

THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 11. MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS

Sec. 1. COUNTIES AS LEGAL SUBDIVISIONS. The several Counties of this State are hereby recognized as legal subdivisions of the State.

(Feb. 15, 1876.)

Sec. 2. JAILS, COURTHOUSES, BRIDGES, AND ROADS. The construction of jails, court-houses and bridges and the laying out, construction and repairing of county roads shall be provided for by general laws.

(Feb. 15, 1876. Amended Nov. 2, 1999.) (TEMPORARY TRANSITION PROVISIONS for Sec. 2: See Appendix, Note 1.)

Sec. 3. COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL INVESTMENT IN OR DONATION OR LOAN TO PRIVATE CORPORATION OR ASSOCIATION PROHIBITED. No county, city, or other municipal corporation shall hereafter become a subscriber to the capital of any private corporation or association, or make any appropriation or donation to the same, or in anywise loan its credit; but this shall not be construed to in any way affect any obligation heretofore undertaken pursuant to law or to prevent a county, city, or other municipal corporation from investing its funds as authorized by law.

(Feb. 15, 1876. Amended Nov. 7, 1989.)

Sec. 4. CITIES AND TOWNS WITH POPULATION OF 5,000 OR LESS: CHARTERED BY GENERAL LAW; TAXES; FINES, FORFEITURES, AND PENALTIES. Cities and towns having a population of five thousand or less may be chartered alone by general law. They may levy, assess and collect such taxes as may be authorized by law, but no tax for any purpose shall ever be lawful for any one year which shall exceed one and one-half per cent of the taxable property of such city; and all taxes shall be collectible only in current money, and all licenses and occupation taxes levied, and all fines, forfeitures and penalties accruing to said cities and towns shall be collectible

only in current money.

(Feb. 15, 1876. Amended Aug. 3, 1909, and Nov. 2, 1920.)

Sec. 5. CITIES OF MORE THAN 5,000 POPULATION: ADOPTION OR AMENDMENT OF CHARTERS; TAXES; DEBT RESTRICTIONS. (a) Cities having more than five thousand (5000) inhabitants may, by a majority vote of the qualified voters of said city, at an election held for that purpose, adopt or amend their charters. If the number of inhabitants of cities that have adopted or amended their charters under this section is reduced to five thousand (5000) or fewer, the cities still may amend their charters by a majority vote of the qualified voters of said city at an election held for that purpose. The adoption or amendment of charters is subject to such limitations as may be prescribed by the Legislature, and no charter or any ordinance passed under said charter shall contain any provision inconsistent with the Constitution of the State, or of the general laws enacted by the Legislature of this State. Said cities may levy, assess and collect such taxes as may be authorized by law or by their charters; but no tax for any purpose shall ever be lawful for any one year, which shall exceed two and one-half per cent. of the taxable property of such city, and no debt shall ever be created by any city, unless at the same time provision be made to assess and collect annually a sufficient sum to pay the interest thereon and creating a sinking fund of at least two per cent. thereon, except as provided by Subsection (b). Furthermore, no city charter shall be altered, amended or repealed oftener than every two years.

(b) To increase efficiency and effectiveness to the greatest extent possible, the legislature may by general law authorize cities to enter into interlocal contracts with other cities or counties without meeting the assessment and sinking fund requirements under Subsection (a).

(Feb. 15, 1876. Amended Aug. 3, 1909, Nov. 5, 1912, Nov. 5, 1991, and Nov. 8, 2011.)

Sec. 6. (Repealed Nov. 2, 1999.)

(TEMPORARY TRANSITION PROVISIONS for Sec. 6: See Appendix, Note 1.)

Sec. 7. COUNTIES AND CITIES ON GULF OF MEXICO; TAX FOR SEA WALLS, BREAKWATERS, AND SANITATION; BONDS; CONDEMNATION OF RIGHT OF WAY. (a) All counties and cities bordering on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico are hereby authorized upon a vote of the majority of the qualified voters voting thereon at an election called for such purpose to levy and collect such tax for construction of sea walls, breakwaters, or sanitary purposes, as may now or may hereafter be authorized by law, and may create a debt for such works and issue bonds in evidence thereof. But no debt for any purpose shall ever be incurred in any manner by any city or county unless provision is made, at the time of creating the same, for levying and collecting a sufficient tax to pay the interest thereon and provide at least two per cent (2%) as a sinking fund, except as provided by Subsection (b); and the condemnation of the right of way for the erection of such works shall be fully provided for.

