

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM: Paul A. Hofmann, City Manager
DATE: February 11, 2022
SUBJECT: Weekly Memo, February 7 – February 11, 2022



Personnel Updates

Jeremy Bell began employment on February 7, 2022, as a Water & Wastewater Systems Technician. Rudy Astran was promoted to Patrol Sergeant effective February 9, 2022.

UPCOMING TRAINING

Below are future training opportunities through the calendar year. If you are interested in attending any of the training, please notify the City Secretary and she will take care of the registration for you.

TML Small Town Conference

Date: May 19, 2022 – May 20, 2022
Time: All Day
Location: Fredericksburg

TML Newly Elected Officials' Webinars – Understanding Your Financial Oversight Responsibilities

Date: March 10
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Location: webinar

TML Newly Elected Officials' Webinars – Parliamentary Procedure: Being Aware of the Key Rules

Date: March 30
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Location: webinar

TML Newly Elected Officials' Webinars – Interacting Constructively with the Media

Date: April 14
Time: 11:00 a.m. – Noon
Location: webinar

TML Newly Elected Officials' Webinars – Governing Ethically: Understanding Your Influence

Date: April 26
Time: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Location: webinar

TML-TAMCC Newly Elected City Officials' Orientation

Date: August 11, 2022 - August 12, 2022
Time: All Day
Location: San Antonio

Distinguished Budget Presentation Award

The City of Bastrop once again won the Distinguished Budget Award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The award only goes to state and local governments that prepare the highest quality budget books that reflect both guidelines established at the national and state level for best practices in transparency.

March 2 Chamber Luncheon

The City of Bastrop has been asked to provide the program at the March 2 Chamber luncheon, and to present on planning and development processes. We appreciate the opportunity and will use information provided in the Mayor's State of the City Address and First Quarter Report for the bulk of our presentation. As March 2 is Texas Independence Day (and a City holiday), we'll also take a moment to appropriately recognize Texas independence!

Please let Ann know if you plan to attend.

Youth Advisory Council

The Youth Advisory Council met on February 7th at 5:30 pm in the Executive Conference Room. Fabiola de Carvalho presented on Capital Improvement Projects. The Council finalized its social media guidelines and set deadlines for its social media takeover project. This would include short video-logs every couple of weeks hosted and produced by the members of the Youth Advisory Council. The focus will be on engaging and educating Bastrop Youth and the community on the City's Departments and processes. The first video will feature the Wastewater Treatment Plant and highlights from the Mayor's State of the City address. The Council continues to work on developing art call guidelines for the mural project. Their first step is to survey other youth to create criteria for the art call.

Main Street Board

The Main Street Advisory Board met on February 9 at 6:00 pm in the Council Chambers. The board discussed phase 2 of the Heritage Bench program. Locations of the new benches have been finalized and will be placed soon with sponsorship opening to the wait list. A phase 3 of the program was discussed with potential locations on side streets along Main Street. The Board also discussed a new sponsorship approach through annual packages that include sponsorship levels along with package incentives. The sponsorship package will begin later this year.

Repairs and Maintenance on Chestnut Street

Mayor Pro Tem Peterson asked for an update on TxDOT's plans to resurface Chestnut Street (Loop 150).

- According to TxDOT Area Engineer Diana Schulze, a contractor has been chosen for the project, and work will begin when weather warms up in late Spring or early Summer. The project consists of full depth pavement repair to address pavement failures and a mill and overlay to resurface the roadway. Work is expected to take two months, with most of the paving to be performed at night.

Black History Month Display

The Library has partnered with the Bastrop Juneteenth Committee to create a Black History Month display. The display features books from the library's collection chosen by the committee to highlight topics including inspiring biographies, self-care, first person stories, and stories to share as a family. The display will be up during February near the entrance to the Children's Area.



