

City Manager Update – 7/5/19

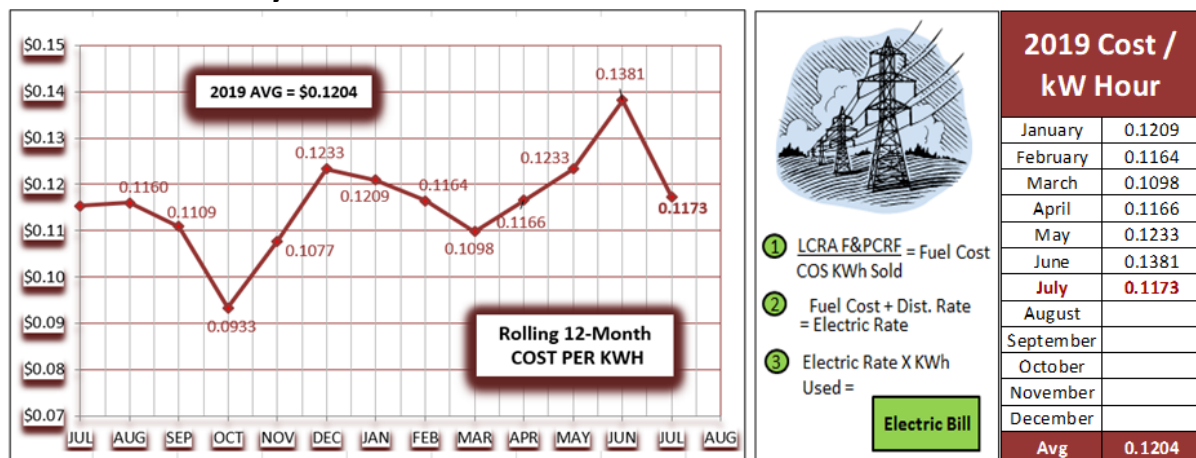
TGIF! I hope everyone had a Happy (and safe) 4th of July. The buzzing sound of mosquitos has been replaced with the buzzing sound of chainsaws as citizens continue to trim/cut down fallen trees in response to the “D-Day Thunderstorm” on June 6, 2019. City crews are still picking up limbs throughout town and the brush dump on Mt. Pleasant Road is nearing capacity. As such, the City will be getting estimates from wood recycling companies out of Austin to bring out a tub-grinder to chip up all the vegetative debris collected throughout our community (i.e., trees, leaves, and limbs). The estimated cost is \$35-50k. As reminder, citizens are welcome to load as much mulch as they can haul off at no charge. Currently, the brush dump is open 24/7 for disposal of leaves, limbs, and trees. Construction debris and/or household garbage is not allowed.

The City Council held a workshop on Thursday, June 27, 2019 to discuss roles and responsibilities, finances, issues, accomplishments, projects, and future plans. The Mayor, City Council, City staff, and three (3) members of the community attended the meeting. Copies of the workshop presentation are available on the City website. Click on the following link → http://easyedit.ci.smithville.tx.us/filemanager/files/Council_Workshop_6_27_19_FINAL_Public.pdf

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

- 1) Miscellaneous Drainage Projects Completed / Scheduled** - Miscellaneous drainage projects continue to be supported as the budget and schedule will allow. The latest project completed was on 4th Avenue to alleviate erosion in an outfall leading to Gazley Creek (SEE PHOTOS). The next drainage project(s) in queue include upsizing drain lines at the corner of 8th and Charleston and installation of drainage culverts along Webb Street.
- 2) TXDOT Mowing Update** - TXDOT contractors finished mowing Hwy 71, Loop 230, and most of the arterial roadways this week to include FM 2571 and FM 2104. TXDOT only mows the Right-of-Way (ROW) twice a year (typically July and November) unless a line-of-sight hazard exists. Unfortunately, line-of-sight hazards must be called into the district office to resolve and it is often easier to have City crews just take care of the issue. Since TXDOT only mows twice a year, the City hired a local contractor to help keep the Loop 230 and Hwy 71 triangle (by the airport) mowed on a regular basis. This has helped the eastbound entrance to our community look more attractive and well-maintained. The same contractor also mows around the crepe myrtles at the airport.
- 3) Residential Cost Per Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Calculated** - An analysis of LCRA billing data was conducted to determine residential cost per kilowatt hour (kWh) in JULY. 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 July is \$ 0.06731. This represents a **23.6% DECREASE** compared to June's fuel cost of \$0.0881. Adding the City's distribution fee of \$0.0500 and LCRA's \$0.0673 fuel cost, the cost per kWh for residential service in Smithville **during JULY will be \$0.1173**. Our Utility revenues this year have been much lower than expected due to a very mild winter and spring. However, the dog days of summer will be upon us soon. So, I expect utility revenues to increase. ERCOT provides energy conservation tips → <http://ercot.com/about/conservation/> to help reduce consumption which in turn will help citizens save money. Below you will find a "rolling" 12-month residential cost per kWh and a fuel cost comparison chart. On average, the cost per kWh for residential electric service in Smithville is between 11-12 cents.

