



Legislative Agenda

86th Session of the Texas Legislature



Mayor Joe McComb



City Council

Rudy Garza Jr., Council Member At-Large
Paulette M. Guajardo, Council Member At-Large
Michael Hunter, Council Member At-Large
Everett Roy, Council Member District 1
Ben Molina, Council Member District 2
Roland Barrera, Council Member District 3
Greg Smith, Council Member District 4
Gil Hernandez, Council Member District 5

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Corpus Christi is the heart of the Coastal Bend. As the largest economic engine in the region, Corpus Christi is home to the booming industrial complex that makes up the fourth largest port in the country by tonnage, and the nation's largest energy port. The area continues to attract diverse industry partners, made up of refiners, chemical and bulk material manufactures, rig fabricators, energy providers, and supporting distribution and terminal facilities

Corpus Christi is consistently one of the top 10 tourist destinations in Texas with eight miles of Gulf beaches and 1.5 miles of bay beaches. Corpus Christi offers a wide variety of attractions including the Texas State Aquarium, the USS Lexington Museum on the Bay, the South Texas Botanical Gardens, Schlitterbahn, live music venues, arts, cultural and historic sites and Whataburger Field. If the outdoors is more your flavor, Corpus Christi is widely known for some of the best fishing and birding on the Gulf Coast. For 10 years running, in a nationwide contest, Corpus Christi has won the title of "America's Birdiest City". In addition to traditional accommodations, the municipally-owned Corpus Christi Marina is in the heart of downtown on the Bayfront and can accommodate transient and long-term boating tenants. With more than 8 million visitors coming to enjoy the Coastal Bend every year, travel and tourism generates an annual economic impact of \$1 billion to the Corpus Christi region. More than 1 in every 10 non-agricultural jobs in the region is related to the travel and tourism industry.



Corpus Christi is also proud to support our military installations, personnel, contractors, and spouses. Since 1942, the City has been home to Naval Air Station Corpus Christi which supports the missions of the Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA), Navy Training Wing 4, the Corpus Christi Army Depot (CCAD), Marine Air Training Support Group 22 (MATSG 22), and the



Defense Logistics Agency among the 41 tenant commands and activities on base. NASCC is one of two Navy bases in the country to conduct primary flight training for Student Naval Aviators. Training Air Wing Four has been training the world's premier military pilots for decades and has trained notable pilots such as Astronaut John Glenn, Senator John McCain, and President George H.W. Bush. In addition, the Coast Guard Sector/Air Station Corpus Christi is located at Valent Hall on the grounds

of Corpus Christi International Airport and is responsible for operations from Port O'Connor to the US/Mexico Border. According to the Texas Military Preparedness Commission, NASCC and CCAD are directly responsible for thousands of active duty, civilian and contractor jobs and has a \$3.62 billion impact on the economy of Texas.

To support the needs of the diverse industries located in the Corpus Christi area, we are proud to have two institutions of higher learning that are committed to providing the skilled workforce of tomorrow. Texas A&M University Corpus Christi is attracting a large percentage of first generation college students and is home to the Harte Research Institute and the Lone Star Unmanned Aerial System Center of Excellence and Innovation, one of only seven Federal Aviation Administration designated testing sites in the nation for unmanned aerial systems. Del Mar College is constantly growing and evolving to meet the workforce training needs of the area's industrial and business partners as well as delivering quality academic courses to prepare students pursuing a degree.

Corpus Christi is the regional water supplier to 18 cities and communities in seven counties in the Coastal Bend region (Aransas, Bee, Jim Wells, Kleberg, Live Oak, Nueces, and San Patricio counties). The customer base includes nearly 500,000 residents, as well as diverse businesses and industries. The City, the San Patricio Municipal Water District, the Port of Corpus Christi and Port Industries of the Coastal Bend are exploring an industrial desalination project to serve the expanded water supply demands of manufacturing and industrial growth in the Coastal Bend. Long-term, desal may become economically viable for municipal supply.



Despite a brighter economic outlook, Corpus Christi remains challenged by aging infrastructure, including deteriorating streets, federally mandated requirements to upgrade water distribution and wastewater treatment systems, and the ravages of Hurricane Harvey on homes, businesses, structures and facilities. Decisions made in previous decades to restrict revenue growth limited the financial resources necessary to keep up with the demand for essential municipal services and adequately plan for a growing community. With limited revenue growth, the city was not able to adequately invest in maintaining and modernizing City infrastructure, buildings and community services. Those decisions have impacted today's leaders and taxpayers. Residents today demand more from their City leaders – better and safer streets, appropriately staffed and equipped police, fire fighters and first responders, quality parks and libraries, responsive permitting, timely municipal services, and investment in economic incentives for better paying, job creating industries

During the 86th Session of the Texas Legislature, the City of Corpus Christi will strive to protect local, community-based decision-making to serve our residents, our neighbors, our businesses, and our industries in the most efficient manner. Our leaders need the flexibility to be responsive to local needs and prioritize the essential services and programs the City delivers on a daily basis.