City Parks Grants

Council Member Crouch has requested information on city parks grants applied for and received since 2015. The City applied for a grant through Texas Parks and Wildlife in 2017 for \$500,000 for Delgado Park improvements, but we were not funded. The City applied for a grant through LCRA in 2020 for \$46,973 for improvements at the Little League Fields, but this project was not funded, either.

The City did receive a grant, approved by the City Council in January, from the St. David's Foundation for a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. That master plan will likely result in projects that could be included in the City's Capital Improvement Plan and be the subject of future grant applications.

In addition, as included in the First Quarter Report, the City is working with Texas Parks and Wildlife to resolve our current compliance issue resulting from the use of Bob Bryant parkland for utility services.

Water Main Replacement Project on Tahitian Drive

Council Member Rogers inquired about a water main project on Tahitian Drive.

Bastrop County Water Control and Improvement District No. 2 has decided to replace and upgrade the water main coming from their water plant on Tahitian. They will also replace the line on Tahitian from the southeast corner of the Walgreens parking lot to the intersection of Mauna Kea. The existing water

main is an 8 inch schedule 40 and has caused many problems in the past. It is old, improperly bedded, and undersized for any future growth.

Their contractor has already begun to locate all underground utilities and should be breaking ground for the new line next week. They do intend to have this section done in a few weeks. The current line is located at the edge of the pavement and the new water line will be placed just inside the property line. This plan puts them in a better position for future development and still keeps their lines clear of other utilities.

Follow-up to February 8 City Council Meeting

Quarterly Report

Council Member Rogers inquired about the plan for covering playgrounds.

There are seven parks with playscapes and two of the seven (Bob Bryant and Delgado) have shade structures.

We have cost estimates to install shade structures at other parks as follows:

- Ferry Park: \$28,000
- Fisherman's Park: \$49,500
- Hunter's Crossing: \$49,000
- Jewell Hodges: \$28,000
- Kerr Community: \$32,000

The March 3 Parks Board Agenda will include an item to discuss a recommendation on the future funding of shade structures. We'll bring this recommendation forward as part of the budget process.

Council Member Crouch commented that geotechnical work was missed on the City's Skatepark project.

The geotechnical report was part of the design package on the Wheeled Sports Plaza. The cost did increase because of the soil remediation required but it was always planned as part of the original design package.

Council Member Crouch requested information on the average time it takes for a permit to be issued.

Council Member Rogers had previously asked if additional resources for the MyGov online permit and inspection system would be helpful, so we were already having discussions with MyGov. The vendor stated there is not another version or enhancement of the system that would provide additional capabilities. We currently subscribe to 9 modules, for a total cost of \$22,320 per year. There is one other module available, for asset management, which wouldn't provide benefit for the tracking of permits. We have pursued the idea with the vendor of requesting programming changes that would enable a report on the average processing time of each step of the permitting process. We have concluded from our discussions with the vendor those programming changes are not viable. The timeline for the permitting process frequently involves stops and starts because of time spent waiting on items from the applicant. It is not uncommon for applicants to withdraw applications or provide incomplete information, which creates unique timelines for projects on a case-by-case basis. The City does not consider time spent waiting on the applicant for a complete application towards the staff timeline goals for turning around permits. A report that simply tracks the initial application time against the final permit approval would not provide helpful information as sometimes an applicant provides the necessary items on the same day but sometimes it takes several weeks. We do keep track of those permits waiting on items from the applicant so that staff can reach out from time to time to remind them of the outstanding items or offer

assistance. As I mentioned during the Council meeting, we are always able to answer specific questions about specific applications and provide timelines. In my experience, those specifics prove the efficiency of the Bastrop permitting process, and we are always able to provide specific information. A case in point, as a project with several stops and starts, is the recently provided analysis on the permitting process for 709 Spring Street. As also mentioned, the information provided in the quarterly report is compelling. All of the permits and plats that were in review at the end of the first quarter were completed within review timelines. I'm happy to provide additional information on those applications as requested.

