



**2017 Texas Downtown Association
85th Session - Legislative Priorities**

The **Texas Downtown Association** provides resources to members through networking opportunities, marketing, education and advocacy to achieve community goals and ensure that every community in Texas has economically vibrant center that reflects its unique character.

The legislative priorities listed below reflect the feedback we received from our members, and the issues we believe are necessary to achieve our organization's goals and objectives.

Economic and Community Development

- Sustain, increase and expand the type of funding mechanisms often used for downtown redevelopment including but not limited to tax abatements, Chapter 380, Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones, Business Improvement Districts as well as 4A and 4B sales tax corporations.
- Maintain cities' ability to protect the interests of neighborhoods, downtowns and their citizens regarding permitted uses through municipal zoning rights.
- Small businesses play a major role in the vitality of downtown districts. TDA supports efforts to protect and promote small business in our communities.

Historic Preservation, Environment and Sustainability

- Texas downtowns have historic resources that tell the story of the history of the state. Many downtowns are centered on county courthouses that are architectural and historic gems. We support continued full funding for the Texas Historical Commission and its programs.
- TDA supports protecting the new state historic preservation tax credit. This credit creates a major incentive to assist with the rehabilitation of historic places throughout the state.
- TDA supports the continued use of the Hotel Occupancy Tax to benefit historic preservation, downtown revitalization and heritage tourism promotion, activities and projects regardless of the local municipalities' population.
- Residential redevelopment sometimes represents the "last best hope" for many historic properties located in Texas downtowns. TDA supports allocation rules that favor adaptive reuse of historic properties in the scoring of highly competitive Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects.



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Historic Preservation, Environment and Sustainability - continued

- Many Texas downtowns are transected by state-controlled roadways. TDA favors funding that mitigates traffic, adds to walkability and considers the aesthetics of central business districts.

Culture, Arts, Recreation

- Support the Texas Commission on the Arts as an important resource to foster growth of the cultural arts including the Cultural Arts District designation program. Cultural arts is a critical part of the local community.
- Ensure that the State's Major Event funding supports sporting and non-sporting events alike while providing flexibility for cities to attract or host major events and conventions.
- Parks and Open space are an integral part of our communities. TDA supports efforts to expand and promote funding for these amenities.

Rural Interests

- Many Texas downtowns are located in rural areas. We support state programs and services provided by the Texas Department of Agriculture and other agencies, including Texas Capital Fund grants that assist rural communities.

Local Control

- Often local downtown revitalization programs are funded in part or totally by municipalities. It is important to these programs that the cities' have the ability to establish their own budgets and meet their own funding requirements.