

Amarillo by Comparison

HIGHLIGHTS

- Compared to the statewide average and similarly-sized municipalities, the city of Amarillo has experienced a slower rate of population growth since 2010.
- Compared to similarly-sized cities, Amarillo’s General Fund budget is relatively robust, both in terms of actual size and on a per capita basis. Conversely, the city’s All Funds budget ranks closer to the average of its peers.
- Over an abbreviated timeline, the city of Amarillo’s General Fund budget has grown faster than population and inflation combined.
- Compared to similarly-sized cities, Amarillo has the lowest level of outstanding debt, both in terms of aggregate amount owed and on a per capita basis.
- Compared to similarly-sized cities, Amarillo’s M&O, I&S, and total tax rates are the lowest (with the exception of Frisco) while its property tax levy imposed per capita is the absolute lowest.

Comparing Populations

PLACE	POPULATION (2010)	POPULATION (2016)	% CHANGE	% RANKING (1 = Highest, 9 = Lowest)	PLACE	POPULATION (2010)	POPULATION (2016)	% CHANGE	% RANKING (1 = Highest, 9 = Lowest)
State of Texas	25,145,565	27,725,192	10.3%	5	Amarillo	190,695	201,322	5.6%	8
Laredo	236,091	260,799	10.5%	4	Grand Prairie	175,396	186,000	6.0%	7
Lubbock	229,573	250,705	9.2%	6	Brownsville	175,023	184,568	5.5%	9
Irving	216,290	239,740	10.8%	3	McKinney	131,117	165,893	26.5%	2
Garland	226,876	236,373	4.2%	10	Frisco	116,989	163,227	39.5%	1

Source: [Texas Demographic Center](#), Total Population By Place

Texas continued to experience robust population growth over the last several years.

From 2010 to 2016, the number of people calling Texas “home” grew from 25.1 million to 27.7 million, an increase of approximately 2.6 million persons or a surge of 10.3 percent over the period. This elevated level of growth was felt in many of Texas’ mid-sized cities—though in some more than others.

In nine mid-sized municipalities—including Laredo, Lubbock, Irving, Garland, Amarillo, Grand Prairie,

Brownsville, McKinney, and Frisco [in order from largest to smallest]—population growth in those communities ranged from a low of 4.2 percent seen in Garland to a high of 39.5 percent witnessed in Frisco. In the city of Amarillo, which is the midpoint in terms of population, the number of residents increased from 190,695 to 201,322, according to the Texas Demographic Center. Hence, the rate of growth in Amarillo was measured at 5.6 percent, which is toward the lesser end of the comparative spectrum.

Comparing City Spending

FY 2017 EXPENDITURES						
	GENERAL FUND	GF PER CAPITA	RANKING	ALL FUNDS	AF PER CAPITA	RANKING
Laredo	\$183,209,056	\$702.49	5	\$620,190,102	\$2,378.04	4
Lubbock	\$170,492,523	\$680.05	7	\$742,379,255	\$2,961.17	2
Irving	\$223,006,128	\$930.20	1	\$360,440,371	\$1,503.46	8
Garland	\$162,174,395	\$686.10	6	\$771,480,848	\$3,263.83	1
Amarillo	\$175,350,282	\$870.99	3	\$395,258,254	\$1,963.31	6
Grand Prairie	\$126,395,145	\$679.54	8	\$279,998,045	\$1,505.37	7
Brownsville	\$95,768,057	\$518.88	9	\$137,519,737	\$745.09	9
McKinney	\$127,021,020	\$765.68	4	\$383,637,959	\$2,312.56	5
Frisco	\$142,732,531	\$874.44	2	\$467,068,637	\$2,861.47	3