In summary, the MyGov system is working as intended. The Planning Staff report that the online process is much smoother with significantly fewer complaints than when the system was first implemented last year. The Planning Staff also reports that we would not be keeping up as well as we are with the unprecedented growth without the implementation of the online system.

Citizen Comments

Moiz Ahi, speaking on behalf of the property owner of 1203 Chestnut, complained about development issues associated with that property, and mentioned a concern that utilities were turned off and the owner was required to pay the previous tenant's balance.

This account has been in the owner's name. If the account had been under the tenant's name, then the debt would have followed that account holder. Per Utility Policy, Bad Debts follow the account holders. We do not allow accounts to be opened under a person or business that has an outstanding debt with us.

Joe Grady Tuck, also complained about development issues associated with the property at 1203 Chestnut. Mr. Tuck stated that the code was being misinterpreted by city staff.

There has been a significant amount of communication with Mr. Tuck on this issue. Attached are meeting notes from a pre-application meeting held in April 2021, notes from a follow-up meeting in August, and a written response to Mr. Tuck from Assistant City Manager Job in September. Mr. Tuck has the opportunity to appeal the staff decisions to the Zoning Board of Appeals which he has chosen not to do up until this point.

Planning Department Appreciation

One of the homebuilders in Pecan Park sent an email to Building Official Shirley Ellis, letting us know they had closed on their last home in Pecan Park. Here is a portion of the email. *"It is bittersweet, but we have closed our last home in Pecan Park . . . I do appreciate your professionalism and patience with my team out there. Hopefully, we will be able to find another opportunity in Bastrop in the near future and we will be able to work together again."*

Upcoming Road Closures on the Hwy 71/Hwy 95 Project

The West Bound Inside (Left) Main Lane will be closed from east of the SH 95 Overpass to east of the Colorado River Bridge. This will allow the contractor to place the beams for the construction of the East Bound Main Lane railroad bridge

The closures will take place Wednesday night February 16 and Thursday night February 17. The closure will take place from 8:00 pm – 5:00 am each night.

Utility Bill Penalties

February Penalties will be waived this month.

Due to the delay in bills uploading to the Utility portal (contractor's error); and due to the delay in receipt of printed bills to customers (caused by the inclement weather) – penalties will not be charged this month on any late payments. Reminder notices will go out to customers, so they are reminded to get bills in by the 25th to prevent disconnection of service. Any questions can be directed to the Utility Customer Service office 512-332-8830.

Time Out of Office

I will be attending a meeting of the Texas City Management Association Ethics Committee on Thursday March 3. On Friday March 4, I'll be providing training to Texas City Managers so that they may become certified ethics trainers. These sessions will take place at the Texas Municipal League offices in Austin. I serve as the Chair of the TCMA Ethics Committee.

I am planning vacation days on Thursday March 10 and Friday March 11, and the week of March 28.

Future Agenda Items

February 22, 2022

- Comprehensive Annual Financial and Audit Report
- Public Hearings and action related to the Colorado Bend development:
 - Annexation
 - Future Land Use Map amendment
 - Thoroughfare Plan Amendment
 - Zoning Concept Scheme Amendment
- Water & Wastewater Employees salary recommendations

Attachments

- Response to Mr. Tuck from Trey Job, 1203 Chestnut
- Preapplication meeting notes, April 2021, 1203 Chestnut
- Follow-up meeting notes, August 2021, 1203 Chestnut
- GFOA-Distinguished Budget Presentation Award
- TML Legislative Update Number #06



1203 Chestnut Pre-Application Notes April 1, 2021

Charlie Bryant (owners representative)
Trey Job, Jennifer Bills, Allison Land, Vivianna Andres

Lot Status/Details:

- Applicant wants to open a Dollar Store in a structure that was previously a gas station and convenience store
- Because the lot has been vacant for more than six months, it will need to come into compliance with [B3 Code](#) lot development standards (Section 2.4.001 (C) (1))
- A Platting Exemption has been approved for the site; therefore, platting will not be required

Development Process:

- The Applicant will need to submit a Site Plan Amendment for the other improvements that will need to be done to the site (removal of the gas canopy and tanks, relocation of the overhead electrical line, etc.)
 - A Public Frontage Plan will need to be included within the Site Plan Amendment in order to come into compliance with the B3 Code (Section 2.4.001 (C) (1))
- Please see the [Schedule of Uniform Submittal Dates](#) for days that allow plan submissions, unless a Waiver to the HB 3167 timeline is applied for and approved.

