

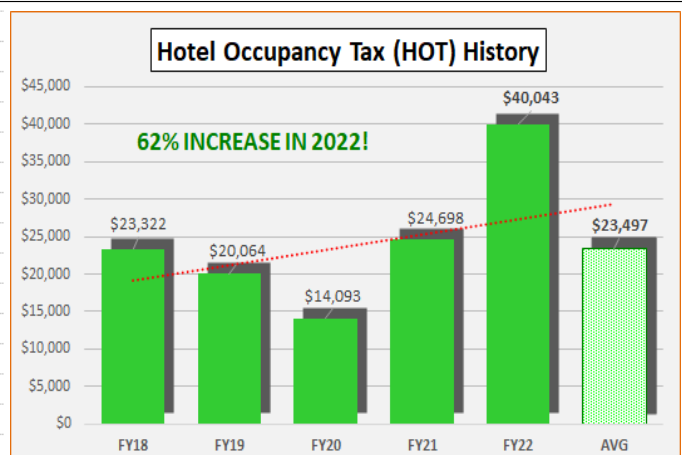
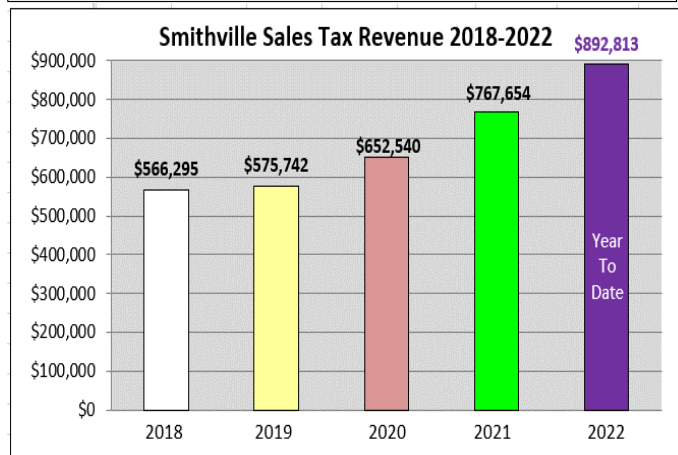
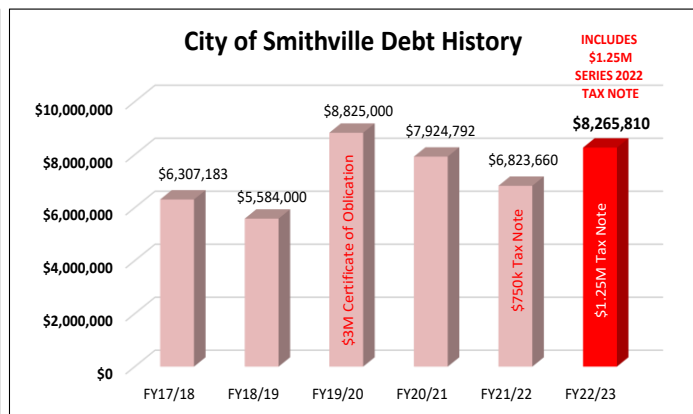
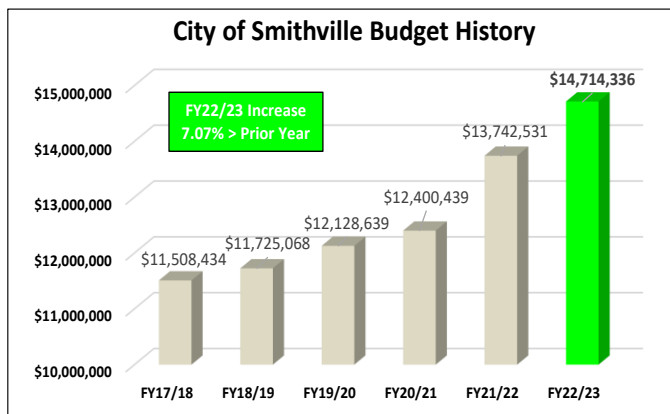
City Manager Update – 1/6/23

Happy New Year everyone! The Holidays gave us the chance to reflect upon all the important things in life that we sometimes take for granted.....family, friends, and fellowship. So, I hope everyone took the time to rest, recharge, and reconnect as 2023 will be another exciting and challenging year.