City of Smithville Residential Cost Per kWh - JULY



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

*Residential Distribution Fee Increase of \$0.005 Approved by City Council on October 1, 2017

City Manager Update – 7/5/19 (continued)

- 4) **City Council Approves Resolution to Seek \$80k TXDOT Funding for Aeronautical Survey** - On June 10, 2019, the Smithville City Council approved a resolution to request \$80k in TXDOT Aviation Non-Primary Entitlement (NPE) grant funding to conduct an aeronautical survey for the development of an instrument approach procedure. In aviation, an instrument approach is a series of predetermined maneuvers that help a pilot land safely under instrument flight conditions (e.g., limited or no visibility) from the beginning of the initial approach to a landing or to a point from which a landing may be made visually. Having an instrument approach will improve the overall safety of airport operations and allow pilots the ability to navigate successful landings that otherwise would not be possible. The estimated cost of the survey is between \$50-80k. Approving this resolution allows the City Manager to execute all contracts and agreements with the Texas Department of Transportation for the aeronautical survey with the understanding that the City will be responsible for 10% of the total cost (90/10 match). The \$5-8k match is a budgeted airport expense.
- 5) **Fiberlight Fiber-Optic Installation Underway** - The City received notification from Manweiler Telecom Consulting, Inc. (MTC) that Fiberlight has begun installation of an underground fiber-optic line that will improve cell phone service and data transmittal (increased bandwidth) in our community. The 13,126-foot fiber optic line will be installed 60" below the surface of the road beginning on Colorado Street and ending at Dump Ground Road via Short Street, NW 4th Street, Hwy 95, and 4th Avenue (SEE MAP BELOW). The fiber optic line will be buried on city easement and encased in conduit. Residents who park on city easement along the installation path will be impacted. However, notice will be given in advance prior to beginning boring operations to give residents ample time to relocate their cars. Fiberlight is planning to begin this installation in June/July 2019 with an estimated completion in 4-6 weeks. [Fiberlight](#) is Certified by the Texas PUC as a CTP (Certified Telecommunications Provider) that specializes in installation of high-bandwidth fiber optic networks. NOTE: The cost of this installation is being funded by multiple cell phone providers (e.g., Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, etc.) --- not the City.