Lot Considerations:

- The gas canopy will need to be removed, and the gas tanks will need to be decommissioned through TCEQ
- An encroachment will be required to be added onto the front of the structure per the B3 Code requirements (see Development Table pg. 15 in B3 Code)
- The electrical line that goes over the top of the building will need to be relocated.
 - The Applicant will need to coordinate with Bastrop Power and Light for the relocation of the line and cost
 - An Electrical Needs Form will need to be submitted to BP&L for this process
- Parking is only allowed in the third layer on P5 lots. Since the lot has double frontage, parking would need to be relocated to the interior corner on the back of the lot



1203 Chestnut Pre-Application Notes April 1, 2021

- Both of the driveways along Chestnut Street will need to be closed down, and public improvements (sidewalks/street trees/street lights) will need to be installed in their place
- The driveway along Haysel will need to be narrowed to 24 ft, and public improvements (sidewalks/street trees/ street lights) will need to be installed along Haysel Street
 - Please refer to Chapter 7 of the B3 Code for the public improvement development standards included in a Public Frontage Plan
 - The approved plant list for street trees can be found in the [B3 Technical Manual](#) (Table 2.1.003)
- Per B3 Code if a property has dual frontage primary driveway access must be off of the Secondary Frontage (Section 6.3.005 (D) (3))
- There is an opportunity for the applicant to apply for a Warrant to allow parking on the side of the property along Haysel Street
- An administrative warrant process is available if there are variations the applicant will need to make to the site requirements within the B3 Codes. Warrants must meet the criteria of being geographically sensitive, fiscally sustainable, and perpetuation of authentic Bastrop. If the warrant cannot be approved at an administrative level it can be appealed to the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- Please see the Schedule of Uniform Submittal Dates for each application type on the Development Process page for days that allow plan submissions unless the applicant voluntarily waives HB3167 requirements. The approved Waiver will need to be submitted with each application. Waivers are available for plats, public improvement plans, and site development plans.
- The Construction Standards Manual has the construction specifications for any public improvements that will need to be made for the site.
- MyGov is the platform for all projects/permits submitted to the City of Bastrop. All contacts related to the project will need to register to become a Collaborator in MyGov prior to applying for a project/permit. The General Contractor/ Tradespeople will need to apply for a Credential to be listed on the project/permit. Please see the link to the MyGov Quick Start Guide for instructions on how to navigate the system at the end of the notes.
 - There is a Fee Estimator in the Tools Function in MyGov that will allow the applicant to estimate the fees for each application

Parking diagram included on page 3

1203 Chestnut Pre-Application Notes

April 1, 2021





Dollar Store Follow Up Meeting August 19, 2021

Joe Grady Tuck and Owner
Trey Job, Jennifer Bills, Allison Land, Vivianna Andres

Lot Status/Details:

- Applicant wants to open a Dollar Store in a structure that was previously a gas station and convenience store
- Because the lot has been vacant for more than six months, it will need to come into compliance with [B3 Code](#) lot development standards (Section 2.4.001 (C) (1))
- A Platting Exemption has been approved for the site; therefore, platting will not be required

Development Process:

- The Applicant will need submit a Public Frontage Plan in order to come into compliance with the B3 Code (Section 2.4.001 (C) (1))
- The Applicant will need to submit a Site Plan Amendment for the other improvements that will need to be done to the site (removal of the gas canopy and tanks, relocation of the overhead electrical line, etc.)
- Both of the Development Processes can be submitted concurrently
- Please see the [Schedule of Uniform Submittal Dates](#) for days that allow plan submissions

