

City Manager Update – 1/10/25

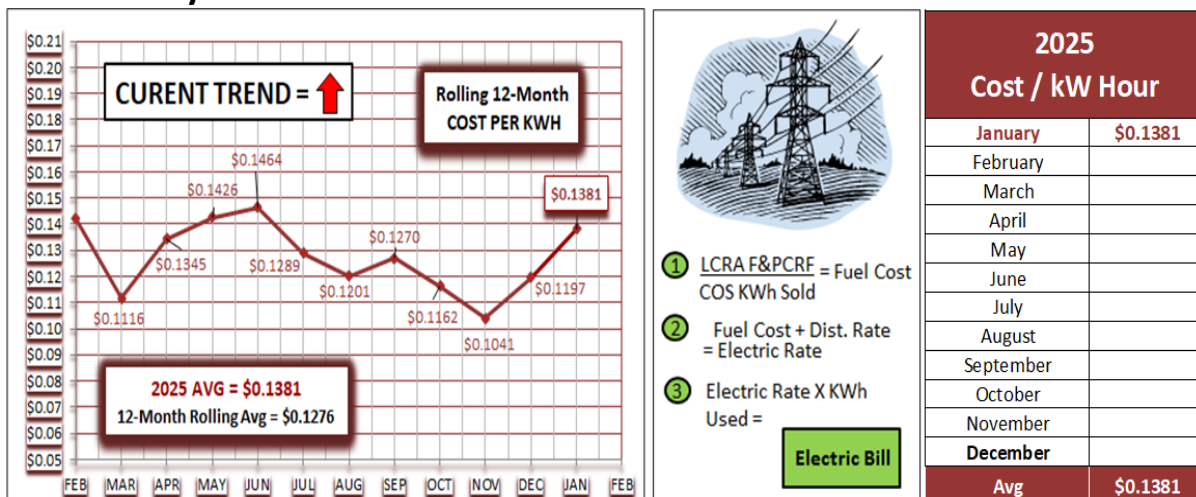
Happy New Year everyone! The Holidays gave us the chance to reflect upon all the important things in life that we sometimes take for granted.....family, friends, and fellowship. So, I hope everyone took the time to rest, recharge, and reconnect as 2025 will be another exciting and challenging year.

The second week in January brought an arctic cold front to the area with high winds, rain and freezing temperatures. Fortunately, there were only a handful of power outages throughout town due to the inclement weather. As a reminder, power outages that occur after hours, on weekends, or on Holidays **should be reported to the Smithville PD (Dispatch) on (512) 237-3228.**

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

- 1) Wastewater Rates - Three Month Winter Water Averaging Begins December 1st** - 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/175/Rates>.
- 2) 36TH Annual MLK Celebration for Peace, Justice, and Equality** - The 36th Annual Bastrop County Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission Walk for Peace, Justice and Equality will be held on **January 20, 2025** in Bastrop. The walk starts at the Paul Quinn African Methodist Episcopal Church (1108 Walnut Street) at 10 am and will end at the Bastrop Convention Center (1408 Chestnut Street) where a tribute will be held. The Martin Luther King Jr. walk and celebration in Bastrop County rotates yearly between the cities of Bastrop, Elgin and Smithville. For additional information, contact Dock Jackson at (512) 308-2213, Bettye Lofton at (512) 963-2721, or Jill Strube at (512) 237-3282, Ext. 2109, Pamela Noell at (512) 575-0707 and/or click the following link → [2025 MLK Day Celebration](#).
- 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 JANUARY. Fuel cost per kWh vary month to month and are based upon electric utility generation, transmission, line loss, unmetered sales, and service fees. The fuel cost per kWh for January is \$0.0831. Adding City's distribution fee of \$0.0550, the cost per kWh for residential service in Smithville during JANUARY will be \$0.1381 per kWh. This represents a **15.39% INCREASE** in the cost per kWh compared to December's cost per kWh of \$0.1197. 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 2025



Note: Fuel & Power Cost Recovery Factor + City Distribution Fee* (\$0.0550) = Cost / kWh

*Residential Distribution Fee = \$0.0550/kWh (Effective October 1, 2023). Non-Resident (i.e., service outside city limit) Distribution Fee = \$0.0650/kWh

City Manager Update – 1/10/25 (continued)