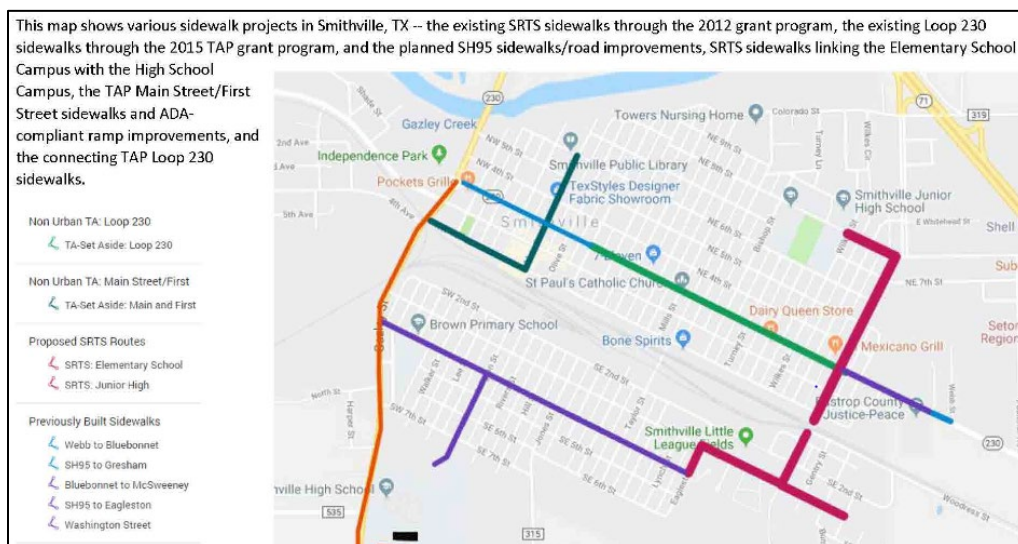


- 6) **TXDOT Commission Approves \$500k Funding Request for Hangar Purchase** - The TXDOT Aviation Division approved the City of Smithville's request for \$500k in Non-Primary Entitlement (NPE) funding for the purchase of ten (10) 30'x40' aircraft hangars at the Smithville Crawford Municipal Airport on June 27, 2019. The Fair Market Value (FMV) of the hangars was determined to be \$45k each. TXDOT Aviation is acting as the City's agent for the transaction and they are currently in negotiations with the owners. Once an agreed purchase price is identified, the City will authorize TXDOT to proceed with the purchase of the hangars. The City will be responsible for 10% of the total cost. The estimated \$50k match will be covered (funded) salary savings from personnel attrition, film permit fees, RAMP grant funding, and reserves from our general fund. The City currently charges \$0.10 ft² per hangar for each of the 10 ground leases. This only brings in \$1200 per year in revenue. Hangar rentals at general aviation airports in Central Texas average \$250-300 per month. The City can rent the 10 hangars for \$250 / month which would bring in \$30k in revenue per year with a return on our initial \$50k investment (ROI) of 20-months. Once a closing date is identified, the Seller will give the current tenants 30-days written notice that their hangar lease(s) will be terminated. Any monies owed to the Seller for hangar rentals after the transfer of ownership (during this 30-day notification period) will be deducted from the closing cost. New hangar rental / lease agreements will then be drawn up and assigned by the City.

City Manager Update – 7/5/19 (continued)

7) **TXDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA) and Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Program funding Program** - On February 8, 2019, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) announced a combined statewide Call for Projects for Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA) Program and Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Program funding. Through the 2019 TA/SRTS Call for Projects, the department will select projects for current TA funds associated with available FY 2019 – FY 2020 federal appropriations for nonurban areas (population areas of 5,000 or less located outside Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). The Call for Projects features a two-step application process, which includes a preliminary application (Step 1) with high-level proposed project information to determine eligibility and funding opportunities and, following successful completion of Step 1, a detailed application (Step 2) with more comprehensive project information. This two-step approach is intended to enhance the quality of project applications and to foster communication between project sponsors and TxDOT District staff. Both steps must be completed in order for a project to be considered for funding under this program call. The City of Smithville submitted three (3) projects for consideration on April 12, 2019:

- Smithville Safe Routes to School Sidewalks - \$780k (**PINK LINE**)
- Sidewalks - Loop 230 (north side) from Gresham to McSweeney - \$687k (**GREEN LINE**)
- Smithville's Main Street ADA Ramps and First Street Sidewalks - \$600k (**DARK BLUE LINE**)



A total of 357 out of 398 projects are moving forward in Step 2. I am pleased to report that the City has been invited to submit detailed applications for all three projects. TXDOT anticipates awarding approximately \$46 million worth of federal funds. A 20% minimum local match is required if awarded. The local match is a cash match or a combination of cash and in-kind contributions. The deadline for submitting our detailed application(s) is August 15, 2019.