Lot Considerations:

- The gas canopy will need to be removed, and the gas tanks will need to be decommissioned with TCEQ
- An encroachment will be required to be added onto the front of the structure per the B3 Code requirements (Development Table pg. 15)
- The electrical line that goes over the top of the building will need to be relocated. The Applicant will need to coordinate with Bastrop Power and Light for the relocation of the line and cost
- An Electrical Needs Form will need to be submitted to BP&L for this process
- Parking is only allowed in the third layer on P5 lots. Since the lot has double frontage, parking would need to be relocated to the interior corner on the back of the lot



Dollar Store Follow Up Meeting August 19, 2021

- Both of the driveways along Chestnut Street will need to be closed down, and public improvements (Public Frontage Plan) will need to be installed in their place
- The driveway along Haysel will need to be narrowed to 24 ft, and public improvements (Public Frontage Plan) will need to be installed along Haysel Street
 - Street trees will be required as part of the Public Frontage Plan, along with sidewalks that will go into driveways being narrowed or shut down (Chapter 7)
 - The approved plant list for the required street trees can be found in the [B3 Technical Manual](#) (Table 2.1.003)
- Per B3 Code if a property has dual frontage primary driveway access must be off of the Secondary Frontage (Section 6.3.005 (D) (3))
- There is an opportunity for the applicant to apply for a Warrant to allow parking on the side of the property along Haysel Street

Non-Conforming Lot Status:

- If the applicant would like to continue the use of non-conforming site on 1203 Chestnut Street will need to go to the Zoning Board of Adjustments for approval
 - Request with Site Development Plan showing what additions will be made
 - Send them the Calendar and Checklist and Supplement

TOPICS DISCUSSED (8-19-21 MEETING):

Grandfathering Status ties back to chapter 245 local government code, and it speaks to the codes an application is vested too, and mostly applies to subdivision ordinance not zoning ordinance

- There are items that are exempt from Chapter 245
- Joe Grady Tuck is wanting to rebuttal the vacancy determination
 - He stated if the site was determined a non-conforming site due to it being vacant for more than six months, then he feels the same committee (Staff) can reverse that decision
 - He does not want to go to ZBA if possible, he would prefer this be handled internally
- Staff will determine what is the best path forward after reviewing the submittal and will be in touch with Joe Grady Tuck

Dollar Store Follow Up Meeting August 19, 2021



TO: Joe Grady Tuck
RE: 1203 Chestnut Street (non-conforming status)
CC: Jennifer Bills Assistant Planning Director
DATE: September 28, 2021



Mr. Tuck:

I appreciate you sharing with us the series of unfortunate events that have affected your client's management of the site. Our team at City Hall is sympathetic to your client's circumstances related to their health, the overall pandemic, and the previous tenant.

The site and the building constitute a nonconforming structure that was allowed to continue under certain terms and conditions specific in the City of Bastrop Code of Ordinances.

Having reviewed your letter (dated August 19, 2021) and subsequent email correspondence between you and city staff, in my capacity as Assistant City Manager I have determined that your client abandoned the nonconforming structure status at 1203 Chestnut. Additionally, I have concluded that the data you submitted to explain the situation is insufficient to rebut the presumption under Bastrop's Code of Ordinances that the nonconforming structure was intended to be abandoned. See Building Bastrop Block ("B3") Code, Article 2.4 [Administration], §2.4.001 [Nonconforming Uses & Structures].

The primary justifications upon which my decisions are based include the following:

- (1) The site was previously used as a Convenience Store (with a gas station).
- (2) The previous use has been discontinued since August or September of 2019, which means it has been vacant for more than six months.
- (3) Utility service usage declined significantly in August and September of 2019.
- (4) Utility service was disconnected February 2020.
- (5) Utility service was not restored until May 2020.
- (6) Utility service was again disconnected September 2020.
- (7) The City has been asked to provide initial feedback and guidance regarding more than one potential new use of the site, including a U-Haul rental facility and a Dollar retail store (of some type). Neither of those uses are consistent with the previous Convenience Store.

