

RESOLUTION NO. 09-13-22-1

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
AMARILLO ADOPTING STATE AND FEDERAL
LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR THE 2022 AND 2023
CALENDAR YEARS.

WHEREAS, local government is the most direct and frequent point of contact with its residents; and

WHEREAS, the process for local government is a public and participatory process whereby the actions of local governments are subject to the public scrutiny of the residents; and

WHEREAS, local government is responsible for providing basic and emergency services; and

WHEREAS, local governments are the first responders in local emergencies; and

WHEREAS, the ability of local government to provide those services is dependent on the ability to have the resources and authority necessary to carry out its responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, state and federal representatives and senators are charged with working in the best interest of the citizens they represent; and

WHEREAS, residents of the state of Texas expect elected government officials representing local governments to make every effort to be informed on the needs of the constituents and the local government to ensure that local governments have the necessary authorities and resources in which to fulfill the desired needs of the citizens who have elected them.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AMARILLO, TEXAS, THAT:

SECTION 1. That City Council members will meet with area state and federal representatives and senators to discuss the City's legislative priorities and provide both information and assistance on all matters relating to bills and other legislative matters that come before the Legislature to ensure that they have the resources to call upon in making decisions that impact the lives of their constituents.

SECTION 2. The City of Amarillo shall proactively seek the filing and passage of any legislation identified as being sought in Exhibit A.

SECTION 3. The City Council and City staff may work with Texas Municipal League (TML), peer cities in the State, and other appropriate entities to jointly pursue the passage or defeat of legislation that is listed as "supported" or "opposed" by the City of Amarillo in Exhibit A.

SECTION 4. The City Manager and his staff shall:

(a) Take all necessary actions to inform Amarillo residents of the City's legislative priorities; and

(b) Encourage residents to make every effort to be aware of the local, state and federal governing and legislative process and expect their elected representatives from all levels to seek a proactive and positive relationship that does not pass a burden from the Federal or State to the County or City without providing the tools and resources to undertake the added responsibility.

SECTION 5. That it believes it is incumbent of all legislators to work in consort with city and county governments to ensure that the entire governing process is as effective as possible and, to that end, seek input and advice from the local level of government on issues that have a direct impact on their ability to undertake their responsibilities.

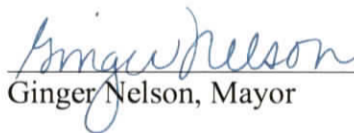
SECTION 6. That it expects elected representatives of federal and state government to fully understand the implications of legislation they act upon to ensure there are no negative impacts on the community and to strongly support and take all actions necessary in furtherance of the information in Exhibit A, as it may be amended from time to time.

SECTION 7. That it believes the federal and state legislative bodies should not exempt its members from any regulation that they impose upon any other member of a political subdivision unless it can clearly be shown that there is a clear and compelling need to do so.

SECTION 8. That it adopts the Legislative Priorities for the 2022 and 2023 calendar year as shown on Exhibit A, attached to and incorporated into this resolution by reference.

SECTION 9. This resolution shall be effective on and after its adoption.

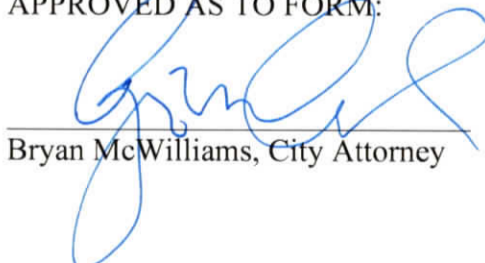
INTRODUCED AND PASSED by the City Council of the City of Amarillo, Texas
this 13th day of September 2022.


Ginger Nelson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Stephanie Coggins, City Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Bryan McWilliams, City Attorney

CITY OF AMARILLO

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

GINGER NELSON, MAYOR

COLE STANLEY, COUNCILMEMBER PLACE 1

FREDA POWELL, COUNCILMEMBER PLACE 2

EDDY SAUER, COUNCILMEMBER PLACE 3

HOWARD SMITH, COUNCILMEMBER PLACE 4

CITY MANAGER

JARED MILLER

Strategic City Pillars: The City Council of the City of Amarillo established eight Council Pillars were established as the key components of Council's vision for the future of Amarillo. Decisions regarding the City of Amarillo's positions on legislative matters will be evaluated with Council Pillars in mind when formulating positions.

1. Public Safety
2. Economic Development and Redevelopment
3. Civic Pride
4. Highly Educated Population
5. Fiscal Responsibility
6. Customer Service
7. Excellence in Communication
8. Transportation

General Approach to Legislative Priorities:

The City of Amarillo supports:

1. Legislation that enhances the City's ability to solve problems and improve the quality of life for its citizens.
2. Legislative initiatives from partners in the community that will enhance the educational, cultural and infrastructure resources in our region.

