

Resolution Adopting the City of Corpus Christi's State Legislative Agenda for the 89th Texas Legislature

WHEREAS, the 89th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature will convene on January 14, 2025 for 140 days; and

WHEREAS, the City of Corpus Christi, its residents, businesses, industry, governments, agencies, and institutions benefit significantly from state government agency programs and services provided in the community and are significantly impacted by legislative activities; and

WHEREAS, during every state legislative session and congress, thousands of bills are filed and many have the potential to either directly or indirectly impact the City of Corpus Christi (City), its programs and services, its citizens, the tax base, and community needs; and

WHEREAS, The City's Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Department is responsible for monitoring state and federal governmental activities, developing legislative priorities approved by City Council, managing the City's legislative consultants at Focused Advocacy in Austin, TX, and coordinating legislative activities with other public and private sector entities and municipal advocacy organizations; and

WHEREAS, to be successful, requires close contact and constant communication with legislative leadership, external legislative consultants, statewide municipal advocacy organizations, and statewide partners, community leadership, and community stakeholders.

WHEREAS, it is necessary to provide guidance for the City's officers and representatives in conducting the City's state and federal legislative efforts and relations;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Corpus Christi, Texas:

SECTION 1. The City Council generally SUPPORTS state legislation and/or administrative actions that:

- Protects policies previously established by City leadership through Charter, ordinances, resolutions and master plans
- Furthers local control;
- Protect and enhance City revenues;
- Provide revenue or eliminate mandates that reduce or eliminates costs to the City; and
- Provides increased educational opportunities and job creation/retention for the citizens of Corpus Christi and the Coastal Bend region through the military, the Port of Corpus Christi authority, public schools, community colleges and universities.

SECTION 2. The City Council generally OPPOSES state legislation and/or administrative actions that:

- Nullify or undermine the City's policies contained in existing provisions of the Charter, ordinances, resolutions, and master plans, unless such changes expand the City's ability to manage its own affairs;
- Diminishes the authority of cities to regulate and manage their growth and development;
- Imposes unfunded mandates that requires any expenditures by the City unless all costs are fully reimbursed by the mandating governmental entity
- Undermine the principle of home rule and local control by the City; and
- Results in the loss of revenue or negatively impacts potential revenue growth to the City;

SECTION 3. The City Council adopts the following policy issues as its agenda for the 89th Regular Session and any potential Special Called Sessions of the Texas Legislature.

A. STATE PRIORITIES:

Preserve Local Decision-Making

Supports the principles of local decision-making from residents, stakeholders and local elected officials who are most directly responsive to their neighbors. Oppose undermining the principle of home rule and local control and oppose legislation that diminishes the authority of cities to regulate and manage their growth and development.

Oppose state preemption of municipal authority to protect residential neighborhoods from activities that would degrade homeowner property values, and more specifically, oppose eroding municipal authority related to development matters, including annexation, eminent domain, land use planning and zoning, building codes and inspections, and tree preservation.

Opposes legislation, especially revenue caps, that undermines the authority of local elected officials to establish budgets and generate revenues through various authorized taxes, and user fees, to improve quality of life and secure the essential municipal services, personnel, facilities, and initiatives prioritized by local taxpayers.

Oppose legislation that would erode the ability of a city to issue debt. Oppose legislation taking away local authority to draft bond and referendum ballot language and interjecting the State of Texas, an agency or statewide elected official into a local election process.

Support increased transparency for Municipalities in the sales tax audit process that results in any type of audit adjustment or refund. Support improvements to the appraisal and appraisal appeals process to align the refund interest charged with current municipal investment returns.

Oppose state legislation that would erode the authority of a city to be adequately compensated for the use of its rights-of-way and/or erode municipal authority over the management and control of rights-of-way.

Oppose legislation that would prohibit the City from using public funds to communicate with legislators or state agencies and advocate on behalf of the community through:

- Participation in grassroots advocacy efforts
- Membership with municipal associations
- Employment of in-house intergovernmental relations staff; and
- Engagement of legislative consultants.

Support legislation that would allow cities to remove themselves from an Emergency Service District when the city can provide service to the area.

Port of Corpus Christi

Supports legislation that preserves the power of the City of Corpus Christi in appointments to the governing board of the Port of Corpus Christi. Oppose Legislation that would expand the authority of the Port of Corpus Christi beyond their role and responsibility to maintain and promote navigable commerce. Oppose legislation that would expand the unilateral economic development and real estate development authority of the Port of Corpus Christi.