If you wish to appeal my administrative decision, the Zoning Board of Adjustment has jurisdiction pursuant to B3 Code, §2.4.001.

As has been explained previously, the site has several nonconforming aspects that interfere with its ability to be utilized in its current state, including:



- (a) Driveways. §6.3.005.
- (b) Parking. §6.3.006.
- (c) Lot Occupation. §6.3.008.
- (d) Façade. §6.5.003.
- (e) Public Frontage. §7.3.014
- (f) Electrical Code issues.

If your client has specific plans to redevelop the site and would like additional feedback from City staff regarding the applicability of the B3 Code, your client is encouraged to submit to the City more specific information about their intentions. Upon receiving particulars about intended future use and site development, City staff can provide more than just generalized guidance on what would be required to proceed.

Trey Job

Trey Job



Legislative UPDATE

February 11, 2022
Number 6

TML President Testifies Before Congressional Committee on Autonomous Vehicles

[Editor's note: The edited press release below was reprinted from the National League of Cities (NLC).]

Last week, TML President Martha Castex-Tatum testified before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's Subcommittee on Highways and Transit on behalf of NLC during a hearing on "The Road Ahead for Automated Vehicles." A recording of the testimony can be found [here](#).

Below is an excerpt from TML President Castex-Tatum's testimony:

"Zero is the only acceptable number of deaths on America's roads. Today, we are losing far too many of our residents to dangerous roads in Houston and across the country, and efforts to reduce fatalities must include every possible strategy, including autonomous vehicles.

Cities handle most aspects of public transportation, and that experience and authority equips us to see both the opportunities and challenges to these new types of transportation. We are aiming

to create the right environment of shared, safe, connected AV transportation options that will better serve our residents and meet our goals as a city.

In Houston, piloting the testing of AVs started with our METRO transit agency and their self-driving shuttle at Texas Southern University on their Tiger Walk across campus. They are now expanding their pilots to on-road options between two universities, AV buses, and researching better paratransit options.

My district was one of the first three areas in Houston where Nuro launched zero-occupant AVs for commercial services delivery using lower speeds and smaller, lightweight vehicles. These AVs pull right up to your home and deliver groceries, prescriptions, or hot food from Kroger, Dominos, CVS, and the Houston Food Bank.

When Nuro first came to District K, we made arrangements with our local police officers to allow them to see the vehicle, understand how to access it in an emergency, and to ask questions.

As with all AVs, these vehicles must be designed to operate on the roads as they exist today and to interact in the real-world situations.”

NLC provided three recommendations to Congress for federal action that will promote safe AV testing if done correctly as well as grow job opportunities in the U.S.

1. **Investing in Piloting with Local Governments:** America’s cities are open to piloting more technology safely that can make our residents’ lives better, and Congress and the U.S. Department of Transportation can support localized piloting in a new effort to build up strong federal safety guidelines. We need to move forward on piloting in a new effort to build up strong federal safety guidelines. We need to move forward on piloting this technology, particularly for shared uses and in areas of the country that feel left behind, and USDOT has the authority to act on this today.
2. **Invest in Ensuring a Skilled, Trained Workforce:** Investment in America’s workforce needs to happen at scale and today. In cities, towns, and villages across America, we know that we cannot carry out today’s road, bridge, water and broadband projects funded through the bipartisan infrastructure law without trained, skilled workers – to say nothing on the future of demand for new skills sparked by new technologies such as autonomous vehicles. If we do nothing to improve labor market outcomes for infrastructure-related jobs, NLC’s latest study anticipates that the U.S. will struggle to fill at least 4.5 million jobs nationally.
3. **Raise Planning and Technology Sharing in Regions:** America’s transportation foundations shifted underneath our feet during COVID – including travel patterns, land use, freight movement, and more. Anticipating, adapting, and accommodating transportation for these trends is the basis of good transportation planning from our metropolitan planning organizations remains underappreciated in federal programming. Investing in foundational transportation planning, logistics, and technology at the metropolitan and regional levels will serve us in more sustainable and practical ways.

