CITY FESTIVALS
AROUND THE STATE
An ACEC Texas member firm created a functional work of art to provide a safer alternative for guests to access the Austin Convention Center from the Hilton Hotel.

Inspired by an art-installation design, the pedestrian bridge is an example of how structural engineering can support and enhance architectural design.
Official Publication of the Texas Municipal League.

This publication assumes no responsibility for statements made by contributors in signed articles. It is not operated for pecuniary gain.

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Mr. Bennett Sandlin has entered into an agreement with Publication Printers Corp. for the printing of *Texas Town & City* magazine. Mr. Sandlin represents the member cities of the Texas Municipal League.

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**ABOUT THE COVER**

Stephenville is one of many Texas cities hosting a spring or summer festival. Pack a picnic and get ready for adventure.
The Texas Municipal League exists solely to provide services to Texas cities. Since its formation in 1913, the League’s mission has remained the same: to serve the needs and advocate the interests of its members. Membership in the League is voluntary and is open to any city in Texas. From the original 14 members, TML’s membership has grown to more than 1,150 cities. Over 16,000 mayors, councilmembers, city managers, city attorneys, and department heads are member officials of the League by virtue of their cities’ participation.

The League provides a variety of services to its member cities. One of the principal purposes of the League is to advocate municipal interests at the state and federal levels. Among the thousands of bills introduced during each session of the Texas Legislature are hundreds of bills that would affect cities. The League, working through its Legislative Services Department, attempts to defeat detrimental city-related bills and to facilitate the passage of legislation designed to improve the ability of municipal governments to operate effectively.

The League employs full-time attorneys who are available to provide member cities with information on municipal legal matters. On a daily basis, the legal staff responds to member cities’ written and oral questions on a wide variety of legal matters. The League annually conducts a variety of conferences and training seminars to enhance the knowledge and skills of municipal officials in the state. In addition, the League also publishes a variety of printed materials to assist member cities in performing their duties. The best known of these is the League’s monthly magazine, Texas Town & City. Each issue focuses on a variety of contemporary municipal issues, including survey results to respond to member inquiries.

For additional information on any of these services, contact the Texas Municipal League at 512-231-7400 or visit our website, www.tml.org.

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**TEXAS TOWN & CITY • FEBRUARY 2020**
Dear Texas City Official,

This issue of the magazine is about partnerships and collaboration. When my town of Staples was newly incorporated a few years ago, we collaborated—through the League—with Texas cities that had come before us to help get our effort off the ground. In fact, I’ll bet there isn’t a lot that happens in Texas cities that isn’t the result of partnering with others both internally and outside in order to make things better. Inside this issue, you’ll find interesting discussions of Texas towns partnering with state colleges, school districts, their counties for disaster recovery, other cities, and much, much more.

And speaking of partnerships, we can’t forget that the League’s advocacy effort at the Texas Capitol is nothing more than a partnership of all Texas cities working together for the good of our citizens. Sometimes our friends in the legislature forget that TML isn’t a stand-alone organization, but a collaboration of the cities themselves. Along those lines, I am in the process of appointing a committee to look into how to restore that grassroots element of partnership to our advocacy efforts. I believe that new focus will pay big dividends in the future.

I hope you enjoy this issue, and that it reminds you of new ways to partner together in your own towns and cities.

Eddie Daffern, CMO
Mayor
City of Staples
TML President
We Want to Celebrate You

The TML Municipal Excellence Awards have been celebrating and inspiring municipal excellence and innovation for more than 25 years. The deadline to submit online applications is June 5. For details about the award categories, the application process, and to link to the application website, visit www.tml.org/210/Municipal-Excellence-Awards.

Get Your Inspiration at the 2020 Elected Officials’ Conference

Join other elected and appointed city officials from around the state at the Elected Officials’ Conference on March 4-6 at the Embassy Suites in Frisco for training that will make you a better community leader.

You will hear from opening keynote speaker Dr. Frank Ashley, Vice Chancellor Emeritus of The Texas A&M University System, about the important role that diversity and inclusion play in allowing every individual to be a contributing member of society.

And you’ll witness an inspirational and patriotic presentation about September 11, 2001 by Lieutenant Colonel Robert J. Darling, United States Marine Corps (Ret.), on your role in protecting and safeguarding your residents and community.

Plus, you will network with other officials from around the state, strengthen your governance skills, and find solutions to some of the tough issues you’re struggling with in your hometown. Register for the conference at tmlelectedofficialsconference.org.

New TML Workshop: Improve Your Emotional Intelligence

Join TML and Dr. Joe Serio on March 19 in Austin for the League’s newest workshop: Improve Your Emotional Intelligence. Once considered a “touchy-feely skill,” research now suggests that emotional intelligence is a strong predictor of individual success and can have a major impact on organizational performance. It affects your capacity to reason, analyze information, make decisions, and develop relationships. In this one-day workshop, you will learn to how to better understand emotions, identify your hot buttons, and use them to guide your actions for better collaboration, influence, and decision-making. Register at https://tmlemotionalintelligence.org.
Your Invitation to Join the 2020 Leadership Academy Class

TML announces its 2020 Leadership Academy – a two-course, six-day program designed to enhance the leadership skills of the elected officials and staff who serve our Texas cities. Taking place April 1-3 and June 3-5 at the Austin Marriott North Hotel in Round Rock, the Leadership Academy boasts an accomplished faculty of university professors and leadership experts who will teach you to critique your actions and develop the competencies you need to be an effective leader. Attendance is limited for the two-course program. Visit www.tmlleadershipacademy.org.

TML Revenue Manual for Texas Cities

The TML Revenue Manual for Texas Cities (2019 edition) covers nearly every known source of revenue available to Texas cities in a simple question-and-answer format. You’ll find in-depth discussions of the major sources of city revenue like property taxes, city sales taxes for general and dedicated purposes, and right-of-way rental fees, in addition to lesser-known sources of municipal revenue. The manual is a collection of new revenue ideas, as well as a basic how-to guide for each revenue source. It’s designed for mayors, city councilmembers, finance officers and staff, and city attorneys. To print your free and searchable copy, visit www.tml.org/183/publications.
Scott Houston, a member of the Texas Municipal League’s (TML) legal services team, was named the 2019 TML Employee of the Year. The TML Employee of the Year honor is a prestigious, peer-nominated award that was established in 1992. Employees are encouraged to nominate a colleague who has shown exceptional service to TML, our members, and staff throughout the year. The nominations are then reviewed and chosen by the League’s executive director and previous year’s winner. The selected Employee of the Year is announced and recognized at a year-end, all-employee meeting.

Scott has worked for TML for almost 20 years. He started at the League as assistant general counsel and is currently the deputy executive director of policy development and general counsel. In this position, he oversees five attorneys, a legal assistant, and a law clerk in the legal services department. The department answers questions from member cities, speaks at TML workshops and webinars on legal and legislative issues, writes publications and articles for the magazine, and works closely with the legislative department.

During the TML Annual Conference and Exhibition, you can usually find Scott speaking at conference sessions.
including the ever-so-popular Legal Q&A. During a legislative session, he is frequently at the Capitol attending or testifying at hearings. He and his team are also responsible for analyzing and summarizing hundreds of bills each session. When it's not a legislative session, you can find him in the office helping staff and city officials – or around the state participating in TML regional and other meetings and speaking at workshops.

What does Scott like most about working at TML?

"Learning more about cities and the law every day. Rarely a day goes by that I don't learn something completely new. Researching and writing is so much fun for me. My favorite part of TML is getting to work with an amazing staff every day, and I'm always honored to visit with city officials throughout the state to help them succeed at home by providing the right information."

Scott’s TML coworkers learn from him too:

"Scott’s commitment to good governance and Texas cities is an inspiration to staff and city officials. His initiative, leadership, and service is a model for all of us on staff."

He "is an advocate for TML and working to provide a better tomorrow for the cities."

Scott’s “dedication to TML and its members can be shown through the many hours spent on the road, in the office, and helping the many city officials across Texas. Our members love our legal department...that is a great reflection on his leadership."

When Scott isn’t working, he’s probably traveling the world. He has been to all seven continents and has summited the highest mountains in Texas, Colorado, and Africa. He has even trekked to the base camp of Mount Everest. Currently, he has a dual sport motorcycle that he is riding east-to-west across the United States in segments. The route is called the Trans-America Trail, and is 80 percent dirt trails and roads. It’s his goal to finish in 2020 – he’ll then start the south-to-north trail up the Continental Divide.

