

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE September 6, 2022

TO Honorable Members of the Environment & Sustainability (ENVS) Committee

SUBJECT **OEQS Legislative Priorities Update**

This memorandum provides recommendations from the Office of Environmental Quality and Sustainability (OEQS) to the Office of Government Affairs (OGA) for possible inclusion in the City of Dallas Legislative Program, highlights activities by external partners to improve the environment through legislative action, and summarizes legislative priorities identified by ENVS Committee members during the August 1, 2022 meeting.

INTRODUCTION

As background, the Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) is a comprehensive roadmap that outlines specific activities that the City plans to undertake to improve quality of life for all residents, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to prepare for the impacts of climate change, and to create a healthier and more prosperous community. In May 2020, the City Council adopted the CECAP and a suite of actions that point Dallas in the direction of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. Many of the actions in the CECAP plan would benefit from State legislative support. The 88th Session of the Texas Legislature will convene in January 2023 and many issues affecting local governments and environmental improvements will be considered.

CECAP ALIGNMENT

The following recommended environmental legislative priorities support the actions in the CECAP. OEQS provided this information to the OGA in June 2022.

- Support legislation related to batch plants that require, for example: buffers between batch plants and neighborhoods; onsite air monitoring; controls on stacks; and annual inspections.
- Support legislation related to power grid improvements and distributed energy resources (e.g., battery, solar, wind).
- Supporting legislation related to climate and climate mitigation and adaptation actions.
- Supporting legislation that advances the use of electric vehicles and associated infrastructure.
- Supporting legislation that advances environmental justice, such as: incentives for infrastructure investment in populations disproportionately impacted by pollution; enhanced community engagement by State agencies; and fund an Office of Environmental Justice in the Office of the Public Interest Counsel.
- Support legislation that encourages the donation of pre-consumer edible food from food service vendors directly to those in need.
- Prevent the narrowing of the definition of State waters.
- Support legislation that expands public participation/community involvement in State decision-making processes.

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- Support legislation that expands producer responsibility.
- Support legislation that advances the reduction of harmful greenhouse gas emissions.
- Support legislation that bans the disposal into landfills of certain recyclable and organic materials.
- Support legislation to update substandard home stock (e.g., weatherization, energy efficiency, health and safety upgrades).
- Legislation that supports clean energy job creation and training.
- Supporting legislation that bans single use food containers (e.g., polystyrene).
- Support legislation that ensures greater coordination between the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and local governments when issuing permits.
- Support legislation that requires and incentivizes the recycling of certain construction, remodeling, and demolition debris.
- Support legislation that encourages the use of alternative modes of transportation.
- Support legislation that requires the incorporation of reusable and recyclable materials into municipal road construction and maintenance projects.
- Support legislation that encourages the pickup and delivery of food and organic waste from food service vendors for composting.
- Support legislation that allows per ton surcharges on materials disposed in landfills to fund a variety of waste reduction and diversion activities.

PARTNER ALIGNMENT

OEQS collaborates with multiple internal and external partners on the local, state, and national level to advance climate action. External partners such as C40, Climate Mayors, Urban Sustainability Directors Network, and other local stakeholders are also prioritizing support for legislation that, for example, improves environmental justice, increases use of renewable sources of energy, promotes reduced water and energy consumption, and reduces global climate impacts. Adding the City of Dallas voice to this call for action will amplify these items and help produce results for local residents.

ENVS COMMITTEE ALIGNMENT

During the August 1, 2022 ENVS Committee meeting, committee members raised the legislative priorities listed below. Many of the priorities echo concerns raised by OEQS and external partners.

- Legislation that addresses gaps regarding renewables (West vs. East Texas). (CM Blackmon)
- Legislation related to climate and climate mitigation and adaptation actions. (CM Ridley)
- Legislation that advances the use of electric vehicles and EV infrastructure to, for example, expand state and municipal EV fleets. (CM Ridley)
- Legislation related to polluting facilities that require, for example: buffers between facilities and neighborhoods; increased monitoring, testing, recordkeeping, and reporting; increased use of pollution controls; increased inspections; and engaging communities early in the permitting process. (CMs Schultz, Bazaldua)
- Legislation that reduces the use of impervious surfaces to, among other things, reduce stormwater impacts. (CM Schultz)

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- Legislation that addresses facilities that were zoned using predatory/discriminatory zoning practices to reduce, among other things, disproportionate environmental and health impacts on communities of color. (CM Bazaldua)
- Legislation that reduces urban sprawl. (CM West)
- Legislation that expands state and municipal parks. (CM West)
- Legislation that helps protect our urban forests and tree canopy from the emerald ash borer. (CM Resendez)

NEXT STEPS

OGA is currently reviewing recommendations from all City staff and Councilmembers. The next update on the City of Dallas Legislative Program will be presented to the Legislative Ad Hoc Committee on September 13, 2022. The final program will be presented to the full Council during the first quarter of FY23.

If you have questions, or need additional information regarding this memo, please contact Carlos Evans, OEQS Director (214-670-1642), Susan Alvarez, OEQS Assistant Director (214-671-9505), or Pharr Andrews, OEQS Senior Climate Coordinator.



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