Public Health

Support simplified reporting system and increased investment in public health IT Infrastructure needs to allow for real-time communication and disease surveillance between local health departments, point-of-care clinics, medical institutions, Emergency Medical Service providers, first responder agencies, Texas Department of State Health Services, Health and Human Services, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Support legislation to increase funding for public health, health care coverage, and health services access for Texans, to address chronic illnesses impacting South Texas.

Protect and strengthen access to behavioral health care (mental health and substance use disorder services) to create healthier communities as well as a healthier workforce.

Public Safety

Support funding to increase existing police grant programs, including the Justice Programs under the Governor's office, and create new grant programs that assist law enforcement agencies with technology costs, such as body camera-associated storage costs and personnel.

Support legislation that requires local governments to coordinate in delivering consistent, high-quality emergency services, such as accreditation for all local law enforcement agencies, standardized training & protocol, and establishing incident command agreements.

Support funding to increase existing fire grant programs, which provide for personnel,

training, and equipment.

Support for Military Community and Installations

Support legislation that protects the investments made by taxpayers in facilities, equipment, infrastructure, and training of active duty and civilian personnel to fulfill the critical national security missions performed at military installations throughout Texas.

Support Legislative Appropriations of at least \$75 million for the Defense Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant (DEAAG) Program.

Oppose legislation to offer tax exemptions for wind energy developments in close proximity to military installations. Ensure provisions from Senate Bill 277 (85th Regular Session) are included in any future economic development tax credit programs.

Disaster Assistance, Emergency Management Reform, and Texas Windstorm Insurance Association (TWIA)

Support funding to assist local governments with recovery, mitigation, and resiliency projects following natural disasters.

Support the continuation of local government ability to pass ordinances and issue orders that address needs in an emergency or disaster.

Support windstorm insurance reform that will provide affordable, equitable rates for the Texas coast, such as developing a statewide disaster insurance policy. Oppose unnecessary rate hikes from TWIA.

Support the relocation of TWIA agency headquarters to a Tier I Coastal community.

Environment and Utilities

Support continued funding for air quality monitoring and mitigation projects to enable Corpus Christi to remain in compliance with federal Clean Air Standards.

Support improvements to Texas Water Development Board Regional Water Planning process, the unified cost model, and other plan requirements.

Support legislation that enables the city to permit, develop, and fund drought-resistant water supply sources including low-interest loans, grants, or other financing tools.

Support legislation that protects municipal utility investments made by ratepayers for treatment plants, conveyance systems, and infrastructure.

Support legislation and funding that provides for the development of resilient and sustainable utility infrastructure, such as flood mitigation, LED light conversion, and trash interceptors.

Support legislation and funding, including grants, to develop stormwater and flood mitigation infrastructure.

Education and Economic Competitiveness

Protect all economic development tools that attract new jobs and companies to Corpus Christi, including but not limited to the Skills Development Fund, Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT), Sales and Use Tax Exemptions, Enterprise and Tax Increment Financing Districts, industrial district agreements, Public Improvement Districts, the film incentive fund, and other statutes related to economic development.

Oppose legislation that would limit the authority of Type A or Type B economic development corporations statewide.

Oppose legislation limiting or eliminating the current flexibility of the Major Events Reimbursement Program as a tool for cities to attract or host major events and conventions.

Support increased educational opportunities and job creation/retention for the residents of Corpus Christi and the Coastal Bend region through the Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corporation, Port of Corpus Christi Authority, public schools, Del Mar College (DMC), and Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC).

Support funding for Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi to construct a Multipurpose Community Center to host student convocations, graduations, UIL events, athletic events, and other programming.

Support legislation and funding to construct a Corpus Christi Aviation Education Campus for higher education use at Corpus Christi International Airport.

Support legislation to allow for competitive procurement of the professional services provided by professional engineers and architects by home-rule municipalities.

Support increasing the state's share of public education funding that would reduce the property tax burden of local taxpayers.

The City supports enhanced formula and non-formula funding for Del Mar College and TAMUCC and legislation authorizing requests for capital construction assistance program (CCAP) projects and increases in the Higher Education Funds (HEF).