Most importantly, Scott would never have made it this far without the constant love and support of his amazing wife Leslie. His favorite thing is hanging out with her and their dog Lucy.★
Texas Officials Hold Key Leadership Positions in the National League of Cities

Six Texans hold key leadership positions in the National League of Cities (NLC).

At the organization’s City Summit in San Antonio last November, Live Oak Mayor Mary M. Dennis, Forest Hill Councilmember Carlie Jones, and Dallas Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Adam McGough were elected to the NLC Board of Directors.

Mayor Mary M. Dennis is a past president of the Texas Municipal League and has served as the City of Live Oak mayor since 2010. She is serving a two-year term on the NLC Board.

Councilmember Carlie Jones has served on the Forest Hill City Council since 2016 and is president of the NLC National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials. She is serving a second two-year term on the NLC Board.

Adam McGough has been on the Dallas City Council since 2015. He is serving a two-year term on the NLC Board.

Dennis, Jones, and McGough join Waco Councilmember John Kinnaird and San Antonio Councilmember Rebecca Viagran on the Board.

Councilmember John Kinnaird was first elected to the Waco City Council in 2012. He was elected to the NLC Board in 2018 for a two-year term.

Councilmember Rebecca Viagran was first elected to the San Antonio City Council in 2013. She was elected to a two-year term on the Board in 2018.

In addition to these leadership positions, NLC President Joe Buscaino, a councilmember in Los Angeles, California, appointed Houston Controller Chris Brown to chair the NLC Finance, Administration, and Intergovernmental Relations (FAIR) Federal Advocacy Committee. As committee chair, Brown will serve a one-year term on the NLC Board. Brown served as the FAIR Federal Advocacy Committee chair in 2019 and has served as Houston’s chief financial officer since 2016.

NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 cities, towns, and villages in the United States. The organization is dedicated to helping city leaders build better communities.

More than 400 city officials from Texas attended the four-day 2019 NLC City Summit in San Antonio. The conference attracted 4,500 city leaders from across the country. NLC’s next major conference will be the Congressional City Conference on March 7-11, 2020, in Washington, D.C. Registration is now open at www.nlc.org.

For additional information about NLC and how your city can get involved, contact Katie Colten, the program manager for the southern region, at 202-626-3160 or kcolten@nlc.org.
The National League of Cities (NLC) and the Texas Municipal League (TML) are partners advocating for and meeting the needs of cities.

An NLC membership complements your TML membership and benefits you, your elected officials, and staff leadership team by:

- Representing municipal interests on Capitol Hill (federal legislation and regulations)
- Creating more opportunities to share great ideas with other local officials at conferences or online from your office or home
- Providing direct access to NLC’s lobbying team
- Giving you access to solutions and savings programs, research reports, toolkits, city practice database, expert staff, and other resources to help you solve problems
- Offering outstanding leadership training programs at member discounted rates
- Recognizing the accomplishments of your city and city leaders

NLC offers unique learning opportunities...

“The National League of Cities is where municipalities of all sizes come together to share experiences, learn from leading experts, and advocate at the federal level for innovative solutions to the most pressing issues of our time. Together with the Texas Municipal League, we are proud to serve our members and help cities and towns become stronger, together.”

--Clarence E. Anthony, CEO and Executive Director, NLC

NLC represents your city in Washington ...

“NLC works for you in Washington, D.C. the same way our state league does at the state capital – by lobbying for your interests and getting you the most up-to-date information about legislation and regulations. I can assure you there are a lot of things happening in Washington that you don’t even know about that can hurt your community.”

--Bennett Sandlin, Executive Director, TML

NLC is dedicated to helping city leaders build better communities. Working in partnership with the 49 state municipal leagues, NLC serves as a resource to and an advocate for the more than 19,000 cities, villages, and towns it represents. For more information, visit www.nlc.org.
Changes to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Rules

Significant changes regarding Department of Transportation (DOT) drug and alcohol testing requirements and entry-level commercial driver’s license training requirements will impact Texas public entities.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s Clearinghouse

Beginning January 6, 2020, all employers, including cities and other public entities, with Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) holders will be required to utilize the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s (FMCSA) Commercial Driver’s License Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse. The system is designed to allow employers, the FMCSA, state driver’s licensing agencies, and state law enforcement officials to obtain real-time information regarding any drug or alcohol program violations. Currently, employers are required to contact previous employers of any new-hire CDL driver to verify that no related drug and alcohol violations have occurred within the last two years.

Although the change to utilize the clearinghouse will likely not impact most current drug and alcohol testing procedures, it will affect how contact is made regarding new employees and previous employers. For the first three years of implementation (January 6, 2020 – January 5, 2023), employers are required to query the clearinghouse database and contact any previous employers covering the preceding three years of an applicant’s drug and alcohol testing records. In addition, employers must also query the database at least once per year for each current employee. Then, beginning January 6, 2023, employers will only be required to query the clearinghouse for the applicant’s testing records, but will continue to be required to query the database at least annually for each current CDL driver employed.

For more information on the FMCSA Clearinghouse and the related requirements, please visit https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov.

Entry-Level Commercial Driver’s License Training

Another significant change was passed in 2016 by the FMCSA regarding the training for commercial drivers. As of February 7, 2020, “Entry-Level Drivers” may not take a CDL skills test to receive a Class A or B CDL, passenger bus (P) endorsement, or school bus (S) endorsement unless they have successfully completed a mandatory theory (knowledge) and behind-the-wheel training program, or, in the case of a hazardous materials (H) endorsement, mandatory theory training that is provided by a training provider listed on FMCSA’s Training Provider Registry (TPR) and is appropriate to the license/endorsement for which that person is applying. It is important to note that the new rules do not cover individuals for whom states have waived the CDL skills test under 49 CFR 383.

The FMCSA’s Training Provider Registry will include all public and private or fleet-operated CDL training programs that register and self-certify that they meet the minimum requirements for CDL instructors, facilities, curriculum, etc.

The training to be provided to applicants will consist of theory (knowledge) and behind-the-wheel (BTW) segments. There is no minimum number of hours that driver-trainees must spend on theory portions but must score at least 80 percent on the test. The behind-the-wheel training will assess proficiencies related to discreet maneuvers on public roads. As with the theory segment, there is no minimum number of hours of BTW time required, but applicants must demonstrate proficiency in performing all required skills as assessed by the training provider.

This change could be critical to many public entities as they often hire employees without CDL credentials with the hopes of allowing them to acquire the necessary license during the early part of their tenure with the organization. Although this is still possible, it could necessitate some changes to job descriptions and requirements as the new training requirements may prolong the process and could be costly for the employer to send employees to schools for training.

For more information on the new training requirements, please visit:

www.fmcsa.dot.gov/registration/commercial-drivers-license/eldt
www.fmcsa.dot.gov/eldt
Rivers flow, ideas flow, and so should sewers.

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Sugar Land Is One of the Nation’s Top Digital Cities

The Center for Digital Government (CDG) named Sugar Land among the nation’s top five cities that successfully use technology to improve resident services, enhance transparency, and encourage resident engagement. The top five also included Lynchburg, Virginia; Westminster, Colorado; Columbia, Missouri; and Roanoke, Virginia.

The city earned fourth among digital cities ranging in populations from 75,000-124,999 in CDG’s 2019 Digital Cities Survey, up one spot from last year’s survey. Sugar Land has been among the top 10 digital cities in the country for the past six years for cities in this population range.

Cities receiving the national accolade were recognized for successfully using technology to tackle social challenges, enhance cybersecurity, and improve transparency. Words used to describe Sugar Land in the judges’ comments included “open, citizen-centric, collaborative, secure, staffed/supported, connected, efficient, resilient and innovative, with use of best practices.”

Sugar Land was credited for innovative efforts to improve traffic flow through the Traffic Technology Services and Trafficware partnership, increase transparency through an Office of Performance and Accountability map, and elevate the quality of water earning honors like the Best Tasting Water in the United States.

“I’m proud that the city can be recognized for our efforts to go above and beyond when it comes to innovating for our residents,” said Imelda Balane, City of Sugar Land information technology manager. “We’re always looking ahead at new technology to find ways to make things more efficient internally, and ensure our residents are receiving the services we take pride in providing.”

Abilene Named Great American Defense Community

The Association of Defense Communities (ADC) and United Services Automobile Association (USAA) announced that Abilene is one of just five communities nationwide to be named to the 2020 class of Great American Defense Communities.

