

CASE STUDY:

TAKING DIGITAL
TO THE NEXT LEVEL

*Backing a Well-Funded Digital
Campaign With Powerful Creative*





The Problem

The Woodlands Township is an unincorporated master community and Special Purpose Tax District with an elected Township Board holding limited tax authority.

Repeatedly ranked by multiple groups like Conde Nast as the #1 place to live in America, the community faced a proposal by the Township Board to incorporate – a move that would require a tax hike to establish services like a police department.

The reasons for incorporating included a growing tax base and potential federal dollars available in the wake of storms and pandemics, but other groups opposed the move in large part because of the hefty tax implications.

The Plan

Majority Strategies crafted a plan to educate voters on what incorporation meant long-term (i.e. high taxes) and motivate them to vote against the ballot message.

The Details

A massive digital program, including video, was supplemented with strong printed collateral including a sample ballot used for grassroots efforts.

Vote Against Incorporation Props A & B

BECOMING A CITY NOW IS ...

RISKY

- ✗ The Woodlands is the "Best Community to Live in America" with a high quality of life and low taxes. Why risk losing that?
- ✗ Loss of existing, reliable law enforcement.
- ✗ Assume full responsibility for road maintenance services we already receive and pay for.
- ✗ There is no going back. If incorporation passes, The Woodlands changes into a city forever.

RUSHED

- ✗ The Board broke their promise to not place incorporation on the ballot the same day the updated financial model was issued, allowing NO time for public input or review, with some Directors not seeing the financial plan until minutes before the meeting. This was the final day such a measure could be placed on the November ballot.
- ✗ Broken promise to not place incorporation on an odd-year ballot to ensure the most voters could make their voices heard.
- ✗ Advocates claim incorporation is needed to prevent annexation, however, strong protections signed into law in 2017 and 2019 ended forced annexation in Texas.

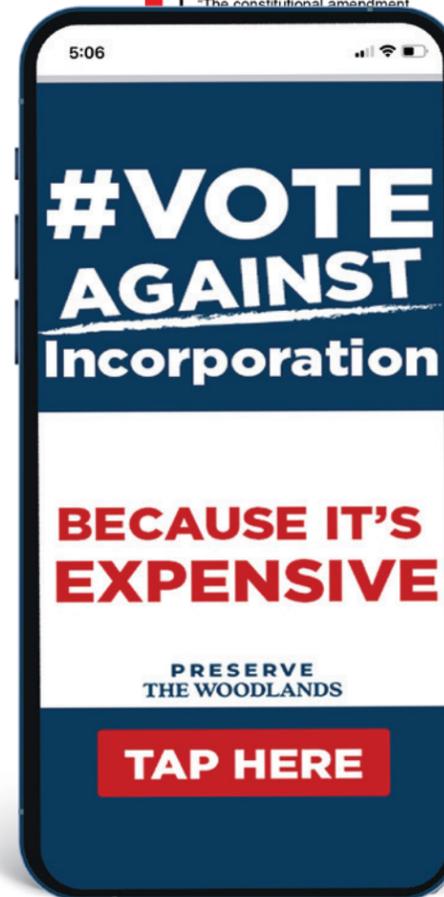
EXPENSIVE

- ✗ Independent analysis indicates Township financial models understate costs by nearly \$27 million.
- ✗ Law enforcement costs in particular will be much more expensive, meaning or cuts to public safety.
- ✗ The Township has been overtaxing to stockpile funds for first years of incorporation instead of lowering our tax rate – and taxes will have to be raised once that happens.
- ✗ A new city will be forced to raise your taxes before they can freeze senior taxes. (The Township could provide a homestead exemption up to 20% for all residents.)
- ✗ Combining and absorbing the MUDs cost of high debt MUDs to residents who currently live in MUDs with no debt.
- ✗ New City Hall, police department, municipal courts, extended administrative services and more - all of that is extremely expensive.
- ✗ The Township Board has already added \$5 million to the cost of incorporation. This on the ballot – a classic "bait and switch" maneuver.