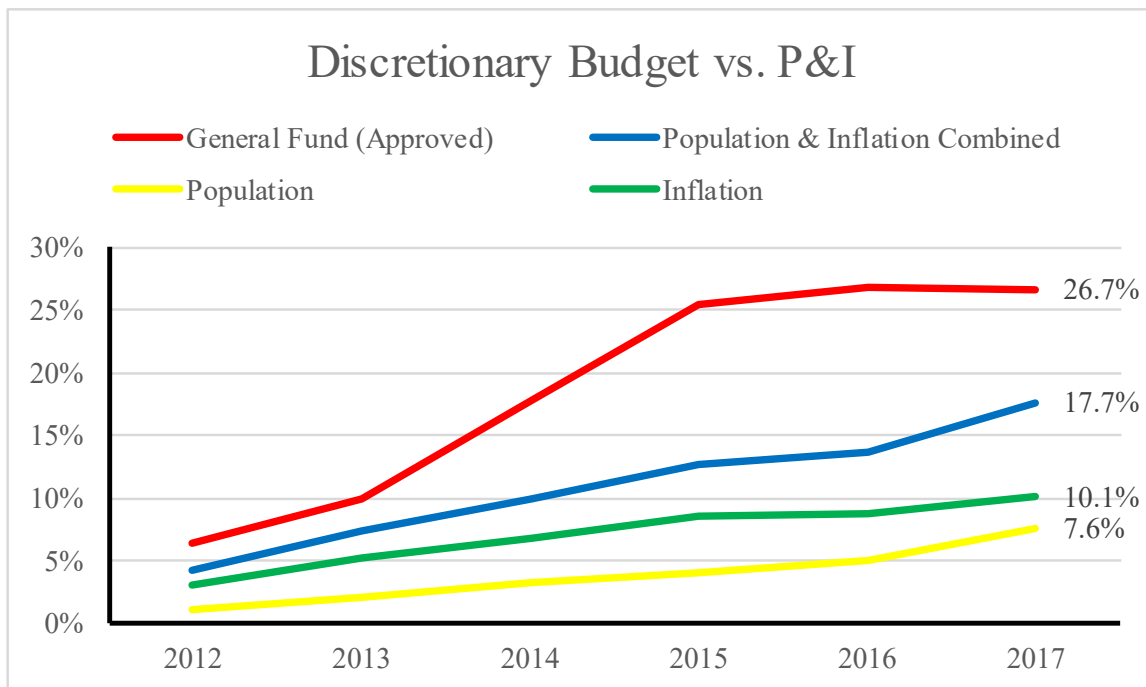
Source: Approved 2016-17 Budgets for each respective city

Among the sample of mid-sized municipalities, the city of Amarillo’s discretionary spending ranked higher than most of its peers, both in terms of its aggregate size and amount spent per person. In fiscal 2017, the city’s General Fund budget was estimated at \$175.4 million, an amount exceeded only by Laredo (\$183.2 million) and Irving (\$223 million.) On a per capita basis, that level of General Fund expenditure amounts

to \$871 spent per person which was exceeded only by Frisco (\$874 per capita) and Irving (\$930 per capita).

In contrast, the city’s All Funds budget for FY 2017, which totaled \$395.3 million, ranked more favorably compared to other mid-sized cities. Of the group, the city’s total budget was the 5th largest in terms of actual size and the amount spent per capita was the 6th highest.

Comparing City Spending against Population & Inflation



Source: Approved 2016-17 Budgets for the city of Amarillo

Examining some of the growth trends in the city of Amarillo reveals that General Fund expenditures are faster than traditional economic measures, like population and inflation.

From 2011 to 2017, General Fund expenditures increased by 26.7 percent. By comparison, population and inflation grew much more modestly, at just 17.7 percent.

Comparing City Debt

FISCAL YEAR 2016						
PLACE	LOCAL DEBT OUTSTANDING (Principal Only)	LOCAL DEBT OUTSTANDING PER CAPITA (Principal Only)	PER CAPITA RANKING	LOCAL DEBT SERVICE OUTSTANDING (Principal & Interest)	LOCAL DEBT SERVICE OUTSTANDING PER CAPITA (Principal & Interest)	PER CAPITA RANKING
<i>State of Texas</i>	\$218,464,200,000	\$7,880	1	\$342,096,054,210	\$12,339	1
Laredo	\$663,648,000	\$2,545	6	\$938,841,174	\$3,600	6
Lubbock	\$1,125,795,000	\$4,491	3	\$1,490,955,441	\$5,947	3
Irving	\$656,780,000	\$2,740	5	\$984,496,789	\$4,107	5
Garland	\$959,935,000	\$4,061	4	\$1,220,542,967	\$5,164	4
Amarillo	\$198,483,733	\$986	10	\$244,685,465	\$1,215	10
Grand Prairie	\$383,045,000	\$2,059	8	\$502,509,170	\$2,702	8
Brownsville	\$439,155,000	\$2,379	7	\$606,282,487	\$3,285	7
McKinney	\$321,975,000	\$1,941	9	\$438,018,751	\$2,640	9
Frisco	\$751,405,000	\$4,603	2	\$1,026,748,366	\$6,290	2