Twenty-four (24) new businesses opened in our community during 2022. Fourteen (14) new single-family residential homes were built adding approximately \$4.M to the tax roll. Multiple infrastructure and development projects were completed and/or are underway that will better position the city to accommodate future growth while providing additional housing and commerce to our community. Other significant accomplishments / projects in 2022 include:

- Received “clean” FY20/21 financial audit.
- Provided emergency management and leadership during the Pine Pond Fire.
- Managed FY21-22 budget to within +2.0% of commit. Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$298k on \$13.8M budget.
- Developed FY22/23 balanced budget (\$14.7M) to include funding of new projects/programs via ARPA and Tax Note.
- Supported the M5, Enclave, Woodrose Place, Grove, and Garwood Park housing development projects.
- Supported multiple infrastructure improvement projects (e.g., water tower renovation, re-paving of Main Street, NW/NE 2nd Drainage project, extension of Christmas lights in the 300 block of Main and on NW/NE 2nd Street).
- Updated Smithville’s section of the [Bastrop County Hazard Mitigation Action Plan \(HMAP\)](#)
- Completed Loop 230 water line expansion from American Legion Road.

The Smithville City Council adopted a \$14,714,336 balanced budget representing a 7.07% INCREASE in projected Y-O-Y spending. This is \$971,805 greater than our FY21/22 budget of \$13,742,531 (see charts below for the City’s budget and debt history). The additional \$565k revenue from American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) and issuing a \$1.25M tax note will cover the cost for sealcoating / restriping Main Street, expanding City Hall to include additional office space and ADA-compliant restrooms, conducting a wastewater expansion study, making upgrades to Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, redesigning the city website, preparing a comprehensive plan, and purchasing capital equipment for the Public Works, Parks, and Police Department(s).



Smithville’s calendar year-to-date sales tax payments from January to December total \$892,813. The data indicates a positive trend with a 16.3% increase (approximately \$125k) over the same period last year. Hotel Occupancy Tax receipts increased 62% with \$40,043 collected.

