

# **City of Sugar Land**

## **2021 Legislative Agenda**



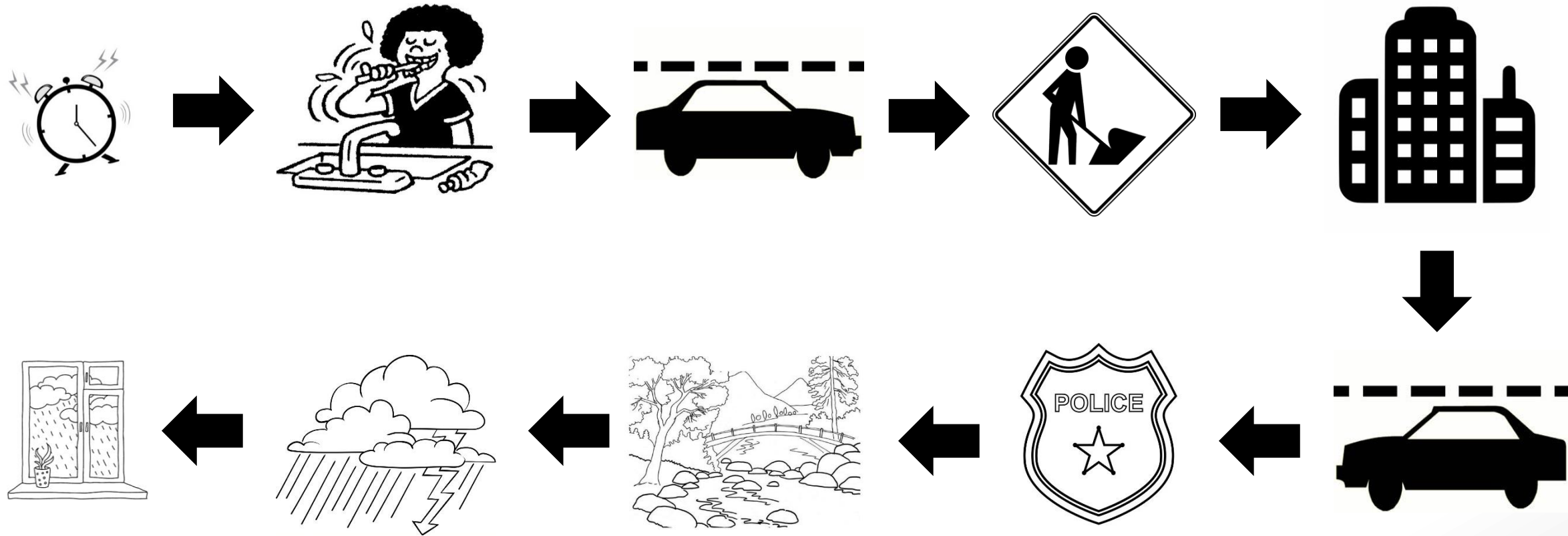
# Overview

- ▶ **Overview of Legislative Program**
- ▶ **Past Legislative Accomplishments**
- ▶ **Legislative Preview (Focused Advocacy)**
- ▶ **Review New Position Statements**
- ▶ **Next Steps**
- ▶ **Questions**



# Why do we have a legislative program?

- ▶ Think about your average day.



# Why do we have a legislative program?

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Bills Introduced</u> *	<u>Total Bills Passed</u>	<u>City-Related Bills Introduced</u>	<u>City-Related Bills Passed</u>
2001	5,712	1,621	1,200+	150+
2003	5,754	1,403	1,200+	110+
2005	5,369	1,397	1,200+	105+
2007	6,374	1,495	1,200+	120+
2009	7,609	1,468	1,500+	120+
2011	6,303	1,410	1,500+	160+
2013	6,061	1,437	1,700+	220+
2015	6,476	1,329	1,600+	220+
2017	6,800	1,220	2,000+	290+
2019	7,541	1,437	2,000+	330+





# Sugar Land Legislative Program

- ▶ **Cities do the State's local work**
- ▶ **Texas Legislature impacts how cities provide services**
- ▶ **Legislative Agenda is publicly created & adopted**
- ▶ **Adopted biennially (even numbered years)**
  - **Input from the public/business community, city departments (LLC), consultants, IG Committee, City Council and Legislators**



# City Role in Austin

- ▶ **Represent Sugar Land residents**
- ▶ **File and pass legislation**
- ▶ **Communicate with legislators**
- ▶ **Monitor legislative process and react accordingly**





# Legislative Consultant Role in Austin

- ▶ **Monitor the legislative process**
- ▶ **Provide advice and guidance**
- ▶ **Help develop and execute legislative strategy**
- ▶ **Represent the City per the adopted Legislative Agenda**



