

City of San Marcos Councilmember Candidate Questionnaire 2025

Chrispy Polanco – 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 started working at 14 as a cadet firefighter with my local fire department. My entire working life has been in various working class jobs. I have sometimes had to hold down multiple jobs.

As a blind individual I have experienced the challenges people with disabilities face living an independent life.

I lead by doing; never asking anyone to do what I cannot or am unwilling to do myself. I ask for input from my team, and encourage discussion to reach a consensus. I trust people to complete their tasks, but also offer guidance and help when needed. I also believe taking care of peoples needs leads to better quality work.

I can connect with the people of San Marcos; particularly those with disabilities. I will listen to what they have to say. I will meet them out in the community to hear and organize with them.

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

One possible challenge I see is insecurities of revenue and labor caused by the seasonal nature of the city. I would work to make San Marcos a city where people want to settle down and start families instead of leaving after school.

To that end I would support measures that make and keep housing costs affordable and prevent predatory lending. Measures that Protect tenants' right to organize without interference or retaliation from landlords followed by the adoption of a tenants bill of rights are examples.

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?

This is where I feel it is important to meet our neighbors out in the community by holding forums and town hall discussions. This would also mean meeting the business community in their businesses to learn about what they do and hear their story. Business owners are also private citizens when they walk into another business as a customer or client.

I will always be on the side of the community. I will not spend the time meeting with the public or sit on the dais listening to eight hours of public comments giving opinion one way just to vote against them unless they are advocating for environmental harms, the segregation or exclusion of marginalized groups, or something that will otherwise intrude on the personal lives of others. This goes for both the business community and private citizens. I trust the community to know what it needs.

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

If we can encourage people to stay and raise families in San Marcos rather than leaving after graduation to address the seasonal aspect of the city, this could encourage businesses to set shop here as well by providing a stable supply of labor and clientele.

Again, I feel this can start with addressing rising housing costs and protecting the right of tenants to organize.

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

Another way to encourage students to make a home in our city in addition to addressing the housing issue is a work study program that connects students to local businesses so they can work here too. We could engage with school and student organizations to promote entrepreneurial ideas to bring new business to the city as well.

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

The city currently partners with CARTS for paratransit services for people with disabilities and seniors. I have used this service just once, but my experience was great. CARTS does the best with what they have, but rides sometimes need to be scheduled as much as two weeks in advance. I think we could continue this partnership and bring Texas State in to shorten this lead time. Through this partnership we could also develop our own ride share service to compete with Uber and Lyft whose rates can be prohibitive. This could offer a chance for employment; particularly for students. Generate some revenue for the city, and help alleviate traffic congestion in town and parking availability on campus.

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 support tenants' rights and addressing rising costs with rent controls and a livable wage based on both inflation & increases in productivity. I support banning private equity owning homes only to leave them empty or charge outrageous rental rates. At the very least, I support a mandate that private citizens get the first option on a home.

I would also give serious consideration to serious proposals aimed at helping the homeless population find employment & housing; not just give them the choice of jail or treatment. We could partner with the Southside Community Center, ARCIL, and Home Center, who all work with the homeless community.

ARCIL's primary mission is to provide services to people with disabilities. Working with them and any other organization that works with this group we could help connect this community to services & technology they need to live a life as independently as possible.

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?

This could go to the paratransit and ride share service mentioned before. The homeless, disabled, and senior communities are often overlooked. These services would greatly benefit all three as well as the community as a whole. It would provide an alternative to both riders and drivers that goes directly back into the community.

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.

Each statement has parts I agree with and parts I do not. I think some of our goals are the same, but we have different ideas on how to accomplish them. This is a reason why I think it's important for members of the City Council to be out in the public to listen to what the community has to say; from the residents of poorest neighborhoods who provide labor to the business owners who employ them.

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.

Call me Chrispy.

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