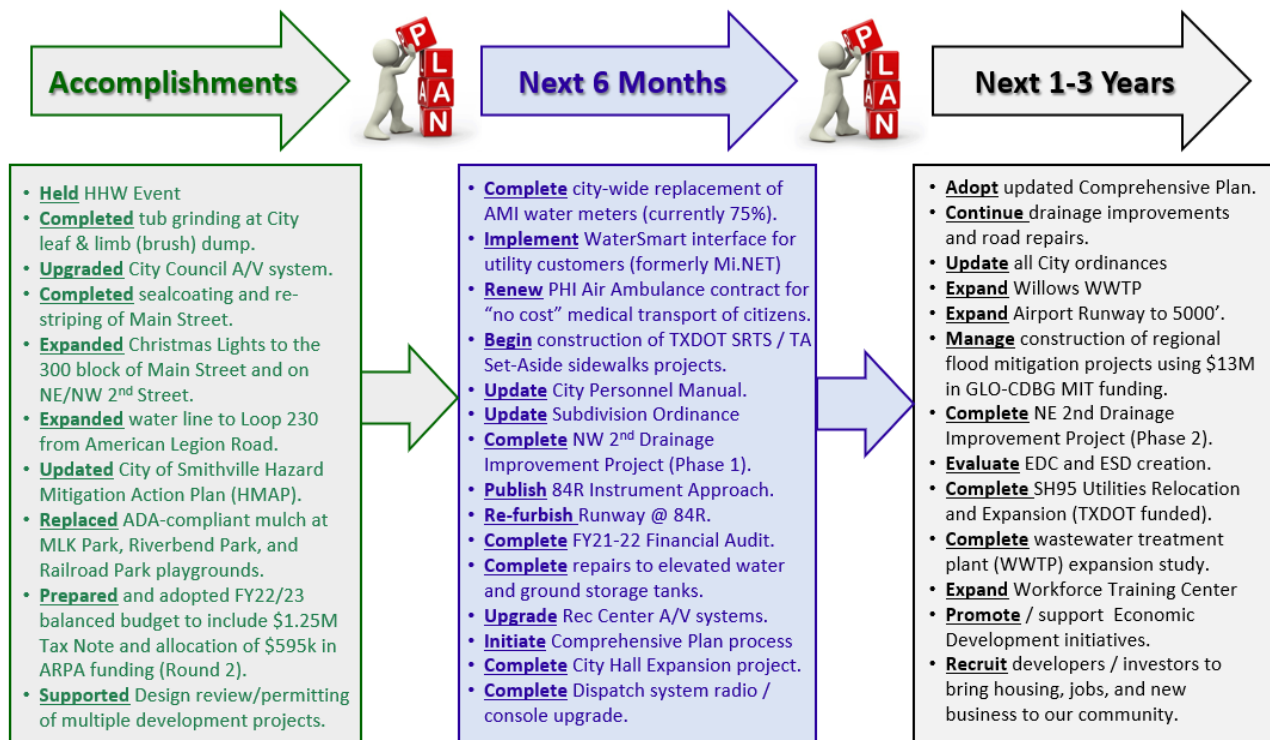
City Manager Update – 1/6/23 (continued)

During 2023, the city will face many challenges with respect to managing growth. Infrastructure improvement, economic development, and fiscal performance remain the City's key areas of focus. Drainage improvements, WWTF expansion, road repairs, ordinance updates, housing development, business recruiting, and updating the city's Comprehensive Plan are among the top priorities for FY22/23. Some of the major projects / initiatives the city will undertake over the next 6-9 months include:

- Complete City Hall Expansion project.
- Complete NW 2nd Drainage Improvement Project (Phase 1).
- Complete construction of four (4) HOME grant houses (207 Cleveland / 203 Washington / 611 Gazley / 407 Gazley)
- Complete Smithville PD Dispatch system radio / console upgrade.
- Complete Instrument Approach Procedure and refurbish runway for 84R
- Complete city-wide replacement of AMI water meters (currently 75%).
- Implement WaterSmart interface for utility customers (formerly Mi.NET)
- Renew PHI Air Ambulance contract for "no cost" medical transport of citizens.
- Begin construction of TXDOT SRTS / TA Set-Aside sidewalks projects.
- Update Subdivision Ordinance and City Personnel Manual
- Replace Mt. Pleasant Cemetery fence and install Entry Gate
- Support Investor / Entrepreneur Development Initiatives

As you can see above, there are many plans and projects the City staff continues to juggle. These projects are above and beyond what it takes to keep the City running on a daily basis. Miscellaneous drainage projects, sidewalk repairs, and road improvement projects will continue as the weather and budget permit. Below you will find a STRATEGIC ROADMAP that provides an "at-a-glance" view of our short (6-9 months) and long-term initiatives (1-3 years). Going forward, there will be multiple opportunities for community engagement and involvement. Citizens are encouraged and welcome to attend all future public meetings, workshops, and/or stakeholder feedback sessions. Good things are happening within our City and I look forward to what the future holds.

