is unlawful for any person to ride or drive any vehicle in the cemetery except on the improved roads, drives or walkways. This does not prohibit the operation of mowing vehicles used in the maintenance of the cemetery grounds or vehicles necessary to the opening and closing of lots.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19; Ord. No. 2021-48 , § 1, 8-3-21)

Sec. 22.004. Admission.

- (a) The cemetery will be open daily for visiting, care of graves and other appropriate uses from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. during Central Standard Time, and from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. during Central Daylight Savings Time. It is unlawful for any person, other than a city employee or cemetery caretaker on official business, to enter or remain within the cemetery at any time when the cemetery is not open.
- (b) It is unlawful for any person to enter the cemetery at any location other than an authorized entrance.
- (c) The caretaker will be on duty at the cemetery during normal business hours from Monday through Friday of each week.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19)

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 purchasers' 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 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.

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- (f) The price of each cemetery lot, mausoleum crypt, and columbarium niche reserved for use by a certificate for the right of interment is established by the city council.
 - (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 ten 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 ten or more certificates are not permitted unless approved by the San Marcos Cemetery Commission.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19; Ord. No. 2021-48 , § 1, 8-3-21)

Sec. 22.006. Transfer of certificates.

- (a) The purchase 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.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19; Ord. No. 2021-48 , § 1, 8-3-21)

Sec. 22.007. Repurchase of certificates by city.

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 a certificate at the price designated by the city council and on file in the city clerk's office at the time of original purchase.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19; Ord. No. 2021-48 , § 1, 8-3-21)

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.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19; Ord. No. 2021-48 , § 1, 8-3-21)

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.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19; Ord. No. 2021-48 , § 1, 8-3-21; Ord. No. 2022-93 , § 1, 10-18-22)

Sec. 22.011. Disinterments.

- (a) Disinterment of a body in the cemetery is permitted only by order of a court of competent jurisdiction or written permission from a person having authority to permit the disinterment.
- (b) A mortuary performing a disinterment must secure the gravesite, must provide for the cleaning of the gravesite and must remove all debris, fill or equipment resulting from or used by the mortuary.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19)

Sec. 22.012. Enclosure of lots; maintenance.

- (a) It is unlawful for a person to place or construct an enclosure including a fence, coping, hedge or ditch around any lot in the cemetery, except as provided in sections 22.013 and 22.014.
- (b) The person responsible for installing or maintaining an enclosure that is damaged to the extent that it is unsightly or hazardous must repair or remove the enclosure within ten days of receipt of written notice from the caretaker, or the caretaker is authorized to remove the enclosure.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19; Ord. No. 2021-48 , § 1, 8-3-21)

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 for the lots or certificates associated with 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.

(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.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19; Ord. No. 2021-48 , § 1, 8-3-21)

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 has been fully paid and the cemetery lot certificate has been delivered to the purchaser.
 - (2) The owner of a cemetery lot or the owner's 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 the 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 the city staff regarding any installation or failure to comply with any city ordinances herein may result in corrective measures taken at the expense of the responsible party.
 - (8) All monuments in the Dixon Addition, Section I, must be stone, flat bronze, granite, or concrete.
 - (9) All monuments placed in areas of the cemetery other than Dixon Addition, Section 1, 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) The maintenance of all monuments in the cemetery is the responsibility of the lot owner or the owner's surviving family members or descendants. This maintenance will include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. The cleaning of the monument;
 - b. Ensuring that the monument is seated properly; and
 - c. Repairing any damage to the monument or the structure of the monument, including replacement, if necessary.
 - (11) 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 lot owner, or the owner's surviving family members or descendants, if known, advising of the necessary maintenance. If the lot owner or the owner's surviving family members or descendants 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 the lot owner or the owner's surviving family members or descendants, 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) Animals 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.
- (Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19; Ord. No. 2021-48 , § 1, 8-3-21; Ord. No. 2022-93 , § 1, 10-18-22)

Sec. 22.015. Miscellaneous prohibitions; penalty for violations.

- (a) In addition to any other prohibited or unlawful conduct set forth in this chapter, entry into and use of the cemetery shall be subject to the restrictions in this section.
- (1) The consumption or open display of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
 - (2) Loitering, loud music, excessive vehicle noise or other behavior that disrupts the peace is prohibited.
 - (3) All pets must be on leash or otherwise restrained in accordance with applicable ordinances.
 - (4) Smoking of cigarettes, including e-cigarettes that create a vapor in any manor or any form, is prohibited.
 - (5) Water is for landscape irrigation use only. Watering is allowed only by hand-held hose or by sprinkler connected to a hose while the person that connected the sprinkler is present and only on the days and

times designated in the approved irrigation conservation plan for the cemetery. No other temporary or permanent irrigation systems or connections shall be allowed.

- (6) Vehicles may only be parked on paved streets or drive aisles. No vehicles are allowed in the cemetery except during cemetery hours. Vehicles parked in violation of this subsection may be towed at the owner's expense.
- (7) Visitors to the cemetery shall comply with all applicable laws.
- (b) A violation of this section is a Class C misdemeanor, punishable by a fine as provided in section 1.05 of the San Marcos City Code.

(Ord. No. 2019-17 , § 1, 6-18-19)