Source: [Texas Bond Review Board](#), Searchable Database for Texas Local Governments FY 2016

Amarillo compares exceptionally well on the matter of local government debt.

In fiscal year 2016—the most recent data available through the Texas Bond Review Board—the city’s local debt outstanding, a term that refers to “the amount of unpaid principal on a debt that will continue to generate interest until paid off,” totaled \$198.5 million. That is both the lowest in terms of total amount owed

and on a per capita basis.

Additionally, the city’s local debt service outstanding, a term that is defined as “the amount that is required to cover the repayment of principal and interest on a debt,” totaled \$244.7 million. Again, that level of indebtedness was both the lowest in terms of the total amount owed and on a per capita basis.

Comparing Property Taxes

CAD NAME	CITY NAME	MARKET VALUE	TAXABLE VALUE	M&O TAX RATE	I&S TAX RATE	TOTAL TAX RATE	LEVY (calculated)	LEVY PER CAPITA	LEVY PER CAPITA RANKING
Webb	City of Laredo	\$13,373,167,466	\$12,500,853,103	0.494068	0.142932	0.637	\$79,630,434	\$305	7
Lubbock	City of Lubbock	\$16,680,727,886	\$16,072,987,520	0.4014	0.13662	0.53802	\$86,475,887	\$345	6
Dallas	City of Irving	\$24,625,891,070	\$23,008,652,158	0.4641	0.13	0.5941	\$136,694,402	\$570	3
Collin	City of Garland	\$29,811,469	\$26,612,457	0.394	0.3106	0.7046	\$187,511		
Dallas	City of Garland	\$14,506,036,810	\$12,374,040,129	0.394	0.3106	0.7046	\$87,187,487		
Rockwall	City of Garland	\$73,180	\$180	0.394	0.3106	0.7046	\$1	\$370	5
Potter	City of Amarillo	\$12,563,278,541	\$12,065,465,099	0.32698	0.02374	0.35072	\$42,315,999	\$210	9
Dallas	City of Grand Prairie	\$6,836,865,060	\$5,855,161,211	0.473549	0.196449	0.669998	\$39,229,463		
Ellis	City of Grand Prairie	\$18,332,696	\$7,851,048	0.473549	0.196449	0.669998	\$52,602		
Tarrant	City of Grand Prairie	\$7,379,847,717	\$6,432,624,084	0.473549	0.196449	0.669998	\$43,098,453	\$443	4
Cameron	City of Brownsville	\$6,647,382,145	\$6,303,473,780	0.449303	0.25131	0.700613	\$44,162,957	\$239	8
Collin	City of McKinney	\$19,011,280,714	\$17,297,537,090	0.409973	0.173027	0.583	\$100,844,641	\$608	2
Collin	City of Frisco	\$16,857,274,968	\$14,920,637,999	0.294052	0.155948	0.45	\$67,142,871		
Denton	City of Frisco	\$10,122,355,795	\$9,360,380,307	0.294052	0.155948	0.45	\$42,121,711	\$669	1

Source: [Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts](#), Tax Rates & Levies

The city of Amarillo's property tax environment compares quite favorably to other similarly-sized cities.

In 2016—the most recent data available through the Texas Comptroller's office—the city's M&O tax rate, I&S tax rate, and total tax rate were among the lowest rates imposed. Only the city of Frisco imposed a lower M&O tax rate and no city bested Amarillo's I&S or total tax rates.

In addition, the property tax levy imposed per capita was the absolute lowest of the sample, and in some cases by far. The city's per capita property tax levy in 2016 amounted to \$210. That burden was modestly better than the next highest burden (Brownsville, \$239) and dramatically better than the top ranked burden (Frisco, \$669). ★

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