

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Rebecca Gleason, Assistant City Manager  
Date: July 8, 2022  
Subject: Weekly Memo, July 4 – July 8, 2022



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## **Upcoming Training**

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

### **TML-TAMCC Newly Elected City Officials' Orientation**

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

## **Special Events**

### Corvette Invasion

The 9<sup>th</sup> annual Corvette Invasion is Friday, July 15 – Sunday, July 17 at the Bastrop Convention Center. The event includes a private “meet and greet” event, Corvette car show, and parade laps at the Circuit of the Americas. Learn more at [www.corvetteinvasion.com](http://www.corvetteinvasion.com)

## **New City Council iPads**

New iPads for City Council have arrived, this includes a stylus and keyboard cover. The new equipment will increase the user experience, performance, and compatibility to the new Agenda Management software. City Council will be able to take notes using the stylus pen and have a high-resolution screen. The estimated implementation time is the end of July 2022. Ann will be reaching out to set appointments to transfer your current data to the new iPads.

## **Volunteer Fair**

The City will host a Volunteer Fair on July 14, 2022, from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm at City Hall to recruit board members for the City’s Board & Commissions, as well as volunteers to general City engagement initiatives.

## **Library News**

The sixth week of the summer reading program Oceans of Possibilities highlights two great programs. The Patriotic Shoebox parade was a flag waving success as the Bastrop Pickleball Association took the votes for the best shoebox float. Friday morning, Bastrop Police Officer Cedillo and Sergeant Sandford read about bugs during Storytime with a Cop. Our officers did a great job interacting with the kids and their parents. Statistics for the week: 813 registrations for reading and 38% of those registered have reached the 500 minute reading goal, 577 registrations for the Community Adventure, 1,730 books and other materials checked out, and 1,124 people walked through the doors.

Computer service was interrupted Wednesday afternoon as IT was backing up parts of the library's current server in preparation for next week's migration to a new server. Service was restored to 7 of the 15 computers by the end of the day, the remaining computers were back online when the library opened Thursday.



### **Overheard at City Hall Podcast**

Episode 6 of the Official Podcast of the City of Bastrop features a visit to Bastrop Fire Department's Station 1 and conversation with Firefighters Ben Gonser and Morgan LeBaron, and Captain Chris Stone. Give the episode a listen and learn about the latest developments within the Bastrop Fire Department! Overheard at City Hall podcast available here: [https://www.cityofbastrop.org/page/city\\_podcast](https://www.cityofbastrop.org/page/city_podcast)

### **Texas Town and City Magazine Article**

TML's July 2022 edition of Texas Town and City Magazine features an article titled 'Making Bastrop's First Impression Last' which includes an interview with Assistant City Manager Trey Job. It is a fantastic article about the charming "first impression" that Bastrop makes on a visitor, and the work being done to plan for the next 100 years.

### **TxDot Construction Update**

We received the following update from Glenn R. Eilert, Senior Construction Inspector on the SH 71 construction project:

#### Construction Progress Update

The bridge beams for the mainline bridge over the Colorado River are all in place and deck work has been ongoing over the west half of the bridge. Bridge beams were recently placed on the south half of the Gills Branch bridge near the railroad tracks. The retaining wall adjacent to Water Street is being completed. Miscellaneous concrete placement and topsoil work has also been taking place over the last couple of weeks.

In the near future, deck work on the east portion of the mainlane bridge over the Colorado River will occur. This will be in the area of the steel girders. The deck work will also take place on the south half of the Gills Branch bridge. Also, demolition of the existing westbound UP railroad bridge will begin.

### **Status of our Wells**

Despite the unusual high temperatures and dry conditions we have been experiencing, our water wells are not showing any effect at this time. The operators monitor each well weekly and chart the water table. Starting in July each year they test the wells twice a week. The month of June we averaged 2.55 million gallons per day (mg/d) with a maximum of 3.022 mg/d, which is up from June of 2021 where we averaged 1.681 mg/d with a maximum of 2.178. A large factor for this change is the river level and the fact that current stream flow is holding around 4.2 feet and 1,600 cubic feet per second. We will keep monitoring the wells to determine their status and whether we should implement our Drought Contingency Plan.