# **City Manager's Legislative Task Force**

- ▶ **7 member ad-hoc panel created by the City Manager to provide community insight into legislative issues**
- ▶ **LTF discussed: muni lobbying, muni finance, STRs, trees, building codes & materials, and permit vesting/super-vesting**
- ▶ **LTF is supportive of the City representing citizens in Austin and are willing to provide assistance with future legislative efforts**
- ▶ **TCMA Region 7 has asked that SL participate on a panel with Georgetown to discuss LTF/public engagement on November 20<sup>th</sup>**





# **Past Legislative Accomplishments**



# Central Unit





# Sugar Land Regional Airport



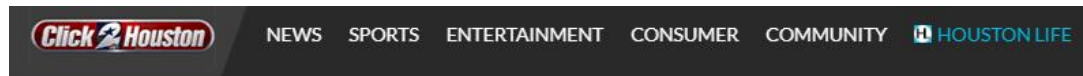


# Representation on GCWA Board





# Public Health and Safety



INVESTIGATES

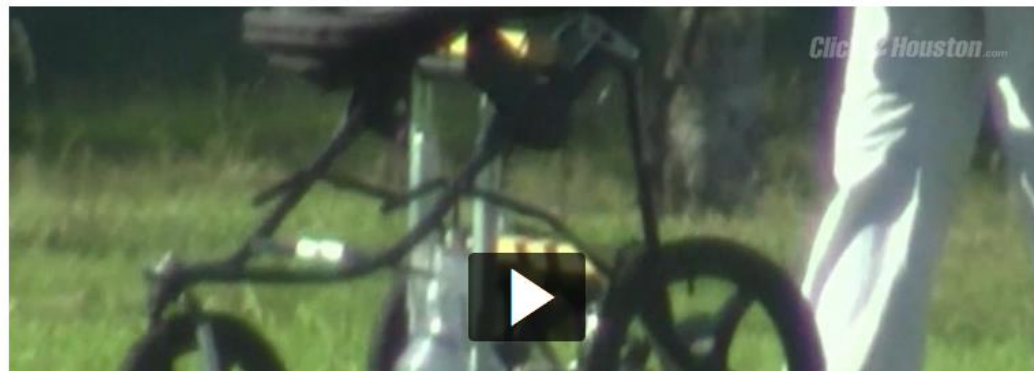
## Questions linger after radioactive material released in Sugar Land

City leaders ask how this happened, why they weren't immediately notified

By Robert Arnold - Investigative Reporter

Posted: 10:05 PM, February 07, 2017

Updated: 10:05 PM, February 07, 2017



# More Sugar Land Legislation

- ▶ **Hike & Bike Lanes (HB 931)**
- ▶ **Qualified Hotel Projects (HB 2445)**





# Legislative Preview



# CITY OF SUGAR LAND PREVIEW: 87<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Brandon Aghamalian & Snapper Carr



A full-service public affairs firm delivering modern solutions to traditional challenges



# Overview

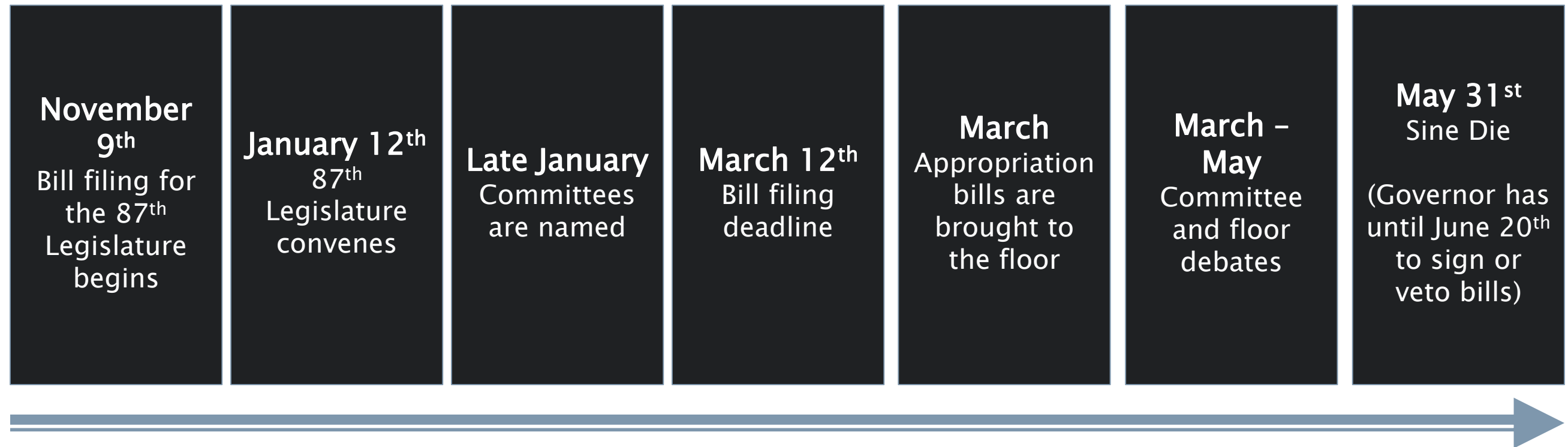
- Unprecedented session ahead – expect limited access to the capitol and members
- Speaker's race – extremely important to cities and issues your communities/cities care about
- Anti-local government environment
- Driven/Supported by organized opposition to local governments by political advocacy groups and special interests (Instigators of SB 29 efforts to silence local governments)
- Comptroller projects \$4.6 B budget deficit\* (likely to grow)