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PRIORITIES

Preserving Local Decision-Making

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

The City strongly opposes legislation, especially revenue caps, that undermine the authority of local elected officials to establish budgets and generate revenues through 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.

The City opposes 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.

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.

Support for our Military Community and Installations

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

Support Legislative Appropriations of \$50 million for the Defense Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant (DEAAG) Program.

Oppose legislation to offer local tax exemptions for wind energy developments near military installations. Protect provisions from Senate Bill 277 (85th Regular Session).

Disaster Assistance and Emergency Management Reform

Support appropriations from the Economic Stabilization Fund to assist local governments with recovery, mitigation, and resiliency projects following Hurricane Harvey or other natural disasters.

Support legislation that will ensure affordable TWIA rates as well as encourage Texas private insurers to write policies equitably across the state, including windstorm policies in coastal communities. Oppose proposed 10 percent rate hike from the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association (TWIA) and remain actively engaged in the Sunset Commission review of TWIA.

Environment

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

Nueces River Authority

Support Sunset Commission recommendations for Nueces River Authority. Oppose proposal to allow Governor to appoint the chairperson of the Nueces River Authority.

ACTIVELY SUPPORT OR OPPOSE

Education and Economic Competitiveness

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, pre-K-12 public schools, Del Mar College, Texas A&M University Corpus Christi (TAMUCC) and Texas A&M University Kingsville (TAMUK).

The City supports an increase in the state's share of public education, therefore reducing the property tax burden of local taxpayers, and updates to the state's school funding system to include an increase in the basic allotment.

Establish a well-funded pre-K-12 school finance system that:

- requires locally collected tax revenue for education to stay in the local system;
- includes education for all children starting in pre-k;
- provides financial transparency and accountability to taxpayers for all education funds;
- explores additional revenue sources aligned with enhanced outcomes and efficiencies, and
- ensure student progress and post-secondary readiness with high levels of pre-K-12 academic rigor and accountability.

The City supports enhanced formula and non-formula funding for Del Mar College, TAMUCC and TAMUK and authorizing Tuition Revenue Bonds for requested capital projects.

Improve the higher education funding system to incentivize quality, workforce readiness, and certificate and degree completion.

Meet industry workforce needs through alignment and expansion of trade and technical skills training, 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.

Protecting economic development tools that attract new jobs and companies to Texas, including but not limited to the Skills Development Fund, CPRIT, Sales and Use Tax Exemptions, Enterprise and Tax Increment Financing Districts, the film incentive fund, and other statutes related to economic development such as Chapters 311, 312, 380, and 381.

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

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

Oppose proposals to use local Hotel Occupancy Taxes for non-tourism purposes

Affordable Housing

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

Transportation

Preserve the billions of dollars in new road and highway funding added by Proposition 1 and Proposition 7 funding and ensuring the deferred payment authorized under the 85th legislative session is paid in full.

Protect the local prioritization of policies and funding for improved transportation and additional transit options.

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

Tourism

Support retention of full State tourism funding.

Protect existing authority to use Hotel Occupancy Tax revenues to construct a convention center hotel and oppose any restrictions, limitations or changes which would alter the existing authority.

Positive changes to local Hotel Occupancy Tax laws to include expansion of sporting facilities category to include additional sports activities.

Support \$5 million Exceptional Item Request of Texas Commission on the Arts for new Cultural District designations.

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 Facilities Task Force
Corpus Christi Convention and Visitors Bureau
Del Mar College
Texas A&M University Corpus Christi
Texas A&M University Kingsville
Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority
Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corporation
Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend
Corpus Christi Housing Authority
Coastal Bend Council of Governments
United Way of the Coastal Bend

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 Mayors of Military Communities (TMMC)
Texas Police Chiefs Association
Texas Fire Chiefs Association
Texas Court Clerks Association (TCCA)
Texas Municipal Courts Association
Texas Court Clerks 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
Texas Water Conservation Association (TWCA)
Lone Star Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America (TXSWANA)
Texas Chapter of American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (TXASBPA)
Water Environment Association of Texas (WEAT)
Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants
Government Finance Officers Association of Texas (GFOAT)

The following state agencies may 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 Retirement System (TMRS)
Texas Workforce Commission