



HILL COUNTRY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

- Local leaders
- Regional challenges
- Real solutions
- Lasting relationships

The Hill Country is a region unlike any other in Texas—full of natural features, treasured places, charming communities, and a rich heritage. Today, the region faces numerous threats driven by rapid growth, land fragmentation, and unchecked development.

The Hill Country needs locally driven and balanced solutions to protect the ecological and economic health of this place we call home. Yet very few opportunities exist for leaders to connect, share, and generate new ideas.

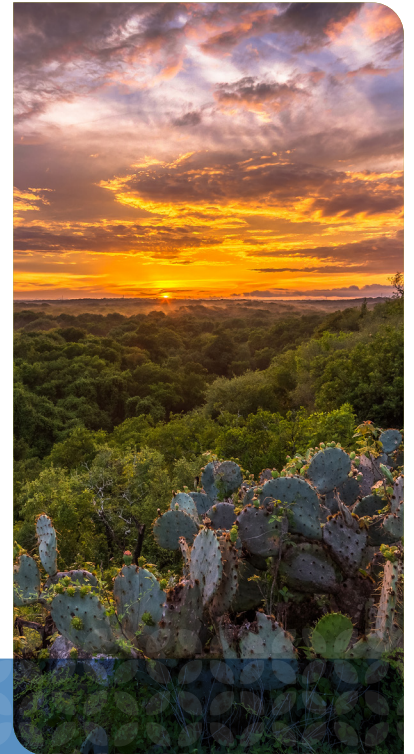
For this reason, the Hill Country Alliance has developed a new leadership program especially for decision makers and elected leaders throughout the Texas Hill Country.

The **Hill Country Leadership Institute** is designed for city council members, county judges and commissioners, groundwater conservation district board members and general managers, and anyone serving in a public leadership role.

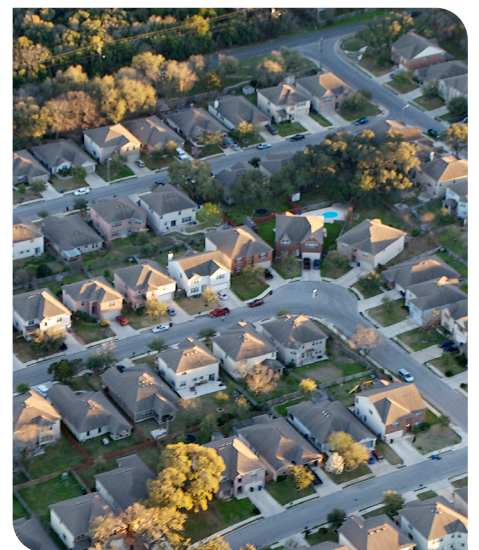
Past and present elected leaders, subject matter experts, and other professionals were involved in development of the Leadership Institute, and the inaugural class launched in January 2023.

Participants can expect both professional and personal benefits.

- Develop strong, lasting relationships across jurisdictional boundaries.
- Discover what is working and what is not working in other communities.
- Learn from experts in an intimate and inspiring setting.
- Engage in problem solving and avoid the need to reinvent the wheel.
- Create actionable strategies for our region's most pressing issues.
- Participate in honest, trusted conversations about what is possible and what is needed.
- Take away tools—including model policies, funding opportunities, and case studies—ready to put to work in your community.



Our purpose is to engage, empower, connect, and inspire local leaders dedicated to the long-term vitality of our unique 17-county region.



Plan for the 2025 Hill Country Leadership Institute

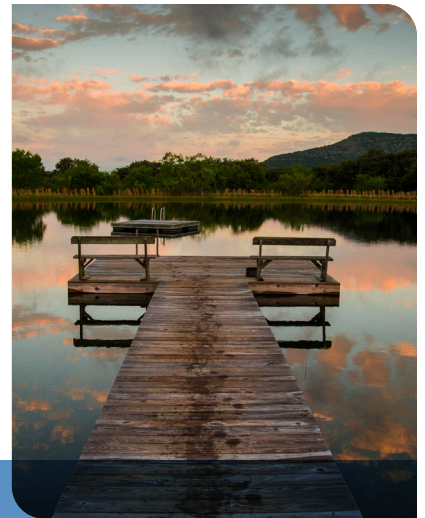
- The educational program will run for ten months—from January through October 2025.
- We will gather in person every third Thursday of the month at unique locations across the region.
- The first gathering is set for Thursday, January 16, 2025, from 9am to 1pm at Selah Bamberger Ranch Preserve in Blanco County.
- Maximum enrollment is 20 to deliver a personalized enriching experience.
- One full-day retreats is included for on-the-land learning in spring and fall.
- Brief topics to be offered as virtual lunch-and-learn sessions.
- Scheduled “office hours” are planned for deeper learning and one-on-one discussions.
- Breakout groups will be created to dive deeper on topics of interest.
- Ongoing engagement for three years beyond the conclusion of the program is encouraged and supported.
- Sliding scale enrollment from \$500 to \$1,000 depending on size of population served.

Core curriculum topics

- **Water infrastructure:** Long-range thinking about drinking water supply for our growing population. Sustainable and innovative wastewater solutions. Protecting pristine streams. One Water strategies. Regional water planning processes.
- **Development oversight:** The costs of sprawl vs planning for density close to existing infrastructure. Conservation development. Low-impact development. Development agreements. Special purpose districts.
- **Groundwater:** Groundwater management. Loss of springs. Working with groundwater conservation districts and understanding their Chapter 36 authority. Groundwater Management Areas and “Desired Future Conditions.”
- **Planning:** Extents and limits of county authority. Municipal planning tools. Thoroughfare plans. Habitat conservation plans. Comprehensive planning and regional planning opportunities.
- **Land stewardship and conservation:** The land/water connection in the Hill Country. Private land stewardship opportunities. Conservation easements. Public funding for conservation.

Additional focus areas

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| Public health | Broadband infrastructure | Night skies |
| Workforce development | Heritage protection | Tourism |
| Workforce housing | Water quality | Working with TCEQ |
| Economic development | Incompatible land use | Industrial activities |



The 2025 class of the Hill Country Leadership Institute is forming now!

Application and additional information are available at hillcountryalliance.org/leadershipinstitute

Applications are encouraged on or before November 1, 2024

For more information, contact Grace Gilker, grace@hillcountryalliance.org

The Hill Country Leadership Institute is a program of the Hill Country Alliance.

Hill Country Alliance is a 501c3 non-profit established in 2004, bringing together a diverse coalition of partners to preserve the open spaces, stary night skies, clean and abundant waters, and unique character of the Texas Hill Country.