8) **Texas Downtown Association (TDA) Assessment Scheduled** - The Texas Downtown Association (TDA) will be performing a downtown assessment in Smithville on **Thursday, July 11th**. Downtown assessments are provided to members of the TDA organization for the purpose of gathering information, offering guidance, and making recommendations regarding future growth and economic development opportunities. Team members include TDA staff as well as other economic development and municipal professionals. The assessment will start with a meeting of stakeholders at the Smithville Recreation Center (106 Gazley) from 9:30 to 11:00 am on July 11th so the team can learn about challenges and successes. As part of the assessment, team members will be visiting downtown businesses and offices to talk to business and property owners, employees, and residents about Downtown Smithville to get feedback on issues and challenges. The team will share initial observations and recommendations at a wrap up meeting to be held at Smithville Recreation Center (106 Gazley) from 2:30 to 3:30 pm. In advance of the assessment team's arrival, an on-line survey → <http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07egfepzfcjxcfl5it/start> was distributed to approximately 25 downtown property / business to obtain feedback regarding issues, challenges, and/or ideas with respect to downtown business development. The TDA was established in 1985 as an independent, statewide, nonprofit organization comprised of over 300 members involved in downtown and commercial district revitalization. TDA provides resources to members through networking opportunities, marketing, education and advocacy to achieve community goals. The City of Smithville is a member of TDA. To learn more, please visit www.texasdowntown.org. If you have any questions regarding the survey or the assessment please contact Jill Strube (512) 237-3282 extension 2109 or Catherine Sak, Texas Downtown Association (512) 472-7832.

City Manager Update – 7/5/19 (continued)

- 9) **City-wide Street Repairs and Paving Project Update** - The wet weather the past several weeks has delayed our street repair / repaving project. BEGINNING NEXT WEEK, the roads listed below will be prepped, resurfaced and repaved. Bastrop County Maintenance Department (who owns the paving equipment) will be doing the work with support from the City of Smithville. This project will require partial and temporary street closures with notification of area residents and business owners 24-48 hours in advance. Pot-hole repairs will continue throughout town as pot-holes are identified. Citizens can report a pot-hole using the Smithville [SEE/CLICK/FIX](#) link on the City Website or by downloading the SEE/CLICK/FIX app to their smart phones.

City-wide Street Repairs and Paving Schedule					
Street	From / To	Paving Material	Prep Completed	Road Closure	Paving Date
1st Street	Hwy 95 to Olive	Seal Coat	YES	YES	COMPLETE
2nd Avenue	Live Oak to Hickory	Chip Seal	NO	YES	July
4th Street	Marburger to McSweeney	Chip Seal	NO	YES	July
Hickory Street	200 Block	Chip Seal	NO	YES	July
McSweeney	300 Block	Chip Seal	NO	YES	July
Old Uptown Road	Old Uptown Rd to Uptown Drive	Chip Seal	NO	YES	July
Olive Street	Loop 230 to 1st	Seal Coat	YES	YES	COMPLETE
Shade Street	300 - 400 Block	Chip Seal	NO	YES	July
Walker Street	500 - 600 Block	Chip Seal	NO	YES	July
Webb Street	Willows to End of Street	Chip Seal	NO	YES	July
Whitehead	200 Block / 400 - 700 Block	Chip Seal	NO	YES	July

- 10) **FY 2019-2020 Annual Operating Plan / Budget Process Initiated** - I am currently working with my staff to identify fiscal year 2019-20 goals and objectives as part of the initial budget / annual operating planning process. I will have a better feel for where we are and where we need to go in the coming weeks. We still have not received certification of our 2019 Appraisal Roll (taxable base) from the Bastrop County Appraisal District. The total assessed *preliminary* property values (net taxable minus exemptions) for Smithville in 2019 is \$280,590,957. This represents an 12.27% increase (\$30,666,760) over last year's net taxable value of \$249,924,197. This could bring in an additional \$174,494 of revenue to the FY19-20 General Fund - barring any adjustments given to citizens who protest and win their appeals, added exemptions, etc. which typically equates to a 2-3% reduction of the total assessed value. Final property values (i.e., the certified tax roll) won't be out until the end of July. These values are what drives the effective tax rate. Our current tax rate is \$0.5690 per \$100 evaluation. It is too early to tell what amount of tax increase, if any, we should consider for 2019-20. Brenda will be setting up budget workshops and public hearing dates as we navigate the FY19-20 budget process. During the next 3-4 weeks, the staff and I will be focusing the majority of our time developing a balanced budget. In the interim, please email any projects or areas of focus you would like to see included as part of our annual operating plan / budget. See table below for the City of Smithville's historical property values / tax rates.