CITY OF SMITHVILLE – STRATEGIC ROADMAP



As of 12/30/22

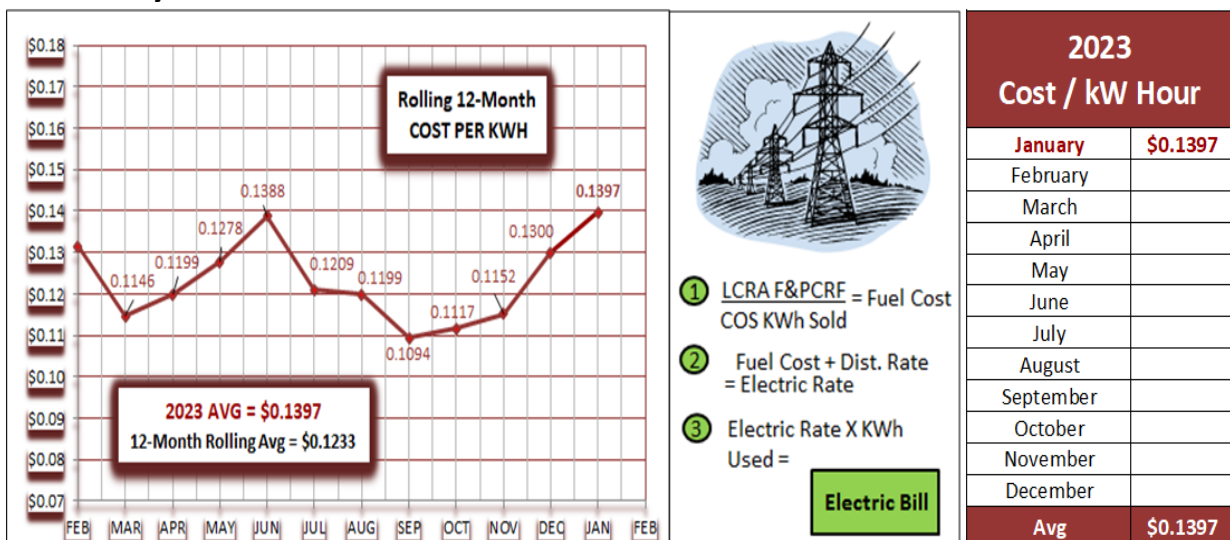
- Much has been accomplished but still much to be done.
- **Strategic Focus** - Infrastructure Improvement, Eco Development, and Fiscal Responsibility.
- Partner with the Community, Chamber, and County to proactively manage growth in a manner that preserves and protects our small-town look, feel, and charm.

City Manager Update – 1/6/23 (continued)

Below you will find a list of accomplishments, issues, and planned activities since my last report:

- 1) **Wastewater Rates - Three Month Winter Water Average** - Wastewater rates in Smithville are set by using a three (3) month “winter” water use average between DECEMBER and FEBRUARY. You can reduce your monthly wastewater (sewer) bill by conserving water during these months. In the event that the monthly water usage for any month is less than the computed “winter water average,” the lesser of the two shall be used as the basis for calculating the wastewater bill. Residential customers pay a \$15.00 sewer base rate per month and \$4.00 sewer fee per 1000 gallons of water used. Cut back on water use between December and February and let the savings begin! For a list of all utility rates in Smithville, click on the following link → <https://www.ci.smithville.tx.us/city-departments/utilities/rates/>.
- 2) **34TH Annual MLK Walk for Peace, Justice, and Equality** - The 34th annual Bastrop County Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Commission Walk and Celebration will be held **January 16, 2023** in Elgin. The walk’s theme is “A Day On... Not a Day Off!!” which emphasizes that though the day celebrating the civil rights leader is a national holiday, everyone is encouraged to remember and celebrate King’s legacy. The Martin Luther King Jr. walk in Bastrop County rotates yearly between the cities of Bastrop, Elgin and Smithville. This year, the walk will begin at 10 a.m. at the Elgin Veterans’ Memorial Park located at 109 Depot St and will end at Booker T. Washington Gymnasium, 510 Martin Luther King Blvd., where a tribute will be held. For more information, click the following link → [2023 MLK Walk and Celebration](#)
- 3) **2023 It’s Time Texas (ITT) Community Challenge** - Each year, H-E-B sponsors the free, state-wide competition in which Texas communities compete to see which communities can demonstrate the greatest commitment to healthy living. The City has won the competition the past five (5) years in a row in the “extra small” community category (population between 1-5000). If you have not yet registered, there is still plenty of time to participate as the challenge runs from January 9, 2023 through March 5, 2023. Go to <https://register.ittcommunitychallenge.com/> to register.
- 4) **Residential Cost Per Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Calculated** – An analysis of LCRA billing data was conducted to determine residential cost per kilowatt hour (kWh) in January. LCRA fuel costs vary month to month and are based upon electric utility generation, transmission, line loss, and service fees. The LCRA fuel cost per kWh for January is \$0.0897. This represents a **12.17% INCREASE** compared to December’s fuel cost of \$0.0800. Adding the City’s distribution fee of \$0.0500 and LCRA’s \$0.0897 fuel cost, the cost per kWh for residential service in Smithville during JANUARY will be \$0.1397. Generally speaking, it costs more to heat a residence than it does to cool it as there is a greater outdoor temperature difference to make up to achieve what most folks consider “comfortable” inside.....68°F in winter and 78°F in summer. The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) of Texas has published energy-savings tips on their website → <https://www.puc.texas.gov/consumer/facts/Save.aspx>. On average, the cost per kWh for residential electric service in Smithville is between 12-13 cents.

