

# CHARTER

## Hays County Parks & Open Space Advisory Commission (POSAC) Adopted March 3, 2020 – Amended and Restated April 27, 2021

The Parks and Open Space Advisory Commission (“POSAC”) shall be composed of seven members, with each of the five Commissioners Court members making one recommendation, confirmed by vote of the Hays County Commissioners Court along with their approval of two at-large members. The POSAC, with organizational support and structural guidance from a consultant to be hired by Hays County, will establish their own operating procedures (in compliance with this charter) and elect its own Chairperson. All meetings will be open to the public, with notice of meetings being provided to each POSAC member and advertised publically at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance.

The role of the Committee shall be the following:

1. Establish a democratic, inclusive process to study a parks, open space, and conservation bond program that will yield project recommendations to the Hays County Commissioners Court meant to ensure the confidence and trust of Hays County voters.

This effort should be at stated meeting times, properly called, and at which all the members of the Committee or subcommittee are given an opportunity to attend. Private communication with parties who, because of ownership, employment, consanguinity, or affiliation, will financially benefit from the planning, design, construction, or implementation of a candidate bond project must be disclosed by POSAC members at or before the next public meeting.

2. Receive information from Hays County staff regarding county roles and authorities, previous bond programs, Hays County Parks & Open Space Master Plan (2012), current needs for improved or additional facilities, related maintenance and operating costs for each project..

3. Continue to analyze the fundamentally critical needs for Hays County projects that include parks, open space, scenic vistas, water quality, water quantity, endangered species habitat, access to water recreation, trails/trail systems, flood mitigation lands, and any other necessary land or water conservation project(s) in the context of the financial impact on taxpayers along with maintenance/management impacts, as well as community benefits.

4. Determine if candidate bond projects meet appropriate tests for inclusion in a \$75 Million Parks and Open Space Bond Program with an affordable financial scope as will be established by Commissioners Court and coordinated with other civic efforts. Appropriate tests shall include but not be limited to the following:

- \_Projects should optimize available bond funding and maximize the value received for the outlay of taxpayer dollars by identifying creative, innovative financing vehicles and achieving economies of scale and other public benefits by partnership with public and private entities.
- \_Projects should be based upon need, have a significant scale and outcome, and an expected 20-year design life or better.
- \_Projects should be able to be completed within five years of bond issuance.
- \_Projects must be consistent with County adopted plans and policies.
- \_Projects must demonstrate value and affordability and should include a fiscal impact

analysis associated with operating and maintenance costs in order to inform the voting public.

- \_Projects should consider joint use with other jurisdictions and due consideration should be given to overlapping debt.
- \_Projects should reflect Hays County's statutory responsibilities and include serious consideration of needs expressed by citizens and other local governmental entities.

5. Conduct public meetings from the beginning to the end of the POSAC process, offering opportunities to receive public input on local needs and initiatives.

6. If a POSAC member stands to benefit financially from any project under consideration, whether personally, or within the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree of consanguinity or affiliation, that member should disclose that fact to the Commission and recuse himself/herself from deliberation or vote on that project.

The POSAC should report its recommendations on projects to be considered by the Commissioners Court on a periodic basis, adding to the existing list of recommended POSAC projects, and incorporating new projects into the Tiered matrix already established by POSAC.