

Transportation and Natural Resources Department (TNR) recommends that the Travis County Commissioners Court adopt the following guiding principles as it considers support of either administrative actions or legislation proposing to create a GCD in the Hill Country PGMA, particularly in southwest Travis County:

1. Creation of a GCD rather than leaving groundwater management unaddressed within the PGMA
2. A GCD with adequate funding provided to the maximum extent feasible, by the users of groundwater within the GCD
3. A GCD with effective other powers, as authorized by State law in Chapter 36, Texas Water Code
4. Powers that could be considered as prohibited may include the power to assess ad valorem property taxes and the power of eminent domain
5. Powers that should not be prohibited would include authority to enter private property of an owner of any groundwater well for purposes related to groundwater management, the authority to establish and collect well production fees, based on authorized pumpage from non-exempt wells, and other appropriate authority to establish modest fees for groundwater management as set out in Chapter 36
6. A territory that includes all geographic area within the PGMA in southwest Travis County, including within municipal boundaries
7. A GCD that does not require a confirmation election, since it is in a PGMA and further provided it has no taxation authority
8. Consideration of options that may include a territory of the GCD that combines southwest Travis County's PGMA area with other Trinity Aquifer GCDs adjacent to Travis County, if support can be gained for such an option and if a combined area had effective groundwater management capability.
9. Non-support of legislation that would limit the powers of a GCD to independently collect revenue necessary for effective groundwater management.

These guiding principles are consistent with the powers common to other effectively managed GCDs. These guiding principles are ones promoted by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to implement effective groundwater management via the State's preferred method of locally-based GCDs.