The Great American Defense Communities program, now in its fifth year, recognizes military communities and regions that help improve the quality of life for service members and military families. In addition to Abilene, the 2020 class includes Central Arkansas; Davis and Weber Counties in Utah; Junction City, Kansas; and St. Clair County, Illinois.

“The men and women who serve our nation deserve our full support whether they are on a mission abroad or on duty at an installation closer to home,” said Joe Driskill, ADC president. “We at ADC feel it is important to recognize defense communities for the part they play in strengthening our military.”

The Great American Defense Communities program is designed to highlight the overall support that communities and regions in the United States provide to service members, veterans and military families. Communities are chosen through a competitive nomination process based on community and integration programs, educational and employment opportunities, and family support initiatives.

Defense communities and regions that are home to active military installations are eligible to apply each year. Abilene and other selected communities will be honored throughout the year, including a visit from ADC’s leadership and special recognition at the Defense Communities National Summit in Washington, D.C., in June 2020.
Elected Officials’ Conference
FOR TEXAS MAYORS, COUNCILMEMBERS, AND COMMISSIONERS
March 4-6, 2020 • Frisco

Presented by the Texas Municipal League and the Texas Association of Mayors, Councilmembers and Commissioners

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THREE INSPIRATIONAL KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

THURSDAY, MARCH 4
The Importance of Diversity
Dr. Frank Ashley
Vice Chancellor Emeritus, The Texas A&M University System, and Senior Associate Dean, Academic Affairs, Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University

FRIDAY, MARCH 5
September 11, 2001: A Crisis Leadership Presentation
Robert J. Darling
Lieutenant Colonel, United States Marine Corps (Ret.)

SATURDAY, MARCH 6
Chart Your Own Flight Course
Ginger Kerrick
Flight Integration Division Chief, NASA, Johnson Space Center, and Regent, Texas Tech University System

WWW.TMLELECTEDOFFICIALSCONFERENCE.ORG
Connection, expansion, acquisition, shared resources, common goals, increased benefits, mutual learning, respect, and trust—these characteristics of cooperation manifested themselves when, in 2017, our small City of Menard partnered with history and collaborated with another small city in Spain to create a friendship through the ages across space and time.

In a bold enterprise in April 1757 intended to project Spanish colonial military, cultural, and economic power into the heart of Texas, more than 300 Spanish colonists traveled from San Antonio and built a mission and a fort to establish a permanent Spanish presence on the San Saba River.

Father Alonso Giraldo de Terreros guided the civic and religious side of that expedition, founding Mission Santa Cruz de San Saba a few miles downstream from the fort. Don Pedro Romero de Terreros, the wealthiest man in Mexico at the time, financed the cost of the mission effort. The men were cousins, both born in Cortegana, Huelva Province, Spain.

A century after settlement, a coalition of northern Indians destroyed the mission so thoroughly that the site remained lost until it was re-discovered in the 21st century. They murdered Father Alonso and seven others at the mission.

The stone fort Presidio de las Amarillas (later renamed the Real Presidio de San Saba) remained, however. For a decade in the mid-18th century it became, before its eventual abandonment, the most strategically important Spanish fort in Texas. For more than 260 years since then, the Presidio served as a defining historical and cultural landmark memorializing in stone the high tide of Spanish Colonial expansion in Central Texas.

A century after its abandonment, utilizing the durable old Spanish acequia irrigation system which is still functioning to this day, and the finely-dressed stones from the nearby abandoned Presidio, settlers raised a city, Menard, on the San Saba River, awakening the Terreros’ dream.
The Presidio – Menard’s hidden Spanish Colonial jewel – is valued by archeologists as second only to the Alamo in historical importance to Texas.

In 2017, in celebration of the 260th anniversary of the founding of the Presidio, the City of Menard decided to establish a Sister City relationship with Cortegana.

The impetus for establishing this relationship with Cortegana began with Ray Rickard, a local businessman. Rickard, a member of both the County Historical Commission and the Presidio Restoration and Preservation Corporation, began thinking about the links between Menard and Cortegana during the archeological digs conducted by Texas Tech University at both the mission and Presidio sites which occurred in 2010-2011. Rickard, with the blessings of these two organizations, met with the Menard City Council to introduce the concept of becoming a Sister City with Cortegana, a concept warmly and unanimously favored by the Council. Further contact with other organizations in the community including County Commissioners, the Chamber of Commerce, the Industrial Development Board, and our Businessmen’s group resulted in a community-wide feeling that this was an idea whose time had come.

The City Council realized that a Sisterhood with Cortegana presented an efficient and effective single path to achieve multiple goals: to honor the sacrifice and vision of the Terreros cousins; to increase our economic base through historical tourism and shared rural/agricultural economies (Spain is the seventh highest international investor in Texas with over $835 million invested through 23 companies); and to build a sense of community spirit and pride.

State and international collaboration began to complement local collaboration. State media, the Texas Historical Commission, and the Texas Forts Trail all contributed to the process. Spanish Ambassador to the United States Juan Romero de Terreros, a descendant of the cousins, became the unofficial liaison between the two cities.

In April 2017, the City sent a letter of invitation to Cortegana to enter a relationship with us in a mutually beneficial expression of goodwill in honor of Father Alonso and Don Pedro. Cortegana responded the following month with a delighted and enthusiastic “Yes!”

In November 2018, Cortegana invited a delegation of citizens, including Mayor Barbara Hooten, as honored guests of the annual Cortegana in the Americas Festival. During the festival Mayor Barbara Hooten and Cortegana Mayor Jose Enrique Borallo Romero signed documents formalizing our agreement.

From our community’s love of history, and our sense of responsibility to hold that historical torch high for ourselves and Texas, Menard reached out to Cortegana to retie an old knot. Perhaps Father Alonso and Don Pedro smile somewhere, knowing that their visionary partnership of faith and finance lives and stretches through collaboration into the future. ★
**LEGAL Q&A**

By Evelyn Njuguna
TML Assistant General Counsel

**Q** Can a city perform random drug testing on all of its employees?

**A** No. Unlike a private employer, a governmental entity’s ability to conduct drug testing on all its employees is limited by the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution. Because testing for drugs is considered a “search” under the Fourth Amendment, a city is generally prohibited from undertaking such test without “individualized suspicion”. See *Skinner v. Railway Labor Executives Ass’n*, 489 U.S. 602 (1989). However, a limited exception to this rule allows a city to conduct suspicionless drug testing (also referred to as “random drug testing”) of employees if a special need outside the need for law enforcement exists, and such “special need” outweighs the employees’ privacy interest. See *id* at 652; *Nat’l Treasury Employees Union v. Von Raab*, 489 U.S. 656 (1989).

**Q** When is random drug testing based on a “special need” allowed?

**A** A special need beyond the need for law enforcement exists in “safety-sensitive” or “security-sensitive” positions that are “fraught with such risks of injury to others that even a momentary lapse of attention could have disastrous consequences.” *Skinner*, 489 U.S. at 628. The courts have determined that employees who hold the following safety-sensitive positions may be randomly drug tested without violating the Fourth Amendment: (1) law enforcement employees who carry firearms or who are directly involved in drug interdiction (*Von Raab*, 489 U.S. at 679); (2) public transporters in industries in which there is a documented problem with drug or alcohol related incidents (*Skinner*, 489 U.S. 602); (3) operators of heavy machinery, large vehicles or hazardous substances (*id; Aubrey v. Sch. Bd. of Lafayette Par.*, 148 F.3d 559 (5th Cir. 1998)); (4) employees working in high-risk areas such as highway medians (*Bryant v. City of Monroe*, No. 14-30020, 2014 WL 6466862 (5th Cir. 2014)); and (5) wastewater treatment employees who handle hazardous chemicals (*Bailey v. City of Baytown, Texas*, 781 F. Supp. 1210 (S.D. Tex. 1991). Additionally, post-accident drug testing of employees holding safety-sensitive positions without individualized suspicion of wrongdoing has been upheld. See *Skinner*, 489 U.S. at 620.

A city that desires to implement a random drug testing policy should first articulate a “compelling interest” beyond the need for law enforcement that justifies such testing, and then determine which employees may legitimately be randomly tested. If a “compelling interest” beyond the need for law enforcement cannot be identified, the city should not perform random drug tests.

