

City of San Marcos Councilmember Candidate Questionnaire 2025

Barbara Montana Escobar – Candidate for Place 2

1. Please describe your experience, areas of expertise and leadership style and how you feel they make/will make you an effective Councilmember in San Marcos.

I have been dedicated to serving individuals and families for years here in San Marcos. I worked for SMCISD and currently SMHA and I have firsthand experience addressing issues such as housing stability, resources and support. I have led a non-profit in San Marcos over a decade called Head to Toe. I am collaborative and innovative because it has continued to grow over the years. What qualifies me for this role is not only my professional and nonprofit experience, but also my belief that leadership starts with listening. My background in housing, education, and community service uniquely positions me to serve as a responsive, accountable, and effective member of City Council. Beyond the titles, my work has always been about people.

2. What do you see as the biggest challenges our local businesses face? What can you do as a Councilmember to help overcome them?

There are many challenges businesses face like rising costs and the slow seasons when Texas state students leave. I would look at the key challenges and find strategies that would work for our city.

3. How will you balance citywide discussions and bridge the gap between private citizens and the business community when they are at odds on issues that impact the business/economic environment or other vital issues that affect San Marcos?

Bridging the gap is done by having meetings that are collaborative. Making it centered on our great city of San Marcos. Although everyone has their own opinions clear communication on strategies and solutions is key.

4. What can the City do to encourage existing business growth and new business attraction?

Diverse businesses are good for our city. I believe the city should reduce the unnecessary red tape and keep communication with businesses transparent and clear. For new business attraction we need to highlight the beauty of San Marcos our location, diverse community. Strengthening our partnerships with Texas State and our local schools use that to keep our students and residents shopping and working locally

5. If elected what will you do to further strengthen the relationship between the City of San Marcos and Texas State University?

I believe strengthening our partnership with Texas State will benefit the entire community. Communication between city leadership and Texas State administration could collab on issues like housing, transportation and public safety. If we can create more joint programs to connect students with local business and non-profits hopefully, we can keep the students here after they graduate.

6. What improvements do you believe are needed for adequate transportation infrastructure in San Marcos?

Transportation Infrastructure must be at the same pace as our growth here in San Marcos. Better coordination with regional partners will help us address traffic on I35. The traffic on 35 makes us use the neighborhood streets far too often. Road maintenance and expansion where it's necessary and more sidewalks are a must.

7. A major issue facing the region is housing availability, lack of workforce housing, and housing affordability and diversity. If elected what actions would you take to create more housing choices in San Marcos?

I would use the range of tools we have to expand on housing choices. I would explore partnering with developers to use vacant or underutilized city owned land for new housing, convert unused commercial or industrial buildings into residential units. Employer-assisted housing allows for investing in workforce housing. Make underutilized city or county land available for workforce housing development. Prioritize what benefits our city.

8. If you received a \$1 million grant to use for the city any way you wanted, what would you do with it and why?

My top priority would be expanding affordable housing. Partnering with nonprofits and help families with down payment assistance for first time homebuyers. I would also dedicate a portion to sidewalks and neighborhood improvements. I would help San Marcos high school graduates with scholarships to relieve some of the stress on the family.

9. Please review the San Marcos Chamber's "Government Relations & Advocacy Guiding Principles" document. Do you agree with all of these statements? Please describe below any statements you do not agree with.

I reviewed the San Marcos Chamber's "Government Relations & Advocacy Guiding Principles" document and agree with all the statements.

10. You may use this opportunity to provide any additional information you would like members of the San Marcos Area Chamber of Commerce to know.

I look forward to working with the Chamber and business community to build a San Marcos where families, businesses and future generations thrive together.

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