



Richmond Receives 2025 Scenic City of the Year Award

The City of Richmond has been named the 2025 Scenic City of the Year by Scenic Texas, a statewide honor that recognizes communities for exceptional standards in visual character, environmental stewardship, and long-range planning. For Richmond, this represents a significant and, in many ways, once-in-a-lifetime distinction that reflects years of coordinated effort to keep the city both beautiful and forward-looking. “This recognition from Scenic Texas

is a powerful affirmation of who we are as a community,” said Mayor Rebecca Haas. “Richmond is deeply rooted in its’ traditions, yet we are continuously growing, modernizing, and raising our community standards. Being named Scenic City of the Year shows that we can protect what makes us historic and authentic while thoughtfully shaping our future.”

Scenic Texas highlighted Richmond’s comprehensive approach to visual quality, from its strengthened sign ordinance and billboard controls to its emphasis on high-quality building design and streetscapes. The City has reduced visual clutter along key corridors such as FM 762, U.S. 90A, and IH 69/ U.S. 59 by prohibiting

new off-premises billboards, guiding businesses toward monument-style signage, limiting digital displays, and investing in coordinated wayfinding signs that supports both residents and visitors. At the same time, the Unified Development Code and related design standards ensure that new development complements historic areas, protects key viewsheds, and creates walkable, attractive corridors that feel cohesive and people focused.

Environmental stewardship and green infrastructure have also played a central role in Richmond’s recognition. The City enforces a robust tree preservation ordinance, maintains an extensive tree canopy, and integrates native and low-water-use landscaping into parks, medians, trail corridors, and public facilities. Green infrastructure features such as bioswales, vegetated detention basins, and rain gardens are used to manage stormwater in ways that are both functional and visually appealing. These initiatives are reinforced by the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Trail Master Plan, which tie scenic preservation directly to park expansion, trail connectivity, and the protection of natural corridors such as the Brazos River.

(Continued on pg 5.)



Message from the Mayor

Mayor Becky Haas



As we welcome the New Year, I would like to extend my best wishes to you and your loved ones for a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2026. January is a season of fresh starts and renewed energy—a time to reflect on where we have been and to look ahead to where we are going, together.

Our community continues to grow in ways that make me incredibly proud. Through ongoing investments in infrastructure and public safety, along with new development and local business growth, we are building a strong foundation for the future while preserving the character and values that make our city such a special place to call home.

In the year ahead, your City Commission and staff remain committed to transparency, responsible stewardship of resources, and thoughtful planning that prioritizes quality of life for all residents. We will continue to listen, engage, and work collaboratively to ensure our city remains safe, vibrant, and welcoming.

I encourage you to stay involved—attend meetings, share your ideas, support local businesses, and take advantage of the many programs and events offered throughout the year in the Richmond community and across greater Fort Bend County. Your involvement, support and civic pride truly drive our success.

Thank you for being an essential part of our community. I look forward to all that we will accomplish together in the months ahead.



**Mark Your Calendar for
Keep Richmond Beautiful
and the City's Two Document
Shred Events at City Hall Plaza,
9 am- 12 Noon**

Saturday, April 25, 2026 will be a document shred & electronic recycling event at City Hall Plaza from 9 am - 12 Noon.

October 17, 2026 will be a document shred event at City Hall Plaza from 9 am- 12 Noon.



City Government

The City of Richmond operates under the commission- manager form of government, per the city charter. The voters elect the city commission which hires a City Manager to administer the city's day to day affairs. The commission serves as the legislative body and is final authority on all policy decisions which determine the scope and functions of the city government. The City Manager serves as Chief Administrative Officer of the City and is responsible to the City Commission for the execution of the laws and administration of all the affairs of the city.

COMMISSIONERS:



Commissioner Terry Gaul,
Position 1
tgaul@richmondtx.gov



Commissioner Barry Beard,
Position 2
bbeard@richmondtx.gov



Commissioner Carl Drozd,
Position 3
cdrozd@richmondtx.gov



Commissioner Alex BeMent,
Position 4
abement@richmondtx.gov

CITY ADMINISTRATION:



Ms. Terri Smith,
City Manager
TVela@richmondtx.gov

Richmond's Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Project Nearing Completion

The City of Richmond approved the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) water meter replacement project in late 2024. This initiative is designed to replace aging water meters—many which no longer provide reliable readings—and to modernize how water usage is measured and reported.

The new AMI system allows water meters to be read remotely, eliminating the need for monthly, in-person meter readings. Once fully implemented, customers will also have access to an online portal where they can track their daily water usage, should they choose to do so.

The project began with Ameresco and its subcontractors collecting GPS coordinates for all water meters throughout the city. In early July 2025, the project moved into its second phase: replacing all residential and commercial water meters citywide. As of mid-December, approximately 50 percent of the city's nearly 8,500 meters have been replaced.