**Q** When is drug testing based on individualized suspicion allowed?

**A** A city can require an employee to undergo drug testing if the city has individualized suspicion that the employee is under the influence of drugs. See *Chandler v. Miller*, 520 U.S. 305, 313 (1997). Whether individualized suspicion exists is a fact-specific inquiry. Before requiring an employee to undergo a drug test, the city should be able to articulate specific observations that led to the individualized suspicion, including, but not limited to, speech, behavior, conduct, or odor that suggests that an employee is under the influence of drugs, observation of drug use, a physical state of impairment, an incoherent mental state, or deteriorating work performance that is not attributable to other factors, changes in personal behavior that are otherwise unexplainable, or evidence of possession of illegal or unauthorized drugs or drug paraphernalia.

However, requiring non safety-sensitive employees injured in the scope of employment to submit to a drug test without any individualized suspicion of an employee’s wrongdoing is prohibited. See *United Teachers of New Orleans v. Orleans Parish Sch. Bd. Through Holmes*, 142 F.3d 853 (5th Cir. 1998).
Q Can a city drug test all applicants for employment?

A Texas courts have not addressed whether a governmental entity can require drug testing of all applicants for employment. However, federal courts in other jurisdictions have struck down pre-employment drug testing of employees in non safety-sensitive positions. See e.g. Am. Fed’n of State, County and Mun. Empls. v. Scott, 717 F.3d 851 (11th Cir. 2013), cert. denied, 572 U.S. 1060 (2014) (mandatory drug testing of all job applicants struck down); Lanier v. City of Woodburn, 518 F.3d 1147 (9th Cir. 2008) (post-job offer drug testing of a library page was unconstitutional as applied to that position because the page’s duties were not safety-sensitive). Additionally, one court concluded that an employee’s submission to drug testing, on pain of termination, does not constitute voluntary consent. See Scott, 717 F.3d at 873. Although these cases are not binding on Texas employers, they are persuasive. Accordingly, a city that has or desires to implement a policy requiring pre-employment drug testing should consult with local counsel regarding this matter.

Q What rules apply to employees and applicants for employment who operate commercial motor vehicles?

A All employees of a city who operate commercial motor vehicles that are subject to commercial drivers’ license (CDL) requirements must undergo drug and alcohol testing pursuant to federal Department of Transportation regulations. See 49 U.S.C. §31306; 49 C.F.R. Part 382. Said employees are subject to post-accident, random, reasonable suspicion, return-to-duty, and follow-up testing. See 49 CRF §§382.302; .305; .307; .309; and .311. Also, applicants for employment who are subject to Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations must receive a negative drug test before being allowed to operate a commercial motor vehicle. Id. §382.301. A city may not allow a driver who refuses to submit to such tests to perform or continue to perform safety-sensitive duties. Id. §382.211.

Additionally, beginning on January 6, 2020, all employers, including cities, who employ drivers with CDLs are required by federal law to use DOT’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s Commercial Driver’s License Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse to determine a CDL driver’s drug and alcohol program violations. Id. §382.601 et seq. In addition, employers and medical review officers, or their designated representatives, are required to report information about current and prospective employees’ positive drug and alcohol test results, as well as refusals to submit to testing, through the clearinghouse. Id. The clearinghouse can be accessed here: https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov.

Q Can a city require an individual to submit to and pass a drug test before the individual can be appointed to or run for an elective city office?

A Not likely. The Supreme Court of the United States has determined that requiring drug testing of elected officials, without individualized suspicion, as a condition for running for office is not permissible. See Chandler, 520 U.S. 305. The court found that there was no special need so substantial to override the individual’s privacy interest so as to suppress the Fourth Amendment’s normal requirement of individualized suspicion. Id.

Q Are the results of a drug test confidential?

A Generally, the results of a drug test should be kept confidential and not disclosed to third-parties without the employee’s consent. If the results of a drug test reveal the presence of a lawfully prescribed drug or other medical information, this information must treated as a confidential medical record and maintained in a secure file separate from an employee’s personnel file. See 42 U.S.C. §12112(d)(3) (B). As a best practice, drug test results received by a city should only be shared with city personnel on a need-to-know basis.

DOT regulations allow an employer to release the results of an employee’s drug or alcohol test without the employee’s consent in certain legal proceedings, including a lawsuit (e.g. a wrongful discharge action), grievance (e.g. an arbitration concerning disciplinary action taken by an employer), or administrative proceeding (e.g. an unemployment compensation hearing) brought by, or on behalf of, an employee and resulting from a positive DOT drug or alcohol test or a refusal to test. 49 C.F.R. §40.323. An employer is also allowed to release test results in response to a court order. Id. ★
Amarillo went back to its past to build its future.

Amarillo lost affiliated baseball when the Amarillo Gold Sox, the Double-A farm team of the San Diego Padres, left following the 1982 season.

While Amarillo saw several incarnations of professional and amateur baseball teams for more than three decades, it was the return of affiliated baseball to Amarillo in April 2019 that led to an economic rebirth in the downtown area.

And this was the game plan - to use a partnership between the city and baseball to revive downtown.

For decades beginning in the early 1980s, there was little significant downtown development in Amarillo.

While this economic malaise cannot be attributed to the loss of affiliated baseball in Amarillo (previous baseball teams played in a stadium owned by Potter County), the goal for the city was clear – bring back baseball to bring back downtown.

Dating back to at least 2009, city officials and community leaders began discussing a multipurpose event venue (MPEV) as a home for baseball and a catalyst for downtown development.

These efforts culminated in April 2019 with the opening of “Hodgetown” – named for longtime community leader and former Amarillo Mayor Jerry Hodge, who played a pivotal role in bringing affiliated baseball back to Amarillo.

Hodgetown is a success – both on the field in terms of baseball and off the field in terms of sparking a rebirth of economic development in downtown Amarillo.

On the field, Hodgetown is the home of the Amarillo Sod Poodles.

As fate would have it, the San Diego Padres returned their Double-A franchise to Amarillo in impressive, if not historic, fashion.
The Amarillo Sod Poodles led the Texas League in attendance (averaging 6,291 fans a game with 40 sellouts) and won the league championship. Hodgetown was also awarded the 2020 Texas League All-Star Game. The Sod Poodles were named Baseball America’s 2019 Minor League Team of the Year.

From an economic perspective, the Sod Poodles had about 50 fulltime employees during the season, and 100 part-time jobs were created related to game-day team operations.

Off the field, Hodgetown has been paying dividends even before its groundbreaking in February 2018 right across from Amarillo City Hall.

The construction cost for Hodgetown was $45.5 million, and the MPEV was built in only 13 months.

Amarillo taxpayers did not foot the bill – unless they stayed in a hotel or motel in Amarillo. Hodgetown was funded by the Hotel Occupancy Tax, meaning a tax levied on hotel and motel customers in Amarillo.

And most importantly for Amarillo taxpayers, Hodgetown – with a 9.6 acre footprint - was completed just under its $45.5 million budget.

As for Hodgetown being a catalyst for downtown economic development, the list of infrastructure/businesses in downtown that can be traced to Hodgetown is significant and growing:

- The Embassy Suites by Hilton Amarillo Downtown is located almost directly across the street from Hodgetown and opened in September of 2017 – a $40 million investment.
- Xcel Energy opened its new downtown office building in May 2017 – a $42 million investment that sits not far from Hodgetown’s home plate entrance.
- A $16 million parking garage adjacent to Hodgetown opened in July 2017, with as many as 756 hotel /valet and paid parking spaces.
- The parking garage facility includes 25,000 square feet of retail space.
- Jimmy John’s Gourmet Sandwiches opened on the ground floor of the Xcel Energy Building in June of 2017 becoming the first retail establishment to open on the four blocks of South Buchanan Street on which Hodgetown sits.
- The first tenant of retail space in the city-owned parking garage is Joe Taco, a “Mexi-Café” which announced its third location in the Amarillo/Canyon area in October 2019.

Amarillo Mayor Ginger Nelson summed up the impact of Hodgetown during its grand opening in April 2019: “This is an exciting and historic day for Amarillo. After nearly a decade of preparation, the most significant economic catalyst in downtown Amarillo in decades – Hodgetown – is a reality. This is a beautiful facility that will serve as a centerpiece for increasing tourism and economic development for the entire Amarillo community.”

The city of Amarillo's goal of bringing back its past to improve its future created a partnership between the City and affiliated baseball and, more importantly, it has accomplished the objective of breathing new life into downtown. ★
MELISSA REAPS BENEFITS FROM STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

By Celso Martinez, President, Municipal Voice
It’s a universal truth that relationships evolve, that these interactions have lives of their own. Whether interpersonal relationships or relationships between large organizations, they will eventually experience ups and downs, opportunities, and challenges.