The City of Amarillo opposes:

1. Legislation that increases the City's costs.
2. Legislation that reduces the City's authority.
3. Legislation that burdens Amarillo taxpayers with unfunded mandates.

This document reflects the City of Amarillo's current legislative priorities as approved by City Council.

STATE OF TEXAS LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
POSITION STATEMENTS

TRANSPORTATION

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that enhances statewide and national passenger and freight mobility through the City of Amarillo and increases the safety of passengers traveling through the City, specifically including legislation that:

- a. increases funding to complete the building of Loop 335; and
- b. supports future expansion of Interstate 27 to the north and south.

The City of Amarillo will support legislation which would provide for the co-designation of Interstate 40 as Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Memorial Highway

PRO-FAMILY POLICY

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that strengthens resources provided to new mothers and new families that live in the City of Amarillo:

- a. Rehabilitates the foster care system to better promote child welfare and encourages adoption;
- b. Reduces barriers to private adoption by reducing the cost and minimizing the amount of burdensome regulations; and
- c. Lessen the time commitment and paperwork surrounding both private and public adoption

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that addresses disparities in maternal health services as well as health services for newborns.

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that increases funding for programs focused on family, newborn, and new mother welfare in Amarillo, as well as educates citizens on available resources for services in these areas.

PROPERTY TAX, DEBT, AND SALES TAX

The City of Amarillo will oppose legislation that restricts local control of government, specifically including legislation that:

- a. would have a disproportionately negative effect on the most prudent and responsible taxing entities that have a very low property tax rate, like the City of Amarillo; or
- b. would unnecessarily restrict the City's ability to issue debt or impose undue burdens on debt issuance referendums; or
- c. would impose revenue caps including a lowered voter-approval tax rate or mandatory property tax rate ratification elections.

The City of Amarillo will oppose legislation related to Sales Tax Sourcing that would have a

detrimental impact to the City's annual budget.

ANNEXATION

The City of Amarillo will oppose legislation that would further restrict or impose more stringent requirements on a municipality's authority to annex land.

EXPANSION OF BROADBAND INTERNET

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that would address the digital divide disparity by expanding internet coverage or aiding in elimination of financial barriers for all citizens to gain access to broadband internet.

RIGHT-OF-WAY AND SMALL CELL TOWERS

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that:

- a. preserves municipal control of municipal rights of way;
- b. requires service providers to pay market rate (or close to market rate) for the use of municipal infrastructure and rights of way; and
- c. provides for local authority over small cell nodes, including both existing and future installations.

OPEN MEETINGS AND OPEN RECORDS

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that would provide clarifications to open meetings laws and public information laws to enhance communication between elected officials and their constituents, specifically including legislation that:

- a. would provide for the continued use of technology and other tools that provides for transparent, convenient, and secure virtual public meetings and encourage the general public to participate, provide feedback, and engage with State and local governments remotely; and
- b. would reduce the financial burden on local governments required by responding to Open Records Requests.

The City of Amarillo will oppose legislation that would attempt to make the current open meetings and public information laws more restrictive or ambiguous.

VIRTUAL COURT

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that would continue or expand Municipal Court's ability to offer virtual court hearings. Virtual court allows defendants the option to resolve eligible cases remotely from their homes or offices through a video conference with a judge.

DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that provides for or enhances local control during disaster or other emergency declarations to allow cities to better manage such situations. The City of Amarillo will also support any legislation that ensures funding of public safety, emergency management, public communications, public health, and other operations at the levels necessary to respond to disasters or emergencies.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The City of Amarillo will support legislation reauthorizing or expanding Chapter 311 Tax Increment Financing, Chapter 312 Property Redevelopment and Tax Abatement Act and other local economic development tools used for capital investment and job creation. The city also supports new legislation to replace Chapter 313 Texas Economic Development Act expiring on December 31, 2022.

The City of Amarillo will support legislation providing for the expansion of Palo Duro State Park, which would provide for a greater tourism and economic development impact for the entire Texas Panhandle such as developing a second entrance to the park, hiring more park personnel, and allowing more accessible land for park visitors.

The City of Amarillo will support the Route 66 Centennial Commission to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Route 66 in 2026, including the City or our local partners seeking funding opportunities in support of this historic anniversary.

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that greatly limits or prohibits the sale of land in the Texas Panhandle or the rest of the state to the Chinese Government, the Chinese Communist Party, or Chinese nationals affiliated with these two entities.

