

We Didn't Get a Vote on TexasLand — But We Do Get a Vote on This

By Citizens in Defense of Waller County

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Most of the biggest decisions shaping Waller County's future haven't included us. We weren't asked if a 200-acre theme park should move into Hempstead. We didn't get a ballot question when private developers went to Austin pushing for the power to tax, borrow, and govern as if they were a local government.

But this November is different. Voters have a direct say in whether Waller County keeps its rightful share of millions of dollars in sales-tax revenue — or lets it slip away to Austin or into the hands of private developers. This is our chance to act, and it's one that could shape our county's future for decades.

What's at Stake: Millions in Local Funding

Most purchases in Texas are already taxed at 8.25%. Of that total, 6.25% automatically goes to the State of Texas. The remaining 2% can stay right here at home—but only if we, the voters, claim it.

Currently, 1% is already spoken for: it funds Emergency Services District 200 (ESD 200), which supports critical fire and EMS services. The other 1%—worth millions every year—is currently unallocated in unincorporated Waller County and not staying here.

If voters approve creation of a County Assistance District (CAD) this November, Waller County will finally claim that remaining 1% and put it to work locally. If we fail to act, the revenue remains unclaimed—flowing to the state instead of funding our local roads, drainage, and services, or potentially being folded into a private developer's district down the road.

County officials estimate this single percentage point could be worth millions of dollars every year—money that could support roads, drainage, law enforcement, parks, and other essential services that make our communities safer and stronger.

And it's important to understand: this vote does not create a new tax. It simply brings unincorporated Waller County's sales-tax rate up to the same 8.25% that most Texans already pay—and keeps that money here.

The Power Play Behind the Scenes

This vote isn't just about revenue. It's about power — who has it, and how it's used.

TexasLand USA has stated that it plans to pursue a Municipal Management District (MMD) through the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)—a special taxing district that would give it the ability to tax, borrow, and control land use with little public oversight.

We've seen this play before. Earlier this year, TexasLand USA backed House Bill 5685, which would have created a similar district by legislative act. After widespread public outcry, the bill was pulled. The MMD application process is the quieter version of the same idea.

If voters pass the CAD, the entire 2% local sales-tax capacity will be spoken for—1% to ESD 200 and 1% to Waller County. That means a private district can no longer tap into this sales tax.

Sales-tax revenue is one of the most valuable funding sources developers have. They use it as collateral for bonds, bait for investors, and leverage for large-scale infrastructure projects. Without it, that financial power disappears—and public money stays public.

A Lesson from Liberty County

If you think this sounds far-fetched, just look to Liberty County. There, the developers of the Colony Ridge project secured MMD powers over 51 square miles — an area larger than many Texas cities — and now levy taxes with minimal oversight. Lawsuits allege they misled buyers, failed to deliver promised infrastructure, and steered lucrative contracts to affiliated companies.

That's not a future Waller County wants — and with this vote, we can stop it before it starts.

The One Vote That Actually Matters

Here's the truth: We don't often get a say in big development decisions. TexasLand USA didn't need our approval to pursue their plans, and they don't need our vote to apply for an MMD. But this election is different.

This is the one moment when the public can act — decisively — to keep millions of dollars working for Waller County instead of flowing to Austin or into private hands.

A YES vote means:

- **No new tax** — just claiming the 1% we're already entitled to
- **Millions of dollars** for roads, law enforcement, drainage, parks, and infrastructure
- **Accountability** — funding decisions made by local officials, not developers
- **Protection** — shutting down the last path private developers have to use a local sales tax

We didn't get a vote on TexasLand USA. But we do get a vote on this — and that's why it matters more than ever.

On November 4, let's make the choice that keeps Waller County strong, self-reliant, and in control of its own future. Vote YES to keep our penny local — and keep millions of dollars working for us.