Often, the positive or negative tone of a relationship, especially for organizations that interact with other organizations in the same community, is a function of the individuals or groups that set the organizations’ policies, define its goals and objectives, steer the conversations, and establish the association’s overall atmosphere and culture.

For the City of Melissa and the Melissa Independent School District (ISD), like many institutions that share a constituency, the relationship between them has naturally undergone some of these interactions at various times.

Since the summer of 2016 though, the relationship between these two expanding organizations has been reshaping itself into a symbiotic bond that has yielded unprecedented benefits for both emerging entities. What has developed is more a partnership than a relationship, more a deep collaborative than a casual linkage.

Moreover, the close, highly-cooperative, intensely-transformational relationship, already deeply ingrained in the two organizations, continues to evolve, breaking new ground for both – to the ultimate benefit of the citizens of Melissa and the students, parents, staff, and supporters of the Melissa ISD. And, like all of these intensifying relationships, it’s driven by the resolve of the people at the core of both. Certainly Mayor Reed Greer and Melissa ISD School Board President George James deserve the lion’s share of credit. The two understand, better than most, that service to the greater Melissa community is their primary function, and more importantly, they both know that building a foundational partnership with each other is the key that unlocks the proverbial doors of opportunity.

In like manner, the members of the Melissa City Council and Melissa ISD board are just as fully invested in the partnership and each elected official is outspoken in their unqualified support. Significantly, the winner of the MISD Volunteer of the Year Award in 2018 now sits on the City Council as an at-large representative.

Notwithstanding the full support at the top, the physical expression of the City of Melissa and Melissa ISD relationship occurs at the staff level. City Manager Jason Little and Superintendent of Schools Keith Murphy have been unequivocal in their determination to see that the relationship lives up to, and exceeds, the vision of their respective organizations.

The City Manager sits on several MISD ad hoc and standing committees, and is a trusted resource for the Superintendent, each leader lending their personal energy to ensure the lines of communication are always open and that chatter, official and otherwise, is kept constant.

Duke Sparks, Melissa ISD’s director of athletic operations and community partnerships, has fittingly provided the spark that has ignited the fervor that keeps the relationship aflame. His rapid-fire delivery of facts and figure is sometimes hard to follow, as his enthusiasm far outpaces his ability to formulate his words. The infectious nature of Sparks’ dedication to ensuring the City and ISD relationship stays on the upswing is refreshingly youthful, belying his senior status.
Cooperation at every level between the two entities is, in fact, seamless. To an outsider, it would be as difficult to discern the allegiance of City employees versus district employees as it would be to tell apart a set of identical twins.

Examples abound. But at the top, the commitment to a combined and coordinated pledge of service to each other’s shared mission was clearly demonstrated with the Council’s unanimous vote awarding a $40,000 grant from the City of Melissa to the Melissa ISD Police Department. The grant carried no stipulations or conditions other than it be used to elevate the safety and security of students at school campuses and school facilities.

The district’s transportation maintenance lot, called the “bus barn” because the dozens of buses parked there resemble a herd of cattle, required a variance from the City’s Code Compliance Department to be in full conformity. School officials duly applied, and in the spirit of collaboration and teamwork, the variance was granted after the request was fully vetted. Code regulations were met, of course, ensuring that the bus barn was in complete compliance once the variance was granted.

Staff members at the Melissa Public Library interact regularly with students, teachers, and staff from several MISD schools, presenting special programs often designed to fit into the curriculum of study. While slightly distinct in their overall missions, the library and schools coordinate and cooperate in assisting each other meet their various undertakings.

Melissa Municipal Court partners with the district in the Texas Department of Transportation-sponsored Municipal Traffic Safety Initiative program, including annual Back to School safety events, interactive displays at the high school on driving safety, and many other student-directed traffic safety programs. The Court staff has hosted mock trials with middle school students acting as judges, prosecutors, and defendants. Regular tours of the Court are provided to students of all ages.

Although the hand-in-hand relationship is extremely strong in a variety of areas, the relationship between these two
major organizations is most evident in the Texas Sports Village at the Z-Plex, a premier, first-class baseball, softball, and tennis facility constructed on City land bordering the high school campus.

Along with community activist Doug Zadow and members of the recently formed Melissa Sports LLC, the City and the school district joined forces to design, construct, and manage the sports complex. Just completing its first full year of operation, the complex has already hosted Division I college baseball games, the Don Mattingly World Series, a national-level baseball tournament, and will be the host park for the Pudge Rodriguez World Classic.

The Z-Plex is also, of course, the home field of the various Melissa High School Cardinal boys’ and girls’ teams. Students in the district’s Career and Technical Education (CTE) program practice their computer and graphic skills by operating the high-tech scoreboards at the fields, while CTE students in other sports and hospitality related disciplines are also able to gain real-world experience.

The constant play at the Z-Plex has attracted thousands of players, coaches, support personnel, parents, and a fair share of scouts from colleges, universities, and even many professional baseball teams. The draw is national in scope, as teams from coast to coast converge on Melissa to play.

And, from the “be careful what you wish for” department, the weekly influx of fans and family driving personal vehicles, completely full school buses, and a steady stream of large 40-50 passenger coaches means that local restaurants, area hotels, and retail businesses reap the benefits of these visitors, at times straining to accommodate the out-of-town onslaught.

That, community officials agree, means that the Z-Plex will become a major economic generator for the City, boosting the sales and use tax, establishing new businesses catering to visitors, creating more job opportunities, and furthering development of the surrounding land.

Truly, a rising tide lifts all boats, and in the case of the City of Melissa and the Melissa ISD, the rising tide appears limitless. ★

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It makes perfect sense, but it’s rarely done. Multi-agency collaboration could soon become a trend in Texas and across the nation. Local governments are discovering they can team up to shore up their technology programs, while saving taxpayers money. The City of Plano and Collin County took this spirit of collaboration to another level in what officials from both governments are calling a “win-win.”

Collin County did not have a location where they could quickly restore computer operations should the main data center be compromised. They planned to create a secondary disaster recovery center. For security and disaster purposes, governments have a vital need to replicate data between two sites. With tornados common in North Texas, the recommended distance between data locations is 10 miles. The County’s data center is located at the County courthouse with backup systems located a quarter mile away in the county administration building. Their initial plans were to refurbish space in their sub-courthouse in Plano, expanding their records vault and converting it into a backup data center. The estimated cost: $1.1 million.

At the same time, Plano had plans of its own to expand the pathway for the City’s 80-mile fiber network, which connects all City facilities. The estimated total cost of the network was $5.25 million.

Information technology representatives from local North Texas governments often converse through association meetings and other gatherings. When the experts from Plano and Collin County started a conversation about their respective pending projects, they started to ask, “What if?” They asked what if Plano could help the County with a suitable environment for a secondary data center and what if the County could offer Plano more fiber capacity. Collin County Chief Information Officer Caren Skipworth approached Plano City Council members to see if there was any interest in a partnership that would benefit county residents and citizens of Plano.

Plano recently built a new technology services data center at the City’s Municipal Center. They had ample floor space to provide the County an area to set up a secondary disaster recovery center with redundant power and climate control. Collin County, meanwhile, owns and operates existing fiber line that runs through Plano and through a City facility. So they struck a deal. Plano allowed the County to use their space and the County allowed the City to use their fiber pathways and existing lines.
“We needed to have some geographic separation as well as floor space to stand up enough storage and compute capacity that we could continue operations in the event of an emergency,” said Greg Elliott, Collin County Information Technology Master Architect. “The partnership with the City of Plano gives us all that along with the assurance the overall facility is being managed appropriately by highly qualified people.”

The benefits are far reaching, especially in cost savings. By utilizing Plano’s data center instead of retrofitting a nearby building, Collin County saved $700,000-$800,000. “As a public servant, we have to be mindful of the funds we expend and make sure we are doing the right thing,” said Elliott.

Plano estimates they saved $475,000 in permitting fees and fiber costs by side-stepping third party agreements with private contractors. With all the mutual benefits, the deal made perfect sense. After all, Collin County and the City of Plano share the same tax base and regulatory requirements. The agreement also meant both projects could be completed much sooner with less construction. “It’s easier to do deals between governments, as opposed to creating contracts with private data centers owned by private companies,” said Chris Edwards, Enterprise Architect and Security Manager for the City of Plano.

The collaborative agreement is the first of what likely will be many partnerships. Plano is also working with Collin County to establish connections between City and County radio networks. That will allow users and subscribers of a joint radio system to have extended radio coverage within Collin County. It will allow the County to utilize Plano’s master sites, which will provide them call processing and system management.

