



# PETITIONS ARE READY!

# ¡LAS PETICIONES ESTÁN LISTAS!

## \*Why It Matters\*

On November 8, 2022, voters approved the Home Rule Charter making Princeton a Home Rule "council-manager" form of government. **The Home Rule Charter is the basic foundation of our city government.** The basis of a home rule city is *local decisions* are made by *local residents*.

Home Rule cities have **greater autonomy to govern themselves**. They can enact ordinances (laws), regulate land use, and address local issues without needing the State's approval (as long as they don't conflict with State or Federal laws). The City Council has the authority to **tax residents** and **spend those tax dollars today** and **apply for loans on future taxes**.

There are very few disadvantages of being a Home Rule City; one of them is if the Home Rule Charter is **not written well or excludes vital protections**. Another disadvantage is **many residents are busy, not interested or do not understand that their input is vital**. Without interested residents, home rule can quickly become a **detriment** and cause **more harm than good**.

The goal of Safeguard Princeton is to add basic safeguards to our charter that will help protect all our residents.

**Over 800 signatures are required. Your signature makes a difference.**

**[SafeGuardPrinceton.com](https://SafeGuardPrinceton.com)**



- ❖ On November 8, 2022 the city of Princeton residents voted to approve the Home Rule Charter making Princeton a Council-City Manager (Home Rule) form of local government. One of the benefits of Home Rule is that local decisions are made by local residents.
- ❖ Mayors are voted in with expectation he/she has the power to protect residents and authority to make changes. Our original home rule charter gave the Mayor **no authority and no vote**. For reference, The Mayors of Plano, McKinney, Anna, Melissa, Sherman, Justin & Wylie have the authority to vote on all issues.

*This amendment seeks to add to the authority of the Mayor:* The Mayor shall have a vote on all matters before the city council but not have the power to veto. In the case of a tie the Mayor will cast a second tie breaking vote. The Mayor will have authority to independently add items to the city council agenda and independently remove items.



- ❖ One of the benefits of Home Rule is that **local decisions are made by the residents**. There are many Home-Rule cities in Texas; most of them **require residency of the City Manager** including similar surrounding cities: Melissa, Anna, Wiley, Frisco, Sherman and Justin.
- ❖ It makes sense that our city officials live within the city limits and Princeton ISD and are personally invested in the community, giving them the opportunity to participate in local civic groups and activities. **Our officials should be paying city taxes, driving the city roads and shopping in the city stores. If there is an emergency, they should be relying on our emergency services; there is no better way to safeguard a city.**

*This amendment seeks to require:* The City Manager need not be a resident of the city when appointed, but within 6 months after such an appointment shall become a resident of the city and thereafter shall reside within the city during the tenure of his appointment. In the event the current City Manager is not a resident of the City of Princeton, they are required to obtain residency as per this amendment before any contract amendments or contract renewal.



- ❖ We elect our council members; we should have the right to know how they vote on city issues
- ❖ *This amendment seeks to require:* How each individual council member/mayor votes on issues will be listed on the Certificate of Resolution and included in the meeting minutes.



- ❖ On September 16, 2024 the city council approved ordinance 2024-09-16-02 that changed how the water utility billed the wastewater. This caused an increase for most residents.

*This amendment seeks to require:* Residential accounts which receive both water and wastewater (sewer) services from the city, wastewater use is calculated using the average water consumption for meter readings taken in the months of December, January and February as the estimated wastewater volume per month (winter average approach). New residential service will use the average city-wide wastewater until a winter average can be established.



- ❖ Princeton is growing very fast. In recent years the city has become inundated with high density residential and multifamily housing. Many believe controls are needed on the rate of growth. High density housing is beneficial for metropolitan areas where residents can take public transportation and walk to nearby necessities and recreational activities. In Princeton high density development puts a strain on the already insufficient infrastructure. For example: in a new 1000 home community at a minimum every resident must get in their vehicle and drive Princeton and the cities between us and the metroplex are insufficient. More residents require more emergency services, more police, more healthcare, more schools, more teachers, more grocers, more activities...

*This amendment seeks to require:* Until the City can provide public transportation; sufficient local industry for jobs; sufficient roadway infrastructure; sufficient emergency (police, fire, ambulance); sufficient grocery stores and sufficient recreational activities. The city will limit high density and medium density residential (defined as single family lots smaller than 6000 sq ft) and multifamily housing (i.e. apartment complexes and townhomes) to 25% of single-family dwellings within the city limits. Residences with guest houses and "mother-in-law" quarters are exempt. If that limit has already been met, no future high density, medium density and multifamily developments will be approved. Affective immediately upon voter approval. This amendment must go back to the voters for approval before being altered.



- ❖ Record requests. Residents have been quoted from no charge to thousands of dollars for requesting records. Charging an exorbitant amount for open records discourages residents from requesting records, therefore obstructing public review.

*This amendment is to seeks* to clarify Section 14.08 by adding requirements for all records request to be responded to within 10 business days AND there will be no fees for electronic record requests; and a nominal fee for printed records AND...to ease the

burden on the city of responding to multiple requests for information on the same issue/item or matter; all records request responses shall be properly organized and archived by subject and made available on the city's website. This repository shall be searchable by title allowing residents to find responses and print them. This will be complete within 90 days of voter approval.