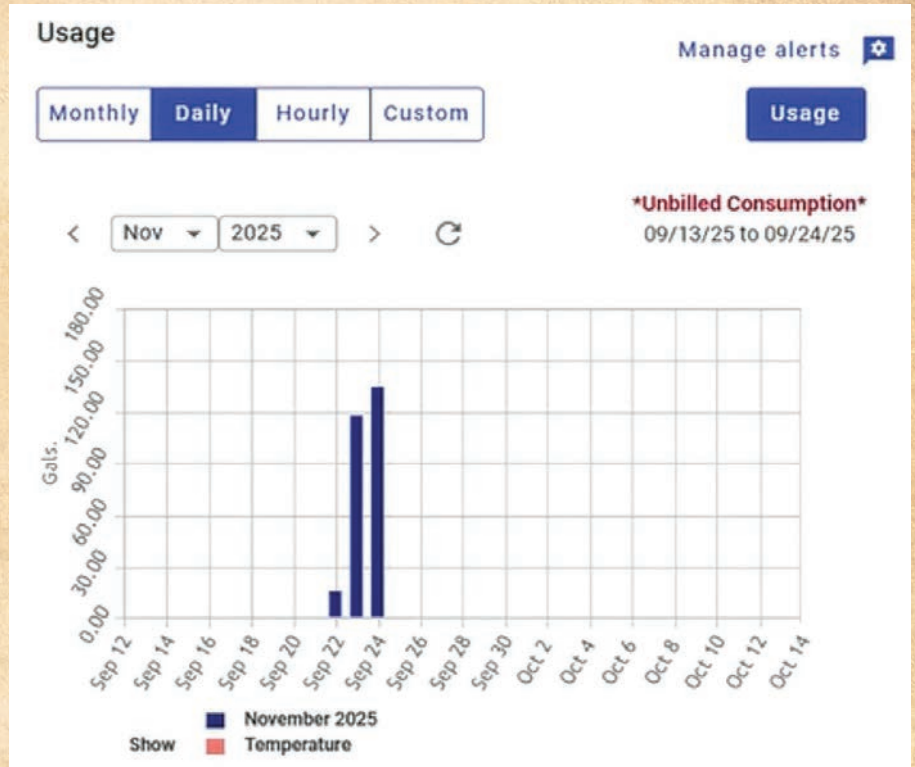
The new meters are equipped with advanced technology that enables the City to automatically and electronically capture meter readings. The first billing cycle using the AMI system began in September 2025. By mid-December, four billing cycles had been successfully completed using data obtained directly from the AMI platform.

To date, meter exchange data for approximately 4,000 locations has been processed into the City's Incode utility billing system. Once sufficient data has been collected, the City will launch the new Customer Portal, providing customers with access to their daily water consumption information.

Meter replacements are expected to be completed citywide by the end of February 2026, with Ameresco anticipated to transition the system fully to the City in March 2026.

For residents whose meters have not yet been replaced, please note that residential meter exchanges typically take less than 30 minutes. Water service will be temporarily shut off during this brief period, and Ameresco and Second Sight Systems representatives do not need to enter your home.

For questions regarding your water account, please contact Utility Billing at 281-342-5456, option 1. For after-hours water emergencies, such as water main breaks or overflows, contact the Public Works Department at 281-342-0559.



Richmond Hires New Fire Chief Mike Legoudes



The City of Richmond is proud to announce the appointment of Mike Legoudes, Jr. as its new Fire Chief, following an extensive search. Chief Legoudes brings with him over 20 years of distinguished service and leadership in fire protection and public safety. Most recently, he served as Assistant Fire Chief with the Conroe Fire Department, where his career has reflected a steadfast commitment to excellence, community service, and operational leadership.

"Finding the right person, the right fit for our city, has been a long but necessary process," said Mayor Rebecca Haas. "Chief Legoudes brings the wealth of knowledge, experience, and leadership that we've been seeking to guide our Fire Department into the future."

The City also extends its deepest gratitude to Interim Fire Chief Christopher Legington. His dedication and professionalism provided stability and ensured continued excellence in service throughout the leadership transition.

Chief Legoudes began his career in fire service on July 9, 2001, with the Conroe Fire Department as a Firefighter. Over the years, he rose through the ranks, serving as Lieutenant, Deputy Fire Marshal, Deputy Chief/Fire

Marshal, Assistant Fire Chief, and most recently as Interim Fire Chief from July 2024 through January 2025. His educational background includes a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Sam Houston State University, as well as an Associate's Degree in Fire Science from Lone Star College - Cy Fair. He is a Master Texas Peace Officer and a Licensed Paramedic, holding multiple advanced fire service credentials and certifications. He is also a graduate of nationally recognized leadership programs, including the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy, the Texas Fire Chiefs Academy, and the Emergency Management Academy through FEMA's Emergency Management Institute.

Chief Legoudes becomes Richmond's 10th Fire Chief, succeeding Chief Mike Youngblood, who retired after 13 years of dedicated service to the community. His appointment marks a significant step forward for the Richmond Fire Department as it continues to evolve and grow alongside the city it serves.