### **Book Bash Campaign**

The following invitation was submitted to staff for City Council members to participate in a campaign promoting local writers and readers:

“Hi, I’m inviting the mayor and City Council to show us what you are reading for our Book Bash campaign. Main Event’s First Friday ArtWalk will feature local writers and readers. Local artists will be collaborating with the local library and downtown bookshop to provide interactive events. What we ask of you is to send a photo of what you are reading (or what you have written, if you are an author) as we kick off this campaign. Be as creative as you wish. Thank you for sharing with our community.

Maria Montoya Stayton  
Main Event chief coordinator”

If Council Members wish to participate, they can send their picture to Maria at [mmontoyastayton@icloud.com](mailto:mmontoyastayton@icloud.com)

### **Future Agenda Items**

July 26, 2022

- Presentation of proposed FY2023 Budget
- Appointment of Acting City Manager
- Appointment of Trey Job to Hunters Crossing Board
- BEDC Support Services Contract
- BEDC Main Street Program Contract
- Convention Center Hotel Letter of Intent

### **Attachments**

- TML Legislative Update Number #49
- Texas Town and City article “Making Bastrop’s First Impression Last”

# TML LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



July 8, 2022  
Number 27

## **Legislative Budget Board Releases Budget Instructions for State Agencies**

The Legislative Budget Board (LBB), along with the governor's budget office, [issued instructions](#) to state agencies this week directing them to submit their Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) for the 2024-2025 budget year with a base funding amount equal to the 2022-2023 budget. The instructions do not require a reduction to baseline funding amounts, and funding requests that exceed the baseline spending level may be submitted as exceptional items.

Due to a sustained period of historically high revenues, Comptroller Glenn Hegar will provide an update later this month to the *Certification Revenue Estimate* published in November 2021. It is expected the update will result in a significant increase in estimated revenue available for the 2022-2023 biennium.

## **U.S. Census Count Question Resolution Operation**

The U.S. Census Bureau opened the 2020 Census Count Question Resolution operation (CQR) to all governmental units on January 3, 2022. The CQR provides cities an opportunity to request that

the Census Bureau review their boundaries and/or housing count to correct any potential errors that may have occurred while processing the 2020 Census counts. Any interested city must [submit](#) their case to the U.S. Census Bureau by June 30, 2023.

Any corrections made will not impact the apportionment counts, redistricting data, or any other 2020 Census data products. However, they would be used in the Census Bureau's Population Estimates and other future programs that use 2020 Census data. The Census Bureau sent an [introductory letter](#) on the operation to all eligible governmental units late last year.

The Census Bureau has prepared an informative [brochure](#) and a [comprehensive explanation](#) of the program.

## **Sunset Advisory Commission Releases Decisions on Texas Water Development Board**

The Sunset Advisory Commission released its decisions on staff recommendations for the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) and the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT) Advisory Committee this week. The Sunset Advisory Commission is tasked with reviewing state agencies functions and making recommendations to the legislature to streamline and improve the agency's operations.

The full report, including staff recommendations and the commission's final decisions, can be found [here](#).

## **Governor Abbott Announces Economic Impact of Military Installations**

On Wednesday, Governor Abbott [announced](#) the results of a study that estimated military installations contribute at least \$114.1 billion to the state economy and supports more than 622,790 jobs in communities across the state. The study was completed by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts at the request of the Texas Military Preparedness Commission. There are 15 military installations and the U.S. Army Futures Command in Texas. The full study can be found [here](#).