Federal Infrastructure Bill Update

In November 2021, the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law. The IIJA is altogether a \$1.2 trillion bill that will invest in the nation's core infrastructure priorities including roads, bridges, rail, transit, airports, ports, energy transmission, water systems, and broadband.

The League will monitor state and federal agencies and work with the National League of Cities (NLC) to access the latest information relating to the IIJA. We will be providing periodic updates in the Legislative Update on resources for Texas cities on how to access IIJA funding for local infrastructure projects.

White House

The White House recently released its [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Guidebook](#). The guidebook is meant to serve as a roadmap for state and local governments to use to access funding from the more than 350 programs included in the IIJA. The guidebook has 13 chapters separated out by issue area and will be updated to reflect emerging details and dates for the different programs. Interested city officials can read more about the guidebook [here](#) and access additional information on the guidebook from NLC [here](#).

The White House also released [this fact sheet](#) for local governments to use to prepare for funding opportunities under the IIJA.

National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

The NTIA announced that it will be holding a series of technical assistance webinars from March-May on five new broadband grant programs funded under the IIJA to help potential applicants understand the process. The programs are: The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program; the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program; and the Digital Equity Act Programs, which include the State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program, State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, and Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program.

More on the webinars, including dates and registration information, can be found [here](#).

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

The FHWA recently released [a guidance memo](#) on the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), which will receive \$15.6 billion in funding under the IIJA from 2022 to 2026. According to the [press release](#), the guidance “ensures that the new funds are used strategically to make travel safer, including protecting people outside of vehicles, such as people walking, biking, or using mobility assistive devices, thereby reducing the number of lives lost on the nation’s highways, bridges, and roads.”

Department of the Interior (DOI)

Last week DOI [announced](#) \$1.15 billion in IJA funding available to the states for the purpose of cleaning up orphaned oil and gas wells. Texas, like other states, is eligible for an initial grant of \$25 million. The estimated total funding formula for Texas under the program is over \$343 million. DOI will release guidance for states to apply for the initial grants in the coming weeks, and application guidance for the formula grants in the next few months.

Governor Releases 2022 Report to the People of Texas

On Tuesday, Governor Abbott released his [2022 Report to the People of Texas](#). The report is issued during interim years when the Texas Legislature does not meet, and no formal State of the State speech is given. The report focuses on the state's accomplishments in 2022 and highlights key legislation passed during the 87th legislative sessions. The report also includes an overview of the programs, grants, and initiatives within the Office of the Governor, including the Texas Enterprise Fund (TEF). Updates on the state's pandemic response and recovery programs and on public safety are included in the report.

Don't Forget: Mandatory Hotel Occupancy Tax Reporting

The 50-day window for reporting local hotel occupancy tax information opened January 1, 2022. The reporting deadline is **February 20, 2022**.

Tax Code Section 351.009 requires cities to file an annual report with the comptroller that includes the city's hotel occupancy tax rate, the amount of revenue generated by the tax, and the amount and percentage of the revenue spent for each of the following purposes:

- Convention or information centers
- Convention delegates registration
- Advertising to attract tourists
- Arts promotion and improvement
- Historical restoration and preservation projects
- Signage directing the public to sights and attractions

Cities have two reporting options: (1) use the comptroller's [online reporting form](#) to submit all required information; or (2) clearly post and maintain all required information on the city's website and provide the comptroller's office with a link to the information. For cities selecting the second option, the comptroller provides an [optional format template](#) to post on the city's website.

For more information, see the comptroller's hotel occupancy tax reporting [webpage](#) or contact the comptroller's transparency team by email at transparency@cpa.texas.gov or (844) 519-5676.

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