(b) To increase efficiency and effectiveness to the greatest extent possible, the legislature may by general law authorize cities or counties to enter into interlocal contracts with other cities or counties without meeting the tax and sinking fund requirements under Subsection (a).

(Feb. 15, 1876. Amended Nov. 8, 1932, Nov. 6, 1973, Nov. 6, 2001, and Nov. 8, 2011.) (TEMPORARY TRANSITION PROVISION for Sec. 7: See Appendix, Note 3.)

Sec. 8. DONATION OF PUBLIC DOMAIN TO AID IN CONSTRUCTION OF SEA WALLS OR BREAKWATERS. The Counties and Cities on the Gulf Coast being subject to calamitous overflows, and a very large proportion of the general revenue being derived from those otherwise prosperous localities, The Legislature is especially authorized to aid by donation of such portion of the public domain as may be deemed proper, and in such mode as may be provided by law, the construction of Sea Walls, or Breakwaters, such aid to be proportioned to the extent and value of the works constructed, or to be constructed, in any locality.

(Feb. 15, 1876.)

Sec. 9. COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL PROPERTY HELD FOR PUBLIC PURPOSE EXEMPT FROM FORCED SALE AND TAXATION. The property of counties, cities and towns, owned and held only for public purposes, such as public buildings and the sites therefor, Fire engines and the furniture thereof, and all property used, or intended for extinguishing fires, public grounds and all other property devoted exclusively to the use and benefit† of the public shall be exempt from forced sale and from taxation, provided, nothing herein shall prevent the enforcement of the vendors lien, the mechanics or builders lien, or other liens now existing.

(Feb. 15, 1876.)

† The language of this provision is identical to the language of the official legislative measure that originally proposed the provision. A digital image of the original text of the official enrolled measure can be found [here](#).

Sec. 10. (Repealed Aug. 5, 1969.)

Sec. 11. TERM OF OFFICE EXCEEDING TWO YEARS IN HOME RULE AND GENERAL LAW CITIES; VACANCIES. (a) A Home Rule City may provide by charter or charter amendment, and a city, town or village operating under the general laws may provide by majority vote of the qualified voters voting at an election called for that purpose, for a longer term of office than two (2) years for its officers, either elective or appointive, or both, but not to exceed four (4) years; provided, however, that tenure under Civil Service shall not be affected hereby; provided, however, that such officers, elective or appointive, are subject to Section 65(b), Article XVI, of this constitution, providing for automatic resignation in certain circumstances, in the same manner as a county or district officer to which that section applies.

(b) A municipality so providing a term exceeding two (2) years but not exceeding four (4) years for any of its non-civil service officers must elect all of the members of its governing body by majority vote of the qualified voters in such municipality.

(c) Any vacancy or vacancies occurring on such governing

body shall not be filled by appointment but must be filled by majority vote of the qualified voters at a special election called for such purpose within one hundred and twenty (120) days after such vacancy or vacancies occur except that the municipality may provide by charter or charter amendment the procedure for filling a vacancy occurring on its governing body for an unexpired term of 12 months or less.

(Added Nov. 4, 1958; amended Nov. 6, 2001; Subsec. (b) amended and (c) added Nov. 5, 2013.) (TEMPORARY TRANSITION PROVISION for Sec. 11: See Appendix, Note 3.)

Sec. 12. EXPENDITURES FOR RELOCATION OR REPLACEMENT OF SANITATION SEWER OR WATER LATERALS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY. The legislature by general law may authorize a city or town to expend public funds for the relocation or replacement of sanitation sewer laterals or water laterals on private property if the relocation or replacement is done in conjunction with or immediately following the replacement or relocation of sanitation sewer mains or water mains serving the property. The law must authorize the city or town to affix, with the consent of the owner of the private property, a lien on the property for the cost of relocating or replacing the laterals on the property and must provide that the cost shall be assessed against the property with repayment by the property owner to be amortized over a period not to exceed five years at a rate of interest to be set as provided by the law. The lien may not be enforced until after five years have expired since the date the lien was affixed.

(Added Nov. 8, 1983; amended Nov. 5, 1985.)

Sec. 13. CLASSIFICATION OF MUNICIPAL FUNCTIONS. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this constitution, the legislature may by law define for all purposes those functions of a municipality that are to be considered governmental and those that are proprietary, including reclassifying a function's classification assigned under prior statute or common law.

(b) This section applies to laws enacted by the 70th

Legislature, Regular Session, 1987, and to all subsequent regular or special sessions of the legislature.

(Added Nov. 3, 1987.)