The City of Amarillo will oppose legislation that would restrict a city's ability to compete for projects that provide jobs and economic benefit to the community and region.

MENTAL HEALTH

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that improves funding for mental health, specifically that provides for:

- a. funding to build a state mental health hospital in Amarillo; and
- b. mental health crisis intervention and funds resources for persons who are suffering from mental illness either temporarily or chronically, with the goal of diversion from the criminal justice system; and
- c. funding to support training for law enforcement, mental health caseworkers to aid in crisis response, alternatives to hospitalization, and alternatives to incarceration.

PANHANDLING

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that protects and expands the City's ability to improve public safety measures of residents and solicitors in City and State rights of way, allowing law enforcement to redirect solicitors to panhandle in safer locations.

AMARILLO CIVIC CENTER COMPLEX

The City of Amarillo will actively support legislation to finance the renovation, revitalization and/or expansion of the Amarillo Civic Center Complex (ACCC). This would specifically include an expansion of Sec. 351.003 Tax Rates of the Tax Code related to Municipal Hotel Occupancy Taxes. The City of Amarillo would like to see the tax rate raised from seven to nine percent either in general or for the additional two percent to be specifically allocated for construction, expansion, maintenance, or operation of convention center facilities

ELECTIONS AND BALLOT LANGUAGE

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that broadens the naming conventions required for propositions on election ballots (i.e., allow alternating from numbers to letters every other election in order to avoid confusion for voters who may think it is the same item from a prior election they may have voted in).

PUBLIC ADVERTISING

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that would enable the use of electronic notice for all required public notices.

WATER RESOURCES

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that protects and expands the City's ability to purchase water, provide water to its residents and customers, use water within the City limits and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Areas, and collaborate with local and regional entities on projects and initiatives that seek to enhance the City's water resources.

LEGISLATIVE COMMUNICATION

The City of Amarillo will oppose legislation that limits the abilities of cities in rural Texas who are geographically distanced from the Capital to communicate with legislators and advocate on behalf of their rural communities.

**FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
POSITION STATEMENTS**

CROSS BAR RANCH – BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

The City of Amarillo will support legislation increasing or providing additional funding for the development of 12,000 acres of federally owned land north of Amarillo for public access. Current priorities include funds for the replacement of a BNSF Railway train trussell, for widening and improvements to an existing access road, and for developing the interior road network to support visitor access within the property.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that continues to invest in the areas of defense and energy as it relates to agency initiatives or increased funding to support the Pantex Plant, Bell, or other companies that work in these industry sectors in the Amarillo area.

TRANSPORTATION

The City of Amarillo will support:

- a. the implementation of the recently-passed Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) which provides vital 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. In addition to actively monitoring BIL program guidance and funding opportunities, this will also include working with respective state agencies such as TXDOT or the Texas Water Development Board that also receive direct funding through IJA;
- b. the priorities of Amarillo International Airport including: seeking federal funding through Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Airport Improvement Program (AIP) program and the recently-passed BIL to help address various airport infrastructure needs;
- c. legislative efforts that will positively impact Amarillo City Transit by engaging directly with the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) National and Regional Offices to explore other potential federal funding opportunities through the recently-passed BIL;
- d. federal legislative efforts to enhance rail safety and rail efficiency that resulted from the BIL.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The City of Amarillo will support:

- a. federal emergency management efforts to enable the city to pursue federal funding through various federal programs at FEMA, HUD, the Economic Development Administration, etc., pertaining to hazard mitigation and emergency preparedness;
- b. federal funding solutions established via the BIL to provide solutions for both current and

future flood resiliency, to create a community resilient to regional and localized flooding events, 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 around the City.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The City of Amarillo will support:

- a. 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 exploring federal grant solicitations through the U.S. Department of Justice;
- b. federal funding efforts to enhance power grid infrastructure, resiliency, and reliability through the BIL.

TECHNOLOGY

The City of Amarillo will support:

- a. legislative efforts to secure federal broadband deployment funds established via the BIL;
- b. legislative efforts to secure federal funding included in the BIL for cybersecurity needs for state and local governments.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that:

- a. continues or increases funding for Community Development Block Grants and HOME Partnership funds;
- b. continues or increases incentives, including tax credits, for development of historic buildings;
- c. continues or increases incentives for redevelopment of city neighborhoods in need of revitalization;
- d. continues or increases funding for park related projects; and
- e. continues or increases funding to demolish blighted structures.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The City of Amarillo will support legislation that aims to create a Texas based rare earth metals exchange that will allow for more economic growth in Texas and for further decoupling from China for the United States. The creation of this exchange is vital to the national defense and security of the United States as well as to the economic future of the City of Amarillo.

For more information, please contact:

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