The creative collaboration is spreading. Plano started discussions with information technology directors in smaller Collin County cities regarding similar deals. “Smaller cities with single data centers are high risk,” said Edwards. “They don’t have the budgets for expensive co-location sites. If they’re located in the county, then they have County fiber that goes through or near their city. With our move to hyper-converged infrastructure, we have reduced our data center footprint by a massive amount. We can house their smaller disaster recovery requirements, and as a result, reduce costs and increase information sharing.”★
9-1-1 operators dispatch EMTs to a nasty five-car pileup. Firefighters request mutual aid while battling both flames and triple-digit temperatures. Police detectives broadcast a bank robbery suspect description to patrolling nearby officers.

For a growing number of North Texas first responders, each of these critical conversations has one thing in common: it takes place via a communication network known as the Joint Radio System. Launched by the Cities of Allen and Plano in 2009, this web of microwave dishes, poles, and antennas give first responders a larger and more reliable network than the cities could ever have alone.

“By partnering with the City of Plano, the City of Allen was able to create two ‘brains’ to our emergency communication system,” explained City of Allen Information Technology (IT) Director Eric Matthews. “Though it required each city to relinquish some control, we both reaped the benefits in reliability.”

The Joint Radio System started as a 10-year experiment under then-Allen IT Director Sid Hudson. In 2019, the cities agreed to continue the arrangement ‘in perpetuity.’ Why? For one, it allows first responders to more easily connect and communicate across an ever-expanding network of jurisdictions. An Allen police officer can communicate with departments across city lines on the same radio network; an Allen fire department ambulance can transport a critical patient to a Dallas hospital while staying in range.

“In the old days, your transmission range would be limited on how much you could spend on an antenna. That’s not the case anymore,” said City of Allen Assistant Fire Chief Richard Vaughn. A 23-year employee of the Allen Fire Department, Vaughn says the transition to the Joint Radio System was “a completely positive experience.”

“Before, if you wanted to make a change to how your radios were set up, you’d have to physically touch every single radio,” Vaughn explained. “Now, updates can be pushed to your radio over the air—almost like a smartphone update. It saves us time, saves us money, and everything works.”

In addition, this “fault-tolerant environment,” as Matthews describes it, allows one system to temporarily shut down

WHEN TALK ISN’T CHEAP, CITIES LOOK TO EACH OTHER FOR SAVINGS

By Chelsey Aprill, Communication Manager, City of Allen
while the other seamlessly takes over for updates, repairs, or (in the case of one especially hot Texas summer) a failed air conditioning unit.

"In order to keep servers from overheating, the Plano system was taken offline until repairs could be made," recalled Matthews. During this time, all communication was routed through the Allen system. "It worked exactly as designed, with users noticing no difference."

What users do notice is the savings. Though the system is co-owned by Allen, Plano provides the employees to staff it—saving the City of Allen up to $250,000 annually on salary and benefits. Meanwhile, both cities profit from subscription fees, paid by surrounding cities that want the same, reliable network without the cost of building their own. Wylie and Murphy, smaller cities with exploding populations, were the first to subscribe. Several more entities followed, including other cities, a hospital system, and school district.

Today, it costs approximately $48 per radio, every month to join the Joint Radio System. Facilities which bring their own infrastructure (such as additional microwave towers) pay a lower overall fee. Collin County is the next in line to join the system, bringing eight towers and a sizeable network of radio subscribers. Owners of the Joint Radio System have also begun talking with nearby municipalities, including Richardson, Garland, and Mesquite, about building an even larger regional system which could lower costs further.

"City revenue caps put in place by state leaders may push more communities in this direction," said Matthews. "I think we'll see more political will for regional partnerships, especially if they significantly reduce costs."

To ensure fair representation of each city’s interests, Allen and Plano formed both an executive committee (consisting of the system’s owners) and technical committee (which includes subscriber cities) to create and enact policies and protocols. For Allen and Plano, this endeavor has led to better overall communication between the cities’ IT departments. Discussions and site visits sometimes meander from microwaves into other pressing concerns: cybersecurity improvements, cloud computing, and more.

"It gives us another glimpse at the real-world solutions to the everyday problems of Texas cities," said Matthews. "Working closely with our partners in Plano has led to increased collaboration and opened up new perspectives." ★
One of the most challenging aspects of city government is creating community consensus. Whether it’s a small town trying to fund road improvements or a multi-million dollar bond package for a new sports stadium in a major metropolitan area, engaging the entire community by educating them about the proposal, providing them with opportunities to offer feedback, and listening to residents all play a critical role in generating the needed support.

Leaders in the City of Cedar Park - a community located 16 miles northeast of Austin - realized the important role that community engagement plays when creating community consensus during efforts to establish a stormwater drainage program. The City had long recognized the need for regular stormwater drainage maintenance and a dedicated, sustainable stormwater drainage program, however, finding funding without increasing taxes or fees presented a challenge.

Unwelcome flooding incidents in several older neighborhoods and a growing list of major stormwater improvement projects had the attention of City leaders. In addition, catastrophic flooding in other parts of the central Texas region in 2015, most notably in Wimberly, reinforced previous discussions among leaders about the importance of creating a long-term solution to maintain a reliable stormwater drainage program, tackle major stormwater drainage projects, and make associated street repairs.

With an eye toward the future, Cedar Park’s staff worked with engineering consultant Freese and Nichols to create a long-term stormwater drainage program to address immediate and future needs. The plan included program management in the form of two new staff positions, identification of approximately $38 million in drainage related capital infrastructure projects, added personnel and equipment for increased maintenance, and a dedicated stormwater coordinator to maintain compliance with state and federal regulatory requirements.

Similar to more than 100 cities in Texas, including regional neighbors Austin, Georgetown, San Marcos, and Round Rock, the City initially proposed a stormwater drainage utility fee to fund the program, but this was not well received by the public. In June 2016, the City presented a plan to residents during a series of town hall meetings to gain feedback and generate a consensus on the preferred funding package from among four stormwater utility fee price range options.

The City also distributed a survey to increase outreach to residents.

While most residents favored having a stormwater drainage program, they did not want to incur increased fees. Of the 265 responses to the City’s survey, nearly 58 percent were against any type of stormwater drainage fee. This sentiment was reinforced by resident feedback to City staff during the town hall meetings and other public forums. In particular, residents living in newer communities with recently constructed roads and some stormwater drainage capabilities did not want to pay a fee for services they believed would only benefit a part of the City that did not directly impact them. Others felt that the financial burden should be placed on the commercial real estate developers since the increased amount of residential and commercial
development was a contributing factor to the severity of the City's flooding.

Rather than move forward on a fee-based funding plan that would not likely be supported by residents, the City wanted to build a consensus. City staff spent several months exploring alternative stormwater drainage funding options that would not incur a fee, including potential use of the General Fund, general obligation bonds, certificates of obligation, and special taxing districts. The City determined that it could not pay for the entire program from the General Fund without a potential impact to the property tax rate, a move that would likely be met with the same feedback as the drainage utility fee. Ultimately, City leaders identified a way to fund the program without requiring residents to pay an unpopular fee. With voter approval, the City could reallocate funds from the City’s economic development sales tax.

In 1999, Cedar Park residents approved the adoption of a Section Type A sales and use tax for economic development. The fund, which is composed of half a cent from each sales tax dollar, is used to offset the cost of recruiting new business opportunities and retaining current companies. With voter approval, ¾ of a half cent would remain in the economic development sales tax, while ¼ of a half cent would be reallocated to pay for stormwater drainage and related street maintenance.

Prior to placing this new funding measure on a ballot, Cedar Park wanted to understand community sentiment and support for this new plan. The City partnered with Cooksey Communications, a strategic communications consultant, and the engineering firm Freese and Nichols to develop and deploy a comprehensive community engagement program designed to educate residents about the components of the stormwater drainage plan, how it would benefit the community, and how it would be funded.

Cedar Park’s community outreach campaign centered around four hyperlocal town hall meetings that took place in late 2017. Locations in various parts of the City were selected to ensure a broad range of residents from different neighborhoods had an opportunity to participate. Direct mailers were created and distributed to encourage residents to attend the meetings, and a press release that was shared with local media generated several print and broadcast stories. As a result, participation at the meetings exceeded expectations with a many as 75 residents attending a single meeting.