The city supports TAMUCC's request for funding to address nursing and mental health challenges by facilitating doctorate student entry into the workforce and for research and development related to the Texas Resilience and Innovation for Ports (TRIP) initiative.

Meet industry workforce needs through alignment and expansion of trade and technical skills training, assistantships, apprenticeships, internships, and work-based learning opportunities, along with funding for workforce Dual Credit programs, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) and industry-specific certifications and degrees.

Infrastructure & Transportation

Support legislation and funding that provides for the development of resilient and

sustainable transportation infrastructure.

Support funding necessary to complete the Regional Parkway – North Padre Island, including the second island causeway.

Support legislation that would enhance community safety initiatives such as Vision Zero by allowing cities more flexibility to reduce speed limits on local streets for the overall safety of all road users.

Protect the local prioritization of policies and funding for improved transportation and additional transit options. Support increased funding to complete the local multi-modal transportation plans, including the proposed North Padre Island Mobility Plan

Utilize new project delivery tools to allow for innovative and smart infrastructure financing and the use of innovative technologies that would not further obligate state funds.

Develop transportation systems as part of an integrated, multi-modal transportation network to maximize our state's capacity to move people, goods, and services throughout the state.

Support legislation and funding that implements the recommendations of the TXDOT Urban Air Mobility Advisory Committee's recommendations included in their final report dated September 2022, including recommendations for technology, airspace and infrastructure, safety and security, and commerce and community integration.

Support legislation that funds and enables broadband infrastructure and universal access across the city.

Tourism

Support retention of full State tourism funding.

Protect existing statutory authority to use the state's Project Financing Zone (PFZ) and Qualified Hotel Project (QHP) revenues and oppose any restrictions, limitations or changes which would alter the existing authority.

Support positive changes to local Hotel Occupancy Tax Laws to include expansion of sporting facilities category to include additional sports activities. Oppose proposals to use local Hotel Occupancy Taxes for non-tourism purposes.

Oppose legislation that would restrict public beach access on local, state, or federal property in a manner inconsistent with the provisions of our city charter and ordinances.

Homelessness and Affordable Housing

The City supports legislation and funding that allows for flexible and innovative solutions to create local options to increase the supply of affordable housing for low to moderate income families.

Support legislation that requires city consent for a housing finance corporation to operate

within the city and prohibits housing finance corporations from taking action that would remove property from the tax rolls without the approval of the governing body of the jurisdiction in which the property is located.

Support funding to create and rehabilitate units in federal housing subsidy programs and create additional housing, shelter, and service options for low-income and homeless populations, including youth who are aging out of the foster care system.

SECTION 4. ENDORSEMENTS. The City of Corpus Christi will coordinate with the following local stakeholders to endorse legislative priorities to promote the overall health and prosperity of the Coastal Bend region, provided they do not conflict with the City's own legislative agenda. These entities may include, but not be limited to:

United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce
South Texas Military Task Force
Corpus Christi Convention and Visitors Bureau
Del Mar College
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corporation
Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend
Coastal Bend Council of Governments

The following municipal advocacy or professional associations will adopt legislative priorities, which the City of Corpus Christi may endorse during the session, provided they do not conflict with the City's own legislative agenda. These entities may include, but not be limited to:

Texas Municipal League (TML)
Texas Municipal Retirement System (TMRS)
Texas Mayors of Military Communities (TMMC)
Texas Police Chiefs Association
Texas Fire Chiefs Association
Texas Court Clerks Association (TCCA)
Texas Municipal Courts Association
Texas Association of Municipal Information Officers (TAMIO)
Texas Chapter American Planning Association
Texas Coalition for Affordable Power (TCAP)
Transportation Advocates of Texas (TAOT)
Alliance for Interstate 69 Texas
Lone Star Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America (TXSWANA)
Texas Chapter of American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (TXASBPA)
Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants
Government Finance Officers Association of Texas (GFOAT)
Texas Chapter of the American Public Works Association

SECTION 5. The Legislative Priorities remain in effect until amended by the City Council.

SECTION 6. Staff is directed to distribute these State Legislative Priorities to the local

legislative delegation, legislative leadership, external legislative consultants, municipal advocacy organizations, federal and state municipal partners, community leadership, and community stakeholders to solicit their advice and support.

This resolution takes effect upon City Council approval on this the _____ day of _____, 2024.

ATTEST:

THE CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI

Rebecca Huerta
City Secretary

Paulette Guajardo
Mayor