The Richmond Fire Department currently operates three fire stations with 37 personnel, delivering essential fire protection and emergency services to the City's 5.1 square miles, as well as an additional 60 square miles of fire protection service area that is within Richmond's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) in Fort Bend County. As the City of Richmond continues to grow, the department remains committed to providing exceptional service and ensuring the safety and well-being of all residents.

Chief Legoudes' appointment was formally recognized by the City Commission at its October meeting, and his official start date was October 6. The City of Richmond invites the community to join in welcoming Fire Chief Mike Legoudes, Jr. as he begins this new chapter of service and leadership.

City Commission Approves Contract for Developer Analysis for Hotel and Convention Center

The Richmond City Commission approved a contract for hotel and convention advisors to conduct analysis and develop Request for Proposals (RFP) for potential hotel and convention center development along the IH-69/US-59 corridor in Richmond, Texas. The RFP

was sent out with two submissions received. The City Commission is working through these proposals to evaluate the best outcome for the City and surrounding community.

Richmond Receives 2025 Scenic City of the Year Award *(Continued from cover.)*

“Our policies help keep the quality of our parks, the character of our Historic District, and provide the experience people have when they drive, walk, or visit Richmond,” said Terri Vela, City Manager. “From underground utilities and dark-sky lighting to thoughtful landscaping and design standards, we have made a sustained commitment to visual quality.”

Community engagement has been another key factor in the City’s success. Programs led by Keep Richmond Beautiful, partnerships with schools and youth sports leagues, citywide recycling and sustainability events, and educational initiatives such as informative trail signage and conservation-focused programming all invite residents to participate in keeping Richmond clean, green, and scenic. Signature events such as Art in the Bend, the Pecan Harvest Festival, Miracle on Morton Street, and community gatherings in downtown parks highlight how well-maintained public spaces, historic charm, and thoughtful design support a vibrant civic life.

In addition to this new honor, Richmond recently achieved Platinum Scenic City re-certification from Scenic Texas through 2029, the highest level available in the program. Together, the Scenic City of the Year award and Platinum status underscore Richmond’s role as a statewide leader in scenic preservation, environmental stewardship, and high standards for the public realm.

Throughout 2025 and beyond, the City will incorporate the Scenic City of the Year designation into its communications and community outreach, encouraging residents, businesses, and visitors to “help keep Richmond scenic” by supporting ongoing beautification, conservation, and corridor improvement efforts.

For more information about the City of Richmond’s scenic initiatives, planning efforts, and community programs, please visit richmondtx.gov.

Richmond Hires New Development Corporation of Richmond Executive Director



The City of Richmond has announced the appointment of Lacie Chambers as the new Executive Director of the Development Corporation of Richmond (DCR). Chambers was selected following an extensive search and brings more than three decades of experience in business development, project management, fundraising, healthcare innovation, and political strategy.

Chambers’ deep understanding of the community, combined with her strategic mindset and proven record of building partnerships, positions her to guide Richmond through its next chapter of economic growth. Her experience across multiple sectors, first-hand knowledge of starting a business, and her ability to bring people together will be a tremendous asset as the City continues advancing Richmond’s growth and strengthening its role as a community partner. “Lacie has a genuine heart for Richmond—our businesses, our neighborhoods,

and our people,” said Terri Vela, City Manager. “She understands the value of relationships and knows that economic development isn’t just about new projects—it’s about creating opportunities that uplift the entire community. We are thrilled to welcome her into this role and look forward to the positive impact her leadership will bring”.

The Development Corporation of Richmond serves as the City’s official advocate for business, real estate, and development interests. The department assists with due diligence, provides real-time market intelligence, and connects private-sector enterprises with city goals—all at no cost to businesses. The DCR is committed to facilitating responsible development and expanding economic opportunities across Richmond.

Chambers is a graduate of Texas A&M University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in English with an Interdepartmental Business minor. She began her new role on December 1.

For more information about the Development Corporation of Richmond, visit <https://developrichmondtx.com>.

Art Adorns City of Richmond Streets

Several years ago, the City of Richmond set out to enhance its streetscapes by transforming twenty-four TxDOT utility boxes throughout the city with custom art wraps. As the initiative took shape, local Catapult Gallery owner and artist Carmen Flores offered to help lead a call for local artists to submit artwork for potential installation on the utility boxes in the historic district.

From the submissions received, the Richmond Historic Commission and the Parks and Recreation Board selected seven pieces from five local artists: Carmen Flores, Elizabeth Marie, Sarah Beth Baca, Michelle Florence, and Sydney Archer. Each selected piece has now been produced and installed as a vibrant wrap around a utility box in the historic district and around the City. Visitors can scan the QR codes displayed on these installations to learn more about each artist through brief interviews embedded online. Mayor Becky Haas was present as the first art wrap was installed and shared her appreciation “We are very grateful to these local artists willing to share their talent with City residents and anyone who visits historic Downtown Richmond.”

The other seventeen art wraps were chosen by the Parks