Each town hall meeting included a presentation by City staff that supported by a script that was developed in conjunction with Cooksey and Cedar Park’s communications team. Display boards and an informational handout with frequently asked questions were also used to reinforce the need for a stormwater drainage program, explain the funding proposal and highlight how the funds would be used. Freese and Nichols representatives and Cedar Park staff were available to answer resident questions, and all participants were asked to take an informal survey before leaving the meeting.

The opportunity to learn about the program and provide feedback was not limited to residents attending the town hall meetings. A comprehensive microsite was launched, a video was developed, and residents were invited through all City communications channels to take the informal survey.

Efforts to educate the general public about the new proposal were highly successful, with more than 93 percent of informal survey respondents ultimately indicating their support. In fact, several residents who were highly critical of the first proposal voiced their approval of the new one.

With all the data indicating widespread support for the stormwater drainage funding proposition, the issue was placed on the ballot in spring 2018. Election-appropriate versions of the communications tools prepared during the first phase of the community engagement and education campaign were created to support further outreach, which included an informal open house.

On May 5, 2018, Cedar Park voters overwhelmingly approved the ballot measure with 77 percent of the vote.

A year later, Cedar Park has made a great deal of progress establishing its stormwater drainage program. Since the election in May of 2018, the City has hired the program management staff and stormwater coordinator, added additional staff and equipment for drainage maintenance, approved a stormwater master plan, and most recently submitted a funding plan for the fiscal year 2020 budget with approximately $9 million in funding for capital infrastructure projects.
The City of San Marcos and Texas State University, in collaboration with the International Town and Gown Association, hosted the inaugural 2019 Texas Town and Gown Symposium on October 30, 2019 at the San Marcos Activity Center. The one-day event provided a unique opportunity for networking between city stakeholders and decision-makers in the higher education realm.

Local town and gown stakeholders were invited to an intimate pre-event dinner in the rotunda of the historic Hays County Courthouse on the town square. Guests were treated to a delicious catered meal and a special appearance by the accomplished Texas State University acapella group Voca Libre. The dinner provided a special opportunity to strengthen town and gown relationships in a relaxed and conversational setting.

During the next day’s symposium, attendees learned from and engaged with one another during six educational sessions. As part of the educational program, participants were introduced to the International Town and Gown Association, known as the primary source of experienced and engaged university and municipal practitioners seasoned in leading practices producing effective solutions with long-term results.

“The work of the International Town and Gown Association is so important for college towns”, said Barbara Moore, College Station Assistant to the City Manager-Special Projects. “It’s an opportunity for those of us in this unique situation to share resources and best practices on how to address our challenges. Learning how to build relationships with the university, educate our student population, and serve the interests of our citizens was a key point for the inaugural regional town and gown conference in San Marcos. It’s all about creating a community that works for both students and residents and that’s thriving and prepared for the future.”

A primary topic for the symposium centered around the growing number of college students moving to off-campus housing and how this increases the concentrations of students in host communities. With increased student numbers comes a process of change in the host community called studentification. This college town phenomenon can have an immensely positive impact on the physical, social, cultural and economic transformation of a host community. This impact includes an economic stimulus for the private sector, volunteerism, vibrancy, and cultural activism.

The most prevalent negatives of studentification are conversion of owner-occupied homes to student rentals, lifestyle friction, lack of affordable housing, and an excessive demand on local resources to constantly “put out fires” related to student density. Long-term residents may feel a sense of loss of community cohesion and identity. Students
may experience hostility from neighbors in the “us versus them” paradigm along with unfair leasing practices by property managers and landlords.

University and municipal stakeholders often find themselves in a crisis while searching for answers dealing with parties, noise, parking, trash, and the upkeep of rental property. The International Town and Gown Association is the starting point for town and gown communities to move from only addressing the symptoms of student density to planning strategic responses, enhancing the university-community relationship, and developing good practices within their local community context.

Topics and speakers for the symposium included:

- **The Power of Possibilities: Town and Gown Relationships** – Chase Stapp, Interim Director of Public Safety, City of San Marcos, and Dr. Joanne Smith, Vice President for Student Affairs, Texas State University

- **What Keeps You Up at Night: Symptoms of Studentification** – Lisa Dvorak, Community Liaison, City of San Marcos and former President of the International Town and Gown Association

- **The University and City Connection** – Emily Allen, Leadership and Networking Coordinator, Colorado State University

- **The Answers are in the Room** – Beth Bagwell, Executive Director, International Town and Gown Association

- **The Future of Student Housing** – Dr. Rosanne Proite, Director of Housing and Residential Life, Texas State University

- **Census 2020: The University, City, and Business Perspectives** – Ron Jackson, President, International Town and Gown Association; Shavon Caldwell, Planner, City of San Marcos; Samantha Brown, Vice President of Communications, San Marcos Chamber of Commerce

The City of San Marcos and Texas State University see this as a fruitful beginning for the symposium tradition. The broad variety of attendees included elected officials and various city, university, and law enforcement professionals. The benefit of bringing together policymakers and boots-on-the-ground personnel to learn about the distinct opportunities and challenges in university towns is invaluable for the future.

“Cohesive town and gown relationships are crucial for creating a healthy living experience for long-term residents and students,” said Lisa Dvorak, community liaison for the City of San Marcos. “Involving a broad array of stakeholders who are representative of the town and university communities can effectively reduce conflict and enhance quality of life in neighborhoods.”

Both the City of San Marcos and Texas State University are recognized leaders in town and gown issues, having received numerous awards for their collaborative program Achieving Community Together (ACT). ACT is an effort to reduce the over-reliance on enforcement to resolve conflict and disorder in neighborhoods. Past awards include the Texas Municipal League Municipal Excellence Award in Management Innovations, Herman Goldstein international Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing Award, Association of College Unions Collaborative Program of the Year, and the International Town and Gown Association Larry Abernathy Award for Excellence in Town and Gown Relationships. The ACT program is a cited as a leading practice in the “Studentification Guide for North America: Delivering Harmonious Town and Gown Associations” and in the just-released book, “The New American College Town” as one of eight leading practices named by the International Town and Gown Association.

For more information on the symposium, contact Lisa Dvorak at ldvorak@sanmarcostx.gov. To learn more about the International Town and Gown Association and the upcoming annual University and City Relations Conference in Boulder, Colorado, visit https://www.itga.org.
TEXAS IS HEATING UP FOR SPRING AND SUMMER

Grab your favorite pair of sunnies, your best pals, and hit the road for some fun in the sun. Warmer weather is right around the corner. In Texas, that means cook-offs, festivals, and live music all over this great state. Here’s a sampling of events taking place in TML member cities around the state from March through August.

March 21
City of Plano: Texas Fly Fishing & Brew Festival
www.visitplano.com/event/welcome-to-the-texas-fly-fishing-brew-festival
Make plans to visit Plano for the Texas Fly Fishing & Brew Festival this spring. This one-of-a-kind, family-friendly event will be held at the Plano Center approximately 20 miles north of Dallas.

April 24-25
City of Granbury: Granbury Wine Walk
www.granburywinewalk.com
The 11th Annual Granbury Wine Walk is the perfect way to experience Granbury! Enjoy fun, live local music, art, and countless flavors of wine and food. You can stroll the historic downtown square with your favorite family, friends, and a drink in hand!
May 2
City of Texarkana: Twice as Fine Wine Festival
www.texarkanawinefestival.com
The 6th Annual Twice as Fine Texarkana Wine Festival is a one-of-its kind wine, art, music, and food festival for the four states area. The festival will target a discerning audience of wine and food enthusiasts. Wineries from across the state will be there.

May 14-17
City of Bastrop: Bastrop Music Festival
www.bastropmusicfestival.com
The Bastrop Music Festival features more than 30 bands in multiple venues. Make plans to visit this charming Central Texas town and enjoy four days of great music!

May 15-17
City of Pflugerville: Deutschen Pfest
www.deutschenpfest.com
Pflugerville’s most popular pfestival, the Deutschen Pfest, is always bursting with pfun all weekend long. Once the event opens Friday evening, you and your pfamily can enjoy children’s games and activities, shopping booths, Saturday’s parade, live music, and thrilling rides at the carnival.

May 16
City of Haslet: Wild West Fest
www.haslet.org
Excitement awaits you at Haslet’s Annual Wild West Fest. There will be fun for all, including bull riding contests, petting zoo, mutton bustin’, food trucks, carnival rides, vendors, and live music.
May 16
City of Lago Vista: Lago Fest
www.lagofest.com
Free Admission
Come by land or by boat to Lago Fest, a vibrant live music, arts, and food festival on the north shore of Lake Travis. Lago Fest features notable musical artists. So pack up the kids and head out to the lake for this family-friendly event.