City of Smithville Residential Cost Per kWh – JANUARY 2023



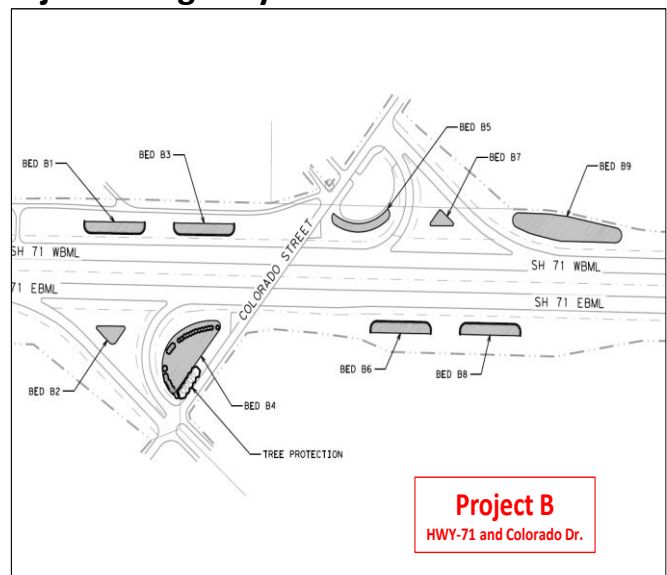
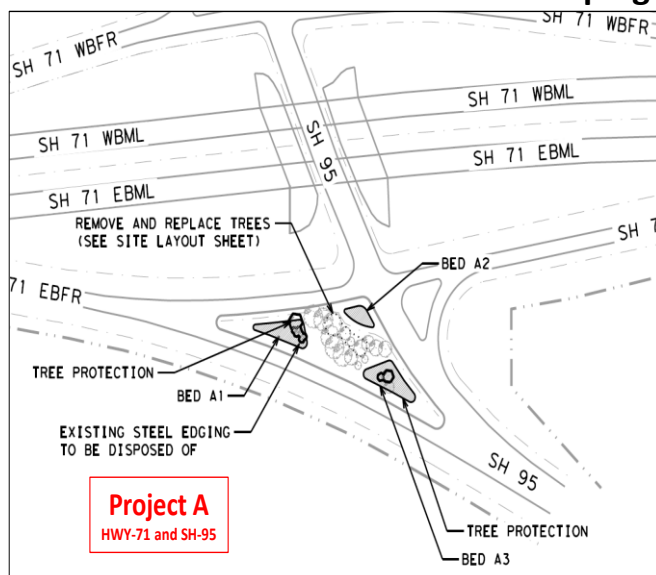
Note: LCRA Fuel & Power Cost Recovery Factor + City Distribution Fee* (\$0.0500) = Cost / kWh