- 4) **2025 LCRA “Steps Forward Day” Project Application(s) Approved** – The City of Smithville submitted our 2025 “Steps Forward Day” project application(s) to the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) for consideration this past November. The city was recently notified that three (3) projects were approved. Volunteers from LCRA will gather on **Friday, April 11, 2025**, to work on community projects throughout LCRA’s service territory. Examples of potential projects include cleaning parks, painting pavilions, planting trees or doing carpentry work. Last year, LCRA volunteers repainted all of the ornamental lights in the downtown area. This year, LCRA volunteers will: 1) repaint the interior and exterior of the restrooms at Riverbend Park; 2) re-paint / restripe the parking lot and wrought-iron fence at the Smithville Recreation Center; and 3) paint sidewalk at the Smithville Public Library. The city will provide the supplies and equipment necessary to support the project(s) with LCRA providing the manpower (typically 20-25 volunteers). The City of Smithville is fortunate to have LCRA as a community partner. Programs like Steps Forward and the Community Development Partnership Program (CDPP) have definitely made a positive impact.
- 5) **Smithville Recycling Center Membership Permit Renewal for 2025** – In September 2023, the City Council instructed the City Manager to institute a permit-based recycling membership program in an effort to help reduce the operational losses associated with running the Recycling Center. For decades, Smithville area residents have been able to utilize the recycling center FREE of charge. Unfortunately, the city is no longer be able to provide free recycling. As such, the city adopted an annual recycling membership permit fee (per household) on January 1, 2024 for those customers who wish to utilize the Smithville Recycling Center. The **2024 recycling center membership permits will expire on 1/31/25 and must be renewed**. The renewal fee is \$50 (resident) and \$100 (non-resident). Recycling center customers who wish to renew their recycling center membership(s) can do so at City Hall (317 Main). Customers should bring their 2024 recycling membership cards to the Utility / General lobby window and a new “2025” sticker be affixed upon payment of the renewal fee. The membership cards will be valid through 12/31/25. The Smithville Recycling Center is open Tuesday – Saturday (8:00 am to 5:00 pm). For more information, contact City Hall at 512-237-3282.



- 6) **Used Tires and Electronic Recycling Collection Event Scheduled** - On **Saturday, January 18, 2025**, the City of Smithville will partner with the City of Bastrop, Keep Smithville Beautiful, Bastrop County, and Lee County to hold a used tire and electronics recycling event at the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facility located at 109 Taylor and SE 2nd Street in Smithville from 9:00 am to noon. Vouchers are required for this event and are available on-line or at one of the following locations:
- Bastrop County Development Services Office - 211 Jackson Street / Bastrop Tx
 - Smithville City Hall – 317 Main Street / Smithville, TX
 - Lee County Annex - 898 E Richmond (Room 107) / Giddings, TX

Only 100 vouchers will be distributed. People with vouchers can recycle up to ten (10) used tires for FREE. There will be a \$5 fee for each additional tire over 10 tires. Only pick-up truck tires (or smaller) will be accepted --- with or without the rim. No 18-wheeler or tractor tires will be accepted. Electronics recycling includes anything with a plug or battery (e.g., televisions, computers, monitors, cell phones, small appliances, rechargeable batteries, etc.). No items with Freon (e.g., A/C units, refrigerators, and/or freezers) will be accepted. Click on the following link for additional information → [Used Tires and Electronic Recycling Collection Event](#).

City Manager Update – 1/10/25 (continued)