BCAD Property Valuation & City Tax Rate Comparison						
Year	Assessed Valuation	% Change in Value	M&O Rate	I&S Rate	% Change	Total Tax Rate
2019	\$280,590,957	12.27%	TBD			
2018	\$249,924,197	4.63%	\$0.4455	\$0.1235	5.57%	\$0.5690
2017	\$238,861,226	14.15%	\$0.4166	\$0.1224	-4.77%	\$0.5390
2016	\$209,255,193	5.48%	\$0.4276	\$0.1384	2.28%	\$0.5660
2015	\$198,375,435	9.25%	\$0.4075	\$0.1459	0.00%	\$0.5534
2014	\$181,581,421	1.34%	\$0.3990	\$0.1544	9.37%	\$0.5534

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

The **Smithville Homecoming** celebration will be held on **Friday, July 5, 2019** at 8pm at the Smithville Rec Center. The event features a casino night with proceeds going to scholarships for graduating SISD seniors. The cost is \$15 and tickets can be purchased at the door that evening. Call (512) 589-8154 for more details.

City Manager Update – 7/5/19 (continued)

The next **Smithville City Council** meeting will be held on **Monday, July 8, 2019** (6:00 pm) at City Hall (317 Main).

The **Smithville Public Library** will be holding its Summer Reading Club Big Finale party on **Wednesday, July 17, 2019** from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at Riverbend Park. This FREE celebration of summer readers brings partners from the City of Smithville Parks and Rec, SVFD, SPD, and SISD's Child Nutrition Department to provide a day of fun with water slides, rides, crafts, and lunch in the park. Reading certificates will be presented at noon. City leaders are always invited to the Finale, and the library would love to have any come to help present the certificates. Funding for the Finale is provided by the Friends of the Library, with partial support through a grant from the Union Pacific Foundation. After the Finale, head over to the Rec Center for a planetarium show! The Library has scheduled a mobile planetarium show, co-sponsored by the Rec Center, Lions Club, and Scott Saunders/Farmers Insurance. This FREE event will feature four 45-minute programs on "The Sky Tonight". Call the Library to reserve your seat for one of the shows! Please consider attending this event to show your support as the Library recognizes our area youth and celebrates the end of another great summer of reading, learning, and fun.

The **July Chamber of Commerce Mixer** will be held on **Thursday, July 18, 2019** at Front Room Wine Bar (116 Main) from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm. The event is co-sponsored by the Smithville Noon Lion's Club and Woodmen Life.

The **23rd Annual Chamber of Commerce Casino Night** will be held on **Saturday, July 27, 2019** at the Smithville Recreation Center, 106 Royston. Chips, food and fun await you at this wonderful "beat the heat" event with BBQ, gaming and prizes from 6pm to 10pm. Tickets are \$50 at www.smithvilletx.org. Proceeds from the silent auction will go to the Chamber Rebuild Fund. Call the Chamber at 512-237-2313 or drop by during business hours to purchase tickets, to donate a silent auction item, or become a sponsor.

The monthly **BEST BREAKFAST** will be held in Elgin on **Friday, July 26, 2019** at 8:00 am. Location TBD.

The **Chamber of Commerce Quarterly Luncheon** will be held on **July 31, 2019** from 11am-1pm in the Fellowship Hall at First United Methodist Church (400 Olive in Smithville). The speaker will be City Manager Robert Tamble who provide a State of the City update. A catered lunch is included with your \$15 ticket. Register online at www.smithvilletx.org or call 512-237-2313.

The next **Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event** is scheduled for **Saturday, August 3, 2019**. The HHW facility is located at SE 2nd and Taylor Street.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Have a great weekend.

-- Robert --

PHOTOS – 7/5/19

TXDOT Mowing on Loop 230



Drainage Improvement Project on 4th Avenue



Hangers at Smithville-Crawford Municipal Airport