*Residential Distribution Fee = \$0.500/kWh. Non-Resident (i.e., service outside city limit) Distribution Fee = \$0.650/kWh Effective October 1, 2019

City Manager Update – 1/6/23 (continued)

- 5) **Holiday Power Outage Impacts 700 Utility Customers** – On December 22, 2022 at approximately 3:15 pm, City utility crews responded to a major power outage at 7th and Gresham due to the extreme wind (SEE PHOTOS). Wind gusts of up to 50 mph caused large oak branch to come into direct contact with the primary causing the subsequent fault. This outage impacting approximately 700 utility customers including downtown businesses and the phones at City Hall. In addition, the outage impacted the traffic lights at Loop 230 and Main Street requiring the City to put up temporary STOP signs for traffic control. City utility crews were able to repair the downed line and power was restored at 5:05 pm. KUDOS to the Smithville Utility crew for repairing the downed line in sub-freezing weather! As a reminder, call City Hall at 512-237-3282 to report a power outage during normal work hours. To report an after-hours power outage, call the Smithville PD (Dispatch office) on 512-237-3228.
- 6) **Contractor Hit 8-Inch Water Main Interrupting Service to Residents in the Quail Run / Oak Meadows Area** – At approximately 2:35 pm on December 28, 2022, an independent contractor broke an 8-inch water main along the north side of Loop 230 East. City water and wastewater personnel responded to the area to assess the situation. The repair required additional heavy equipment and personnel the city did not readily have. Fortunately, WJC Constructors were working on the FEMA HMGP drainage improvement project at NW 2nd and agreed to help. Equipment and personnel were relocated and with the help of the independent contractor (who hit the line) and City personnel, the broken 8-inch water line was repaired at 7:45 pm. Residential water pressure readings were taken throughout the duration of the event and the water pressure never dropped below the TCEQ mandatory boil water notice threshold of 20 psi. Residents who live in Oak Meadows, Quail Run, or on Hill Road may have experienced low water pressure and/or sediment in their water lines which typically clears after running a faucet for 5-10 minutes. KUDOS to the Smithville Water / Wastewater Department, the Smithville PD, and WJC Constructors for successfully completing a very difficult repair in less than favorable conditions (SEE PHOTOS).
- 7) **TXDOT Landscaping Project Along HWY-71 and SH-95** – Many residents (and visitors) are inquiring about the landscaping work along HWY-71 and SH-95. Smithville is currently undergoing two Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) “Green Ribbon” projects that involve landscaping and scenic enhancement. **Project A** is located at HWY-71 and SH-95 just past the Loop 230 exit near the airport and **Project B** is located at HWY-71 and Colorado Drive (SEE DIAGRAM BELOW). Some of the landscaping requires pruning and/or protecting existing trees and removal of others. Planting beds with native plants have been prepared and irrigation systems installed. Currently, the retaining wall(s) along Hwy 71 and Colorado Road are still under construction. This initiative began in 2019 with community input and guidance from TXDOT. The \$1.1M cost of the project is being completely funded by TXDOT. Two years after completion of the project, the City of Smithville will assume responsibility for maintenance. Note: the city currently maintains the triangle on SH-95 just past the Loop 230 exit.