- ❖ Princeton is a Home Rule City ALL residents should be encouraged to participate in all local decisions AND be given adequate time to analyze all requests and documentation if they choose.

*This amendment seeks to add:* Agendas and proposals for all items to be discussed and/or acted upon shall be posted 2 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting on the City of Princeton's website and social media pages. This applies to the City Council, Boards and Commissions (i.e. PCDC, PEDC, Planning & Zoning etc.). The City will have 2 weeks after voter approval to comply with this amendment.



- ❖ When an ordinance (local law) is passed it goes into effect immediately. The residents only have 30 days to reserve the power to approve or reject at the polls any legislation enacted by the City Council...the city has 90 days to post it!

*This amendment seeks to change effective date of ordinances:* All ordinances adopted after the the general public on the official City of Princeton website, social media and local newspaper.



- ❖ The residents of the city have no one to report ethical issues too and there is no one to determine if an ethical violation has occurred.

*This amendment seeks* to expand section 14.02 and add a provision to the charter requiring establishment of an Independent Ethics Commission. The Ethics Commission shall exercise its authority over city officials elected and appointed (including committees and boards), city staff, city vendors and vendor subcontractors. No member of the Ethics Commission during their term of service may hold, under the city government, appointed office or elected office for up to one year prior to serving on the commission or hold any political party office or political action committee position for one year prior to serving on the commission. The Ethics Commission shall be charged with education sufficient to provide information on compliance with and awareness of the commission's functions. It shall also be charged with investigation and enforcement of the City's Code of Ethics. Any person may file a complaint asserting a violation of the code of ethics. The Board shall have jurisdiction to conduct investigations and make recommendations on any complaint filed



- ❖ There has been recent controversy with some residents suggesting unethical businesses practices were done during prior administrations. A Forensic Audit helps the city officials and residents uncover any fraud, malpractice, misappropriations or conflicts of interest. An up-to-date audit since the initiation of the Home Rule Charter will uncover any errors in judgement, unintentional mistakes and wrong doings. It will allow residents to have confidence in our governmental body going forward.

*This amendment seeks add:* A forensic audit of the City of Princeton for the time period of December 2022 (initiation of Home Rule Government) through the current fiscal year then every 5 years thereafter.



- ❖ It has been suggested the City Council has abused the use of executive sessions by discussing and deciding on important decisions without allowing the public the opportunity to be fully informed. This amendment seeks to keep them accountable by *eventual disclosure*.

*This amendment seeks add:* All executive sessions (closed meetings) of City Council meetings, board and commissions will be recorded and made available in open records at the session's three-year anniversary.



- ❖ The City Council and Mayor need to be able to conduct investigations as necessary.

*This amendment seeks to add* The council, the Mayor, the city manager or any person or committee authorized by either or both of them shall have power to inquire into the conduct of any department or office of the city; to make investigations as to city affairs, and for that purpose may subpoena witnesses, administer oaths and compel the production of books, papers and other evidence material to said inquiry. The council shall provide by ordinance penalties for contempt in refusing to obey any such subpoenas or failure to produce books, papers and other evidence, and shall have the power to punish any such contempt in the manner provided by ordinance



- ❖ As Princeton grows, we are already short 33 police officers, according to an article in the Princeton Herald. With more homes and apartments come more people, more people mean more conflict/crime/accidents etc. The city is also planning more parks and recreation areas, officers will be needed to keep these areas from becoming crime ridden and safe for residents of all ages.



- ❖ Overall research using ratios of citizen to police officer for staffing have shown to be ineffective. This is a **MINIMUM** number of officers to provide a minimum level of safety for our fast-growing community.

*This amendment seeks to add* The city will provide a minimum of 2.0 police officers for every 1,000 residents. Starting population will be based on residential water meters or the most current U.S. Census Bureau Population estimate for Princeton, Texas whichever is higher and evaluated yearly. The City of Princeton Police Department will have until 12/31/2028 to complete initial recruitment to achieve the minimum ratio.

- ❖ In our current government environment, the City Council and Mayor are **weak** and the City Manager does not even reside in Princeton. The City Council are our elected officials and should have adequate authority to ensure the best interests of the residents Princeton.

*This amendment seeks to modify section 4.02 to read* Neither the Mayor nor any City Council member shall in any manner dictate the appointment or removal of any City administrative officer or employee whom the City Manager or any or his subordinates are empowered to appoint, **unless authorized by majority vote of the City Council.** Council members may express their views and fully and freely discuss with the City Manager anything pertaining to the appointment and removal of such officers and employees.

~~Except for the purpose of inquiries and for investigations, the Mayor or City Council members shall deal with City officers and employees who are subject to the direction and supervision of the City Manager solely through the City Manager, and neither the Mayor nor City Council members shall give orders to such officers or employees either publicly or privately.~~

If the City Manager is temporarily unable to perform appointed duties, the City Council or City Manager may designate an alternate.

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