## **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 IJA. We will be providing periodic updates in the Legislative Update on resources for Texas cities on how to access IJA funding for local infrastructure projects.*

### **U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)**

DOT released a [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Discretionary Grant Program, which makes available \$195 million in funding to support “projects that reconnect communities by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity, including to mobility, access, or economic development.” Of the \$195 million, \$50 million is available for eligible public engagement, feasibility studies, and other planning activities and these planning grants may range from \$100,000 to \$2 million. \$145 million is available in capital construction grants for eligible construction activities necessary to carry out a project to remove, retrofit, or mitigate an existing eligible facility with a new facility that reconnects communities, and these capital construction grants may range from \$5 million to \$100 million. Cities are eligible applicants for both types of grants. Applications are due October 13. More on the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Discretionary Grant Program [here](#), including a registration link to a webinar on the program to be held on Thursday, July 14, from 11AM to 12:30 PM CST.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) [announced](#) the availability of over \$573 million in grant funding for the competitive Railroad Crossing Elimination Program, which “will help improve safety, eliminate lengthy delays at railroad crossings in communities across the country, and ultimately lower the costs of transporting goods, making them more affordable for American families.” At least 20% of funding will go to rural and Tribal areas and political subdivisions, including cities, are eligible applicants. Interested city officials can access a [fact sheet](#) on the grant program and the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (NOFO). Applications will be due 90 days after the publication of the NOFO in the Federal Register, which hasn’t happened as of the printing of this update. The FRA will hold a webinar on the program on Thursday, July 14 from 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM, CST. Interested city officials can register [here](#).

### **National League of Cities (NLC)**

NLC and the U.S. Conference of Mayors is hosting a series of webinars on the IJA. The [next webinar](#) titled “Local Infrastructure Hub: Kickoff Session Featuring Mike Bloomberg and Mitch Landrieu” will be held on July 12 at 1:00 PM CST. Registration. The webinar will focus on how the [Local Infrastructure Hub](#) will help cities create infrastructure programs that transform communities.

## **Don't Forget: Resolutions for 2022 Annual Conference Due August 22**

Resolutions for consideration at the Annual Conference are due no later than 5:00 p.m. on **August 22, 2022**. The TML Constitution provides that resolutions must be submitted by any member city, TML region, or TML affiliate to the TML headquarters 45 calendar days prior to the first day of the Annual Conference.

The League's advocacy efforts are based on a legislative program that is developed by member city officials in two ways.

First, a member city, TML region, or TML affiliate may submit a resolution for consideration at the business meeting of each year's Annual Conference. Each city is asked to provide one delegate to serve as its liaison at the meeting. The representatives will be briefed on the content of the resolutions and given a chance to discuss and vote on whether they merit inclusion in the legislative program. The resolutions form the basis of a fixed legislative program, under which – each session – modifications to the program will be made only if needed.

Second, member city officials can participate in the League's Municipal Policy Summit during the summer of 2022. The report of the Summit takes the form of a resolution that is submitted to the Annual Conference in interim years. The summit participants have been appointed by the TML President based on volunteers and others chosen to balance the demographics of the TML membership at large.

Details on the submission process can be found [here](#).

## **House and Senate Committee Interim Hearings**

The Texas House and Senate Committees are underway studying interim charges outlined by Speaker Phelan and Lt. Governor Dan Patrick.

Below is a full list of committee hearings set to hear certain city-related charges. All hearings will be held at the Texas Capitol unless otherwise indicated. If a committee has newly posted notice and was not included in last week's edition of the *Legislative Update*, it is indicated as such.

### **Senate Finance Committee**

The committee will meet on Monday, July 11 at 10:00 a.m. to hear invited and public testimony on the following interim charges:

**Federal Funds:** Report on the state use of federal COVID-19 relief funds provided under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, the American Rescue Plan Act, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Acts, and similar federal legislation. Examine local use of federal

relief funding, including funding provided to school districts through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund. Evaluate the overall fiscal impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on state agencies, including costs incurred due to federal mandates. Identify barriers to the effective utilization of funds and make recommendations on the expenditure of unappropriated funds. In addition, evaluate and report on the spending by state agencies that have been utilizing "one-time" federal funding (temporary enhancements, e.g. FMAP and ESSER) sources, where federal funding will likely be significantly reduced in future biennia.

Information on the hearing, including how to register and testify at the committee hearing, can be found [here](#).

**\*NEW\* House Committee on Urban Affairs**

The committee will meet on Thursday, July 14 at 11:00 a.m. at the City of Houston Council Chamber to hear public and invited testimony to consider the following interim charges:

Evaluate the availability of workforce housing to support the dynamic economic growth of the state. study the use of public-private partnerships and other tools to incentivize the development of housing that meets Texas' expanding workforce demands. Develop and include measures to ensure accountability and transparency associated with these tools.