TXDOT “Green Ribbon” Landscaping Project Along Hwy-71 and SH-95



City Manager Update – 1/6/23 (continued)

- 8) **Mt. Pleasant Cemetery Fence Replaced** – The cyclone fence at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery was recently replaced by a local contractor (SEE PHOTOS). Plans are underway to install an entry gate to improve both aesthetics and security. In addition, the overgrown trees will be trimmed and/or removed as part of the 2023 “Steps Forward” project where employees from LCRA volunteer to support beautification projects within the community. The 2023 Steps Forward event will be held on Monday, April 10, 2023. The cost for installation of a new cyclone fence and an ornamental wrought-iron entry gate is being funded by monies received from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Thus far, the city has spent approximately \$18k of the \$50k budgeted in FY23 for the new fence, entry gate, and markers for the 140 unmarked graves identified in 2021 during a survey using ground-penetrating radar.
- 9) **City Council to Consider Action to Recover Delinquent Utility Accounts** - The New Year will also bring a tightening of the reigns with respect to delinquent utility accounts. Prior to COVID-19, a concentrated effort was made to reduce the number of past-due utility accounts by limiting the number of days a customer is allowed to be delinquent. In the past, many utility customers with delinquent accounts (exceeding 90-days) were allowed to continue receiving services if the customer made payment arrangements. With 10% late penalties accruing each month (and continued utility usage), many customers simply could not honor their agreements. As a result, utility services were disconnected and the delinquent account(s) sent to a collection agency. This is revenue the city will very likely never recover. In fact, the City has incurred more than \$701k in lost utility revenue associated with delinquent accounts over the past 10 years. Beginning **June 1, 2023**, utility customers with past due accounts greater than 30-days will have their service disconnected. There are three (3) exceptions to this rule: 1) Temperatures over 100°F in the summer; 2) Temperatures below freezing 32°F in the winter; and/or 3) a life-threatening medical condition (certified by a licensed medical professional) that would be exacerbated by disconnecting service. For the record, per [Article 13.03.003 \(4\)](#) of our City Ordinance, “Services shall be interrupted to any customer whose account is five (5) days delinquent. In the event that the 5th day falls on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday or holiday, service interruption shall occur on the first following working day.” We are not quite ready to ratchet down to 5-days as this situation was not created overnight. Ultimately, establishing a 30-day past-due limit will benefit both the customer and the City by reducing the delinquent utility customer’s balance to something manageable while enabling a more reliable payment of utility services provided. The city staff will send out notices well in advance of the June 1, 2023 deadline to give customers with past due balances additional time to settle their accounts. This will be an item for discussion and action during the January 9, 2023 City Council meeting.

There are several events / activities planned the next few weeks:

The next CITY COUNCIL MEETING will be held on **Monday, January 9, 2023** at City Hall (6:00 pm). Click for [AGENDA](#).

[TXDOT SIDEWALK TALKS](#) will be held on **Tuesday, January 10, 2023** at the Smithville Rec Center (106 Royston) at 5:00 pm.

As a reminder, CITY HALL WILL BE CLOSED **Monday, January 16, 2023** in observance of Martin Luther King Day. City Hall hours will be 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Tuesday-Friday.

The next CHAMBER MONTHLY MIXER will be held **Thursday, January 19, 2023** at 5pm at the Smithville Heritage Museum, 602 Main Street.

The CHAMBER OF COMMERCE QUARTERLY LUNCHEON will be held on **January 25, 2023** at the First United Methodist Church (400 Olive) from 11:30 to 1:00 pm. The guest speaker will be City Manager Robert Tamble with a "State of the City" update.

The BEST COUNTY-WIDE BREAKFAST will be held in Elgin on **Friday, January 27, 2023** from 8:00-9:30 am. Location TBD.

CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE FILING for the upcoming election in May begins **Wednesday, January 18, 2023**. Persons interested in filing to run for City Council (Place 1, Place 2, or Place 3) can pick up a candidate packet at City Hall. The deadline to file is February 19, 2023.

CITY OFFICES CLOSED
JANUARY 16TH IN OBSERVANCE OF
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

PHOTOS – 1/6/23:

Fence Replacement at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery



Smithville Utilities Crew Repairing Electrical Outage at 7th and Gresham on 12/22/23



TXDOT Landscaping Project on HWY-71 and SH-95 / HWY-71 and Colorado Drive



8-inch Water Main Repair on Loop 230 East – 12/28/22