May 23
City of Coldspring: Coldspring’s Annual Car, Truck, and Bike Show
www.cabma.org
Free Admission
Where can you enjoy the beautiful Coldspring historic downtown and marvel at original and custom-built cars ranging the century? At Coldspring’s Annual Car, Truck, and Bike Show of course! From custom cars and orginal cars, to 1940’s-style motorcycles and trucks, there is something for everyone in your crew to admire.

June 3
City of Gatesville: Shivaree
www.gatesvilleshivaree.com
Make your way to Gatesville for an all-day summer festival featuring the Up in Smoke BBQ Cook Off, Jeep show, vendors, food trucks, and family fun. The evening highlight will be a concert and street dance featuring Read Southall Band and The Great Divide.

June 5
City of Aledo: Summer Blast
www.aledo-texas.com
Free Admission
The annual Summer Blast is guaranteed fun for kids (and kids at heart)! Featuring live music, food trucks, and a fireworks show, you won’t want to miss this early June event.
June 5-6
City of Stephenville: Moo-La Fest
www.visitstephenville.gov
Free Admission
Kick off National Dairy Month at Moo-La Fest and celebrate Stephenville’s rich dairy heritage. Featuring tethered balloon rides, balloon glows, live music, a carnival, food trucks, vendors, and a wine tent.

June 11-13
City of Lockhart: 48th Annual Chisholm Trail Roundup
www.chisholmtrailroundup.com
Lockhart is celebrating being a part of the Chisholm Trail with an annual roundup. This event includes a BBQ capital of Texas championship cook-off, rodeo followed by live music, queen’s coronation, awesome auction, carnival, grand parade, and a kids’ zone with petting zoo.

June 13
City of Mesquite: Summer Sizzle
www.visitmesquitetx.com/events/2019/summer-sizzle
Free Admission
Mesquite’s annual festival has endless possibilities for a summer escape. Compete in the mud volleyball tournament with your friends. Dance the afternoon away with live performances. And after you worked up an appetite, head to the food trucks, then end the day with fireworks.
June 27
City of Wylie:
Bluegrass on Ballard
www.wylietexas.gov/living/events/bluegrass_on_ballard.php
Free Admission
World-class bluegrass bands take the stage in Olde City Park, and the day-long celebration includes 100 arts and craft booths, a 200-vehicle car show, food vendors, and pony rides for the kids. Restaurants and shops in historic downtown Wylie will be open for business.

July 3
City of Roanoke:
Roanoke Roundup
www.roanoketexas.com/250/Roanokes-3rd-of-July
Free Admission
Pack up the family and head to Roanoke’s for its 3rd of July Celebration. Everyone will enjoy a night of fun with bounce houses, a rock-climbing wall, spectacular fireworks, food, and music.

July 3-4
City of Waller: Freedom Fest
www.wallerfreedomfest.com
Free Admission
Waller’s Freedom Fest will feature free water slides and a petting zoo for the kids, as well as helicopter rides, food and craft vendors, live music, and fireworks both nights! It’s free to enter, but plan to bring and donate canned goods. There will be a veterans’ recognition with flyover on the Fourth of July.
July 4
City of Fredericksburg:
Fourth of July Fireworks
www.fbgtx.org

Free Admission

Celebrate Independence Day in the hill country! Fireworks light up the night sky at approximately 9:30 p.m. The fireworks show is free and can be viewed from Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park, the Gillespie County Fairgrounds, the Gillespie County Airport, and surrounding areas.

August 1
City of Marion:
84th Annual Marion Sausage Supper
210-867-0353

Free Admission

The 84th Annual Sausage Supper starts with the Trade Days Parade followed up with lunch at 11:00 a.m. The event also includes a live and silent auction, as well as music and dancing. ★

Submit your fall and winter events for the August 2020 issue of Texas Town & City magazine.

July 4
City of Seguin:
Biggest Small-Town Fourth of July Parade
www.seguintexas.gov/fourthofjuly

Free Admission

One of Seguin’s biggest traditions is the annual Independence Day Celebration, where thousands of spectators will enjoy watching more than 150 floats make their way through downtown Seguin decked out in patriotic colors.
Building positive workplace relationships is vital for career success. Relationships can positively or negatively affect your satisfaction with the job, your ability to advance, and gain recognition for your achievements. When you build positive relationships, you feel more comfortable with your interactions and less intimidated by others. You feel a closer bond to the people you spend the majority of your time working with.

However, for a lot of people, relationship building isn’t natural or easy to do. Most refuse to admit this is a concern because it is such a basic, common sense concept. They assume they already know how to do it. Don’t fall into that trap. Everyone – even the most outgoing, engaging personalities – can improve their skills in this critical area.

The ten tips listed below are for anyone who wants to build positive workplace relationships.

Apply these tips to interactions with your boss, team members, project managers, senior management, vendors, clients, constituents, direct reports, and administrators.
1. **Share more of yourself at meetings.** One of the best ways to build relationships is to let others know who you are. This can come by sharing your expertise, knowledge and personality at meetings. Other people will either get to know you, like you or want to hear more from you. They will find you more approachable and thus the chance of building relationships begins to occur. If you are fearful to share at meetings, think ahead of time about what you want to say so that you are more prepared.

2. **Speak positively about the people you work with.** Get in the habit of speaking positively to others and providing quality feedback about the people you work with. Many times the information that gets shared (whether positive or negative) comes back to the person who is being discussed. People will enjoy hearing that you have said supportive things about them and will know that you are on their side. That will build trust. Be careful of the workplace gossip that is so prevalent and don't contribute to it.

3. **Improve your interpersonal skills by supporting other people’s work.** Having a team attitude gives you a big competitive advantage. Ask how you can get involved with others. This will form a closer connection because you are working directly with someone else to help them meet their goals. They will appreciate your support and get to know you better which is vital to creating a more connected working relationship.

4. **Ask others to become involved in your projects or activities.** Don’t be afraid to ask others for help and bring them onto your projects. The more they can participate in the activities you are working on, the better you get to know each other. You’ll enjoy working with others in getting more things done.

5. **Write thank you notes.** Write notes of appreciation to the people who are doing exemplary work, making positive contributions, and going above the call of duty. These notes can be hard-written, sent via email, or done by voice mail. Colleagues like to be appreciated, and will feel more connected to you by having been noticed and thanked for their contributions.

6. **Initiate conversations by asking questions.** When you first meet someone, it can be a bit intimidating. You often don’t know what to say or how to say it. Asking questions is a great way for you to listen and let the other person share. They will feel closer to you when they have shared about themselves and you demonstrate you’re interested in what they have to say. Then share something about yourself so the relationship becomes a two-way interaction that can help establish a bond.

7. **Initiate repeated interactions and communications.** An important part to building relationships is to continue interacting with the person you have gotten to know. As you get to know each other better, personally and professionally, you establish a closer connection that can greatly impact your satisfaction.

8. **Participate in activities with others that don’t involve work.** As you get to know someone, you might find similar interests that may warrant an outside the work activity. This can greatly impact relationships because you are beginning the process toward friendship. Go out to lunch together during the work day or do things in the evenings or weekends.

9. **Share information.** The information you share can be directly related to their work or it can be about a subject you know they will enjoy reading. You are thinking of them and helping them with the right information or content.

10. **Introduce yourself at social work events.** Social events like lunches and dinners with colleagues, retreats, conferences, and holiday parties are good places to interact in an informal setting. If you can reach out and introduce yourself to some of the people who you work with or who you want to know better, you’ll find they are more inclined to let down their guard.

Building positive relationships often provides increased support to help you get your job done and be more efficient. You’ll enjoy greater satisfaction at work... and so will those around you. ★

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Joel Garfinkle is recognized as one of the top 50 coaches in the United States and the author of seven books, including Getting Ahead: Three Steps to Take Your Career to the Next Level. He has worked with many of the world’s leading companies, including Google, Deloitte, Amazon, Ritz-Carlton, Gap, Cisco, and Oracle. Visit Joel at https://garfinkleexecutivecoaching.com.
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The Parks Crew has been busy cleaning the shoreline of the lake and it looks fantastic on this beautiful fall day! #liveoaktx #liveoakparksandrecreation #liveoakpark #mytexascity #fallintexas

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Isn’t Laredo gorgeous? #holalaredo #laredotx #laredotexas #visittaredo #exploretexas #texastodo #lakecasablanca #texasparks #sunset #texas #ilovetexas

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