Review the Municipal Management District Legislative Template with respect to representation and accountability. Make recommendations for improving the template.

Information on the hearing, including how to register and submit electronic comments, can be found [here](#).

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# MAKING BASTROP'S FIRST IMPRESSION LAST

By **Celso Martinez**,  
President, Municipal Voice



Few can successfully argue with the widely-accepted and routinely-proven fact that first impressions are critically important. Evidence of the strength of that axiom abounds. One need only look at contemporary culture, literature, music, poetry, and storytelling to find an overwhelming number of examples demonstrating the impact that first impressions carry. Clearly a good first impression can lead just about anywhere.

Residents, elected officials, and administrators of the central Texas City of Bastrop are very familiar with the concept. In fact, if there were a 'best first impression prize' for cities and towns, Bastrop would be odds-on favorite to win.

Approaching the City via State Highway 71 from Austin, Bastrop's welcoming hospitality becomes evident quickly and unmistakably. Visitors are warmly greeted with a mesmerizing collage of thickly forested areas as they approach the iconic Old Iron Bridge spanning the majestically serene Colorado River, as it bends lazily through the City's western edge.

The greenery is peppered by tall loblolly pines swaying in the gentle Texas breeze adding immeasurably to the natural beauty of the area. Breathtaking is a word that not only fits the area well, but it's also one that is repeated often, without either hesitation or hyperbole.

As one continues heading east, big box stores and national commercial outlets are mixed in with local mom-and-pop shops, unique artisans, and one-of-a-kind retailers, offering visitors and locals the uncommon opportunity of obtaining virtually anything offered by larger cities and a plethora of items that large cities only dream of.

The City's long and distinguished history is replete with references to the early days of Texas, both the republic and the state. Interestingly, had Stephen F. Austin, long-known as the father of Texas, been a bit more insistent, Bastrop would have been the territory's capital. As it turned out, he acquiesced to naming Waterloo, today's Austin, just to the west, as the seat of the fledgling republic and eventually its state capital. Bastrop, itself originally known as Mina, came very close to having the state rotunda as part of its skyline.



In addition, while the City's unmatched beauty, notable history, unparalleled location, unique amenities, accommodating people, and calming manner all speak well for it, Bastrop is also a comfortable yet thriving municipality, facing all of the same challenges and issues that development, expansion, and growth present.

Like other cities that are attracting large numbers of new residents, and the accompanying demands on city services and infrastructure they bring, Bastrop officials are continually looking at how to deal with the rising costs of those services. Everyone involved in the multi-faceted process of creating, adopting, and implementing policy, understands that managing growth provides an opportunity to diversify the city's economic base thus leveling property tax rates. Managing that inevitable growth also means ensuring that it is done in a way that maintains Bastrop's unique character through quality development and redevelopment that feature plans for the future, as well as a commitment that costs are borne by developers and not the taxpayer.

All of this is undergirded by the city's commitment to maintaining its small-town flavor, what officials call authenticity; a fiscal policy that is sustainable for the long haul; and a way that keeps Bastrop's unrivaled environmental beauty intact, viable, and unspoiled.

Mayor Connie Schroeder is among the city's most forthright and proudest promoters and celebrates Bastrop's legacy by engaging with residents, visitors, and administrators on a daily basis. A retired civil engineer, she jokes that she married Bastrop when exchanging vows with Charlie about 20 years ago. Her husband counts himself among the proud cohort of Bastrop natives, having grown up in a city that had few street signs, fewer stop signs, but plenty of pristine spots where rambunctious youngsters could work off their seemingly tireless energy.

Once married and settled, Mayor Schroeder became active in the city's forward progress, serving on the planning and zoning commission in 2011, including as the Comprehensive Plan steering committee chair in 2015. She encouraged, and sometimes cajoled, her neighbors and friends into actively participating in the life of the community, eventually deciding to run for mayor in 2017 and winning. Reelected in 2020, she is in the second year of her final three-year term.