EARLY VOTING
OCT 18TH-29TH

PRESERVE
THE WOODLANDS

Pd pol ad Preserve The Woodlands PAC



SAMPLE BALLOT

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, TEXAS CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ELECTION	State of Texas Proposition 6 "The constitutional amendment establishing a right for residents of certain facilities to designate an essential caregiver for in-person visitation." <input type="checkbox"/> FOR <input type="checkbox"/> AGAINST	THE WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP SPECIAL ELECTION	THE WOODLANDS MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1 SPECIAL ELECTION The Woodlands MUD No. 1 Proposition A Shall Montgomery County Municipal Utility District No. 6 (MUD 6) and The Woodlands Municipal Utility District No. 1 (MUD 1) consolidate into one district, to be known as The Woodlands Municipal Utility District No. 3, with the consolidated district assuming all of MUD 6 and MUD 1's legal rights, obligations and voted but unissued \$16,306,000 water, sewer and drainage bonds and \$1,919,881.60 water, sewer and drainage refunding bonds, and the imposition of taxes, without limit as to rate or amount, sufficient to pay the principal of and interest on the bonds? <input type="checkbox"/> FOR <input type="checkbox"/> AGAINST
State of Texas Proposition 1 "The constitutional amendment authorizing the professional sports team charitable foundations of organizations sanctioned by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association or the Women's Professional Rodeo Association to conduct charitable raffles at rodeo venues." <input type="checkbox"/> FOR <input type="checkbox"/> AGAINST	State of Texas Proposition 7 "The constitutional amendment to allow the surviving spouse of a person who is disabled to receive a limitation on the school district ad valorem taxes on the spouse's residence homestead if the spouse is 55 years of age or older at the time of the person's death." <input type="checkbox"/> FOR <input type="checkbox"/> AGAINST	The Woodlands Township Proposition A Authorizing the Type-A City Incorporation of The Woodlands Township District and the adoption of an initial property tax rate of not more than \$0.2231 per one hundred dollars (\$100) valuation of taxable property <input type="checkbox"/> FOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGAINST	
State of Texas Proposition 2 "The constitutional amendment authorizing a county to finance the development or redevelopment of transportation or infrastructure in unproductive, underdeveloped, or blighted areas in the county." <input type="checkbox"/> FOR <input type="checkbox"/> AGAINST	State of Texas Proposition 8 "The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the market value of the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a member of the armed services of the United States who is killed or fatally injured in the line of duty." <input type="checkbox"/> FOR <input type="checkbox"/> AGAINST	The Woodlands Township Proposition B Upon incorporation of The Woodlands Township District into a Type-A General Law City to be called The City of The Woodlands, the transfer of the rights, powers, privileges, duties, responsibilities, the authority to issue bonds, and the authority to impose taxes from The Woodlands Township District to The City of The Woodlands <input type="checkbox"/> FOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGAINST	
State of Texas Proposition 3 "The constitutional amendment	THE WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP GENERAL ELECTION The Woodlands Township Position No. 5 Vote for one or for none <input type="checkbox"/> Shelley Sekula-Gibbs		
	The Woodlands Township Position No. 6 Vote for one or for none <input type="checkbox"/> Ann K. Snyder		
	The Woodlands Township Position No. 7 Vote for one or for none <input type="checkbox"/> Zipporah Singleton <input type="checkbox"/> Luis R. Granados <input type="checkbox"/> Bob Milner		



THE RESULTS

The anti-incorporation effort was successful at the ballot box, with record turnout for an odd-year election voting down the measure by nearly 3-to-1 **with 68% voting against**.

Targeted Voters	Digital Impressions	Clicks
20,984	1,632,761	18,923

Click-Through Rate	Total Video Views
Click-Through Rate	322,207

Key Takeaways

A well-funded digital campaign alone does not always equal success. However, a well-funded digital campaign backed by powerful creative and a clear, persuasive message that saturates the market is a powerful strategic step toward victory.





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