



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Clay Phillips, City Manager
Date: September 23, 2016
Re: 2017 Legislative Agenda
2030: All

Introduction: The Texas Legislature will be convening in a few months. The Mayor & City Council has routinely developed a position or philosophy on items of major interest or concern to the City of Coppel that are likely to become topics of discussion and possible law during the session. This Work Session item is designed to start that process formally.

Analysis: There are a number of issues that have been generating a great deal of interest leading up to the next legislative session. The overriding subject of interest will be the continued assault on local control and the clear objective to reign in what many in the legislature believe are municipalities, ISD's, counties and local political subdivisions. This effort is likely to take many forms.

Revenue, tax, appraisal, expenditure, and other types of caps continue to be the most troublesome issues that are absolutely going to garner a great deal of conversation. As such, they merit your attention. This is not a new subject and previous councils have included language in their respective Legislative Agendas to speak to the City's concerns.

Other more specific topics will include the legislature's efforts to control local ordinances where one municipality desires to do something different from another, such as smoking, texting, and plastic bag bans. While these may seem a bit trivial for the legislature to concern themselves with given the important clean air, prisons, funding education, and other major statewide issues, it appears there will be no shortage of legislative efforts aimed at controlling cities. These are also not new items as we have discussed these and others over time.

There is already one item moving through other state legislatures and courts around the country that is troublesome, at best. The issue is termed “Dark Buildings/Stores” and it applies to very large retail/warehouse buildings similar to some of the developments in our industrial district that were built with specific users in mind. Owners of this type of real estate are attempting to make the case that the real property values for these properties are over inflated because they cannot be sold at such high prices given they were constructed for specific uses. Obviously, if they are successful in their argument, large percentages of property values and resulting tax revenues could be adversely impacted.

Fred Hill and Dan Shelley will be attending the October 11 City Council meeting to provide their advice on the upcoming session. We hope to complete a draft agenda at that meeting that could be finalized at the October 25 meeting. To facilitate that process I have included a copy of the previous City of Coppel Legislative Priority List.

Legal Review: N/A

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Recommendation: N/A