- 7) **Special-Called City Council Meeting / Workshop Scheduled to Discuss Public Improvement Districts (PID's)** – There will be a Special-called City Council meeting / workshop on Wednesday, January 15, 2025 (from 5:00-7:00 pm) at City Hall (317 Main) to discuss Public Improvement Districts (PID's). **Todd McCullough** (Developer / Owner of the Enclave Subdivision) has recently proposed the creation of a PID to fund the construction of improvements within the subdivision, pursuant to Chapter 372, Texas Local Government Code. A PID is a special district created by a municipality that levies special assessments on the property within the PID that secure the payment of bonds issued to fund the construction of improvements (e.g., streets, sidewalks, utilities, drainage, parks, etc.). The PID assessments function similarly to ad valorem taxes and are typically collected by the Appraisal District pursuant to an interlocal agreement with the City. It is important to note that under a PID, existing residents pay nothing and no city funds are used. The onus for repayment of the cost for the infrastructure improvements lies with the future property owners who will reside within the PID area. **Mark McLiney** (SAMCO Capital Senior Managing Director of Public Finance) will provide an overview of the PID process, pros, and cons. **Jason Rammel** (Law Offices of Ryan Henry, PLLC) will provide the detailed steps necessary to adopt a PID if/when the City Council decides to pursue / approve this option. The public is welcome (and encouraged) to attend.
- 8) **Smithville Solar Two, LLC Solar Array Commissioning / Permission to Operate** - The City of Smithville acknowledged receipt of UGE's correspondence confirming December 23, 2024, as the official Commercial Operation Date (COD) for Smithville Solar Two. With acceptance testing complete and validation that the 995-kW solar array (located at 659 NW Loop 230) is capable of generating energy for at least four (4) consecutive hours, the City of Smithville granted official permission to operate. The Smithville Solar Two Project is a 995-kW photovoltaic solar array interconnected and operated in parallel to the LCRA distribution system next to the existing Smithville Solar One site. Smithville Solar Two utilizes five (5) 200 kW Solectria XGI 1500-200 Inverters. There are 84 strings of Trina Solar TSM-NEG19RC.20, 595 W solar modules on site, with 28 modules per string, for a total of 2,352 solar modules. As a reminder, on October 13, 2023, the Smithville City Council unanimously approved entering into a 25-year solar Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Smithville Solar Two, LLC to build a 1-Megawatt single axis photovoltaic solar array on property located next to the Smithville Municipal Airport on the west side of Loop 230. Our current wholesale power agreement with LCRA allows the City of Smithville to purchase up to 15% of alternative energy through a 3rd party. Smithville Solar One, generates approximately 2.9 Megawatts (6%) of clean energy per year with a total cost savings of \$85k since January 2022. Under the PPA-2 agreement, the City will save a minimum of \$220k (approximately \$9k per year) over the 25-year term providing another 2.4 Megawatts of clean energy annually (6%). The savings will help lower the cost associated with maintaining our distribution system. All costs for the construction of the second solar array were paid by UGE / Smithville Solar Two, LLC.
- 9) **Smithville Workforce Training Center (SWTC) Groundbreaking Ceremony Held** – On January 7, the City of Smithville and SWTC-Career Tracks hosted a groundbreaking event to celebrate the new construction for the Smithville Innovation Center at 404 Fawcett Street. A grant from the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) in the amount of over \$1.2M together (with a City match of \$250k) will construct a 4,000 sq ft facility to be used to train entrepreneurs in the nuts and bolts of operating a business to help them thrive and increase their success rates. Speakers included Mayor Sharon Foerster, State Rep. Stan Gerdes, Suzanne Barnard (TDA), Diane Cook (Workforce Solutions, Rural Capital Area), and Janice Bruno (Executive Director of Career Tracks). Hodges Construction is expected to begin work on Monday, 1/13/25 (weather permitting) with completion of the structure within six months. The City thanks the TDA, Langford Community Management Services, Cutright/Prihoda Architects, and Hodges Construction Services for their partnership in this project.
- 10) **Loop 230 Detention Pond Pre-Construction Meeting / Project Update** – A pre-construction meeting was held on Thursday, January 2, 2025 with C.C. Carlton Industries (General Contractor), BEFCO Engineering, Langford Community Management Services, Inc (LCMS) and the City of Smithville. The scope of work includes constructing a regional detention pond adjacent and to the north of railroad right-of-way south of Loop 230 and approximately 2,000 linear feet southeast of the intersection of McSweeney Street and NE 1st Street. It also includes constructing a new storm sewer system from the proposed pond north to Loop 230, east to Faulkner Road, north to Oak Meadows Drive, and east to Lueders Lane. These improvements will help mitigate the risk of stormwater flooding the adjoining neighborhoods north and west of the proposed pond. Construction will begin (weather permitting) next week with completion of the project within 270 days. (SEE PHOTOS)