\*source: [Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts](#)





# Legislative Timelines



- The House will elect a speaker in January
- The Legislature can hold committee hearings in the early days of session, but per the constitution, legislators can't pass any bills during the first 60 calendar days — unless the governor declares it an emergency item or it's an emergency appropriation



# Potential Partisan Makeup

	Republican	Democrat	Total
<b>*House</b>	<b>83 current</b> (project overall losses; 74)	<b>67 current</b> (+9 seats flip to 76 majority)	<b>150</b>
<b>Senate</b>	<b>19 current</b> (likely -1 to 18)	<b>12 current</b> (likely +1 to 13)	<b>31</b>



# Speaker's Race

- ▶ No candidates announced yet (near or after Election)
- ▶ Election day will be the pivotal moment in Speaker's race
- ▶ The race is on now – continues until someone has 76 votes
- ▶ Formal election is first day of Session (Jan. 2020)
- ▶ Speaker appoints committee chairs and leads negotiations with Lt. Gov. Patrick and Gov. Abbott





# Priority Legislative Issues: Budget & COVID Response

- **Budget**
  - Zero-based budgeting for all agencies
  - Decline in sales tax revenues (declining revenue across board)
  - Decline in oil production (i.e. severance tax revenues)
  - Increase in Medicaid Healthcare Expenditures
  - Increase in public school spending (HB 3 costs plus COVID items)
  - Increase in unemployment insurance expenditures
  - Unemployment system and other assistance program costs
- **COVID-19 response**
  - *Public health*
  - *Economic response / Recovery*
  - **Governor / Local government emergency response authority**



# High-Profile Legislative Issues

- ▶ **Redistricting** – Census Dept now says April issuance of Texas numbers; Legislative Redistricting Board; potential special session
- ▶ **Criminal Justice / Law Enforcement / Policing**
  - Qualified immunity
  - Police unions / Civil Service Statutes
  - Sandra Bland Act Continuation / George Floyd Act (already proposed)
  - Diverting PD funds to civilian response (i.e. homelessness, mental health, substance abuse)
  - Body camera grant funding and statewide records retention and release statute
  - "Big Three" are pushing for legislation next year that would freeze property tax revenues and limit annexation authority further for cities that reduce or restructure police budgets (lacking many substantive details)
- **General Government Issues (areas most likely to be scaled back)**
  - Land use
  - Utilities
  - Transportation



# Key to Success

- *Keep engaging your delegation and community* – tell your story and provide straight-forward facts on impacts of City/Community issues
- Increase citizens involvement (community advocacy)
- Increase business involvement (highlight partnerships)
- The Legislature will be sharply focused on the budget/COVID response and there will be little, if any, time for a wide variety of issues
- *Make your items relevant to issues the Legislature will address* – the bar for getting your issues considered has been raised (pare down your wish list)





Thank you

FOCUSED  ADVOCACY



# Legislative Compass

- ▶ **Agenda is a guide that aids the IGR Office when working with legislators on behalf of the City Council to ensure:**

- 1. Legislation that is harmful to our community is defeated;**

**AND**

- 2. Legislation that is beneficial to our community is successful.**



# Sugar Land Legislative Program

- ▶ **Top Priorities:**
  - **Support local decision making on local issues; and**
  - **Oppose legislation that preempts or erodes the City's ability to pursue citizen priorities or respond to local citizen concerns.**





# 2020 New Positions

- ▶ **Support a fair and transparent appraisal process**
- ▶ **Support repealing HB 2439 (building materials)**
- ▶ **Oppose diminishing City authority on Short Term Rentals**
- ▶ **Oppose erosion of current authority in the ETJ**
- ▶ **Support ability for cities to advocate on behalf of their communities**
- ▶ **Support continued use of technology for virtual public meetings**



# Additional Issues

## ► Policing

- **The City is not recommending any positions related to policing such as 8 Can't Wait and other initiatives at this time.**
- **The City will seek to have a seat at the table regarding discussions on police reform by engaging with legislators and coordinating with partners.**
- **Issues not covered by the legislative agenda will be addressed as they arise throughout the legislative session and the City may amend the Agenda in response.**



# Next Steps

- ▶ **Partner with the following groups to advocate on behalf of Sugar Land residents and businesses leading up to and during the 87<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session:**
  - **City Council and Departments;**
  - **Peer cities;**
  - **Community/business groups; and**
  - **Legislators.**
  
- ▶ **Update the City's Intergovernmental Relations web page to include the 2021-2022 Legislative Agenda**





# **CLARIFYING QUESTIONS FOR STAFF**



# **COUNCIL DISCUSSION & CONCURRENCE**