And, as her professional background might suggest, she is undoubtedly comfortable with Bastrop's historic and purposely effective street grid. Streets in the city's central core are laid out in an almost perfect network of north to south and east to west sight lines, making for easy navigation and rendering traffic virtually self-regulating. City planners explain that the grid provides motorists more options for moving around the city in the same way that shoppers at the grocery store have more options when more checkout lanes are open. More available checkout lanes mean faster and more efficient movement, just like the famed Bastrop street grid provides for vehicles.

With about as many nearly perfect 90 degree angles as a high school geometry book, the rigidity of the City's center is striking. One could probably throw a stone from the south side all the way past the northern city limits and not hit anything.

While one might be forgiven for assuming the inflexibility of Bastrop's straight-as-an-arrow streets also govern how the

City is administered, the truth is far from it. Flexibility, in fact, is actually a key guiding principle for Bastrop. In authentic Bastrop, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. The status quo is continually challenged, and a cut-and-paste solution that might work in a neighboring town or city simply will not fly.

Assistant City Manager Trey Job says that flexibility in thought, in attitude, and in planning is a foundational guidepost for administrators, elected officials, volunteers, and residents. Job is the focal point for the City's efforts at implementing the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. The Plan is decidedly home-grown. Conversations, debates, questions, answers, ideas, suggestions, and lots of very useful chatter were harvested through several public hearings, meetings, and roundtables that attracted over 1,500 individuals, an astounding 20 percent of the population. The topic was, of course, what Bastrop is, and importantly, what it wants to be.

The City Council has been exceedingly active in putting in place the framework for a rigorous and meticulous inward look at the City and how it can address the big three questions mentioned earlier – providing economically sustainable city services; diversifying the local economy; and planning for the City's future.

Serious discussions have evolved, involving virtually all sectors of Bastrop, including long-term and recent residents, large and small businesses, property owners of all stripes, and other stakeholders.

These discussions have borne significant fruit, as the City has effectively settled on nine critically important focus areas for current and future discussion. Bastrop is using these focus areas as signposts for direct forward movement while ensuring that the City's proverbial eyes remain trained on the end result.

The broad topic areas include Communication; Community Safety; Economic Viability; Fiscal Responsibility; Growth Management; Multi-Modal Mobility; Organizational Excellence; Uniquely Bastrop; and Unique Environment.

It's a process that officials hope will result in a continually updated plan of action that will take Bastrop to a place where it can maintain a fiscal posture that is responsible, sustainable, and equitable, a place where businesses can be profitable and contribute to the crucially important

diversification, and a place where people can continue to exhibit the same civic pride that has been the hallmark of this community.

"The City of Bastrop continues to plan for the next 100 years," said Job. "Our City Council has come to the vitally important realization that listening, learning, and basing decisions on what they hear are what will get us to where we want to be. In essence, they know that good information helps make good decisions, and those decisions have a wide-ranging impact on our current and future residents. That's important because those residents are our customers, not developers."

Job and City Manager Paul Hofmann have placed themselves, their staff, and volunteers in a position of being "comfortable with discomfort." They're pushing themselves to be uncomfortably innovative in what has been the traditionally inflexible area of planning and development. Job and Hofmann constantly talk about, and thus encourage, taking bold and unprecedented forward-leaning action, a new, richer take on out-of-the-box thinking. "After all," adds Job, "when you know who your customers are, it's easy to make the right decisions." Their let's-get-this-done attitude has permeated every portion of the process.

Significantly, the polishing has included multiple reviews of citizen-involved updates to zoning regulations, planning procedures, the underlying municipal code, drainage regulations, transportation networks, impact studies, and many other areas that, taken together, help form the tapestry of a thriving city.

Still on the table are a deep dive into the economic development goals that Bastrop wants to attain; performance enhancements on software and hardware that will help stabilize the changes; and, of course, flawless execution of action plans.

American humorist Will Rogers said, "you don't get a second chance to make a good first impression." On that score, Bastrop has nothing to worry about. It's now incumbent on the city to follow up that breathtaking first impression with a way to keep it fresh and sustainable. ★