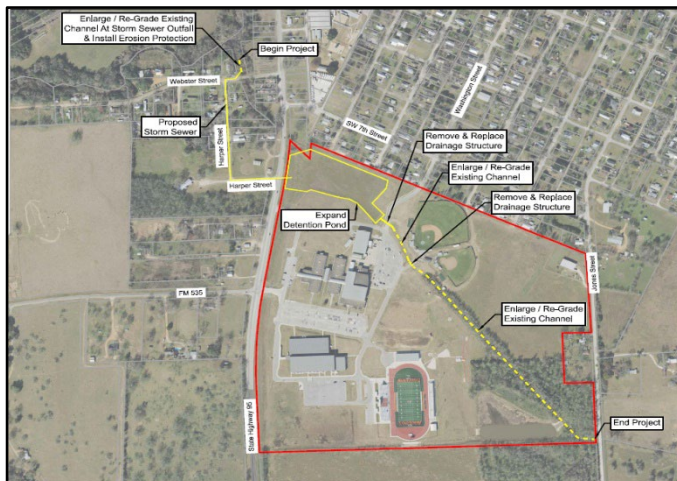
City Manager Update – 1/10/25 (continued)

- 11) City of Smithville Sales Tax Update** - Below are the sales tax allocations for January 2025 vs. January 2024 (retail sales made primarily in November). This data reflects RETAIL sales of goods and services subject to LOCAL sales tax that were purchased in Smithville during the Holiday shopping season. Our sales tax payment (receipt) for January was \$69,057. This represents a **2.36% DECREASE** in our net payment compared to the same time last year. As a reminder, sales tax dollars are used to make street / road repairs and help pay for community services like FIRE and POLICE. Remember...SHOP LOCAL - it makes a difference!!!

Bastrop County Sales Tax Allocation – JANUARY 2025

County/City	Current Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change	2025 Payments To Date	2024 Payments	% Change
Bastrop	1.50%	\$1,077,869	\$1,030,693	4.57%	\$1,077,869	\$1,030,693	4.57%
Elgin	1.50%	\$340,880	\$321,866	5.90%	\$340,880	\$321,866	5.90%
Smithville	1.50%	\$69,057	\$70,729	-2.36%	\$69,057	\$70,729	-2.36%
Bastrop County	0.50%	\$771,210	\$714,209	7.98%	\$771,210	\$714,209	7.98%

- 12) GLO CDBG-MIT-MOD Funding Awarded** - Bastrop County and the City of Smithville recently received notification that our joint application for Hurricane Harvey CDBG-MIT (MOD) funding to pay for flood mitigation projects within each territorial jurisdiction has been approved / awarded. The funding amount allocated to Bastrop County is \$4,362,600 with the City of Smithville receiving \$2,421,100 and the County providing \$1.5M to the city of Smithville. In July 2024, the City Council approved an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) to allow the City of Smithville to manage the contract with the General Land Office (GLO) on behalf of both the City of Smithville and Bastrop County. In December of 2022, CAPCOG was tasked with managing allocation / distribution of \$52,253,000 in Hurricane Harvey Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution (MOD) funds to provide financial assistance for expenses related to Hurricane Harvey disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, economic revitalization, mitigation, and affirmatively furthering fair housing in the most impacted and distressed areas in Bastrop, Caldwell, Fayette, and Lee counties. The proposed project consists of the construction of a new storm sewer, enlargement of existing drainage channels, and expansion of an existing detention pond at the SISD High School (see diagram below). Beginning on the downstream end of the proposed project in an existing drainage channel at a point located approximately 150 feet north of Webster Street and 300 feet west of State Highway 95, the existing channel will be enlarged and re-graded southward to Webster Street. The outlet of the proposed storm sewer will begin in the expanded/re-graded channel and extend southwest to the Webster Street right-of-way and then west to Harper Street. At Harper Street, the storm sewer will extend south approximately 780 linear feet where it will make a 90 degree turn within the Harper Street right-of-way and then extend eastward approximately 420 linear feet to an existing detention pond located between State Highway 95 and Washington Street just north of Smithville High School. The existing detention pond will be deepened and expanded, and the project will continue eastward at Washington Street where the existing Washington Street drainage crossing will be removed and replaced. On the east side of Washington Street, the existing channel will be enlarged and regraded southeasterly approximately 300 linear feet to a pedestrian drainage crossing that will also be replaced. On the east side of the pedestrian drainage crossing, the



GLO-CDBG MIT-MOD Drainage Project

existing channel will continue to be enlarged and re-graded approximately 1,850 linear feet southeast to Jones Street where the improvements will terminate on the upstream end of the proposed project. Construction of these improvements will provide greater stormwater conveyance to Gazley Creek and help mitigate the risk of flooding in low-lying areas. GLO contract documentation has been signed and there will be a series of resolutions that will be on the Monday, January 13, 2025 council agenda to re-affirm / update the city's assignment of a civil rights officer (as it pertains to the CDGB MIT-MOD grant), Fair Housing Policy, signature authority, and direct deposit information. Once these resolutions are passed, the design of the drainage improvements can begin.

City Manager Update – 1/10/25 (continued)

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

The next CITY COUNCIL MEETING will be held on **Monday, January 13th** at City Hall (317 Main) beginning at 6:00 pm. Click → [HERE](#) for a copy of the agenda.

There will be a SPECIAL-CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING / WORKSHOP on **Wednesday, January 15, 2025** (from 5:00-7:00 pm) at City Hall (317 Main) to discuss Public Improvement Districts (PID's).

CITY COUNCIL and SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE FILING for the upcoming election in May begins **Wednesday, January 15, 2025**. New and incumbent candidates interested in filing to run for Smithville City Council or the SISD School Board can pick up a candidate packet at City Hall or the SISD Administration building respectively. The deadline to file is February 15, 2025 at 5:00 pm. See below for current list of incumbents (by place).

	Position	Candidate	Term Lenth	Term Expires	Election Type	Candidate Status
City of Smithville	Alderman - Place 1	Tyrone Washington	2-Years	May 2023	General	Incumbent
		TBD				Challenger
	Alderman - Place 2	Tom Etheredge	2-Years	May 2023	General	Incumbent
		TBD				Challenger
	Alderman - Place 3	Jimmy Jenkins	2-Years	May 2023	General	Incumbent
		TBD				Challenger
SISD	Trustee - Place 5	Josh Magden	3-Years	May 2025	General	Incumbent
		TBD				Challenger
	Trustee - Place 6	Candice Parsons	3-Years	May 2025	General	Incumbent
		TBD				Challenger
	Trustee - Place 7	Michael Hancock	3-Years	May 2025	General	Incumbent
		TBD				Challenger

The next CHAMBER MONTHLY MIXER will be held **Thursday, January 16, 2025** at 5pm at the Smithville Heritage Museum, 602 Main Street. The mixer is being hosted by Smithville Heritage Society & Edward Jones Financial Planners, Micah Oliver.

The next [USED TIRES and ELECTRONIC RECYCLING COLLECTION EVENT](#) is scheduled for **Saturday, January 18, 2025** from 9:00 am to NOON at the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facility located at 109 Taylor and SE 2nd Street

CITY HALL WILL BE CLOSED on **Monday, January 20, 2025** in observance of Martin Luther King Day. City Hall hours will be 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Tuesday-Friday.

The CHAMBER OF COMMERCE QUARTERLY LUNCHEON will be held on Wednesday, **January 22, 2025** at the VFW Post (557 NW Loop 230) from 11:15 to 1:00 pm. The guest speaker will be City of Smithville City Manager Robert Tamble who will be providing an update on the "State-of-the-City".

There will be a SPECIAL-CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING / WORKSHOP on **Tuesday, January 28, 2025** (from 5:00-7:00 pm) at City Hall (317 Main) for the Council to discuss strategic initiatives.

The BEST COUNTY-WIDE BREAKFAST will be held in Smithville on **Friday, January 31, 2025** from 8:00-9:30 am at Quinto Patio – 114 NE 2nd Street.



CITY OFFICES CLOSED
MONDAY, JANUARY 20TH
IN OBSERVANCE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



PHOTOS – 1/10/25:

NE 2nd Drainage Project – WJC Constructors (William Cook)



Innovation Center Pre-Con Mtg.



Innovation Center Groundbreaking



Smithville Solar Two Solar Farm



LOOP 230 Detention Pond Project (Satellite View)



PROPOSED RETAINMENT
& FLUME IMPROVEMENTS

CITY OF SMITHVILLE
LOOP 230 REGIONAL POND & DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS (PART 4)
GLO CDBG-MIT CONTRACT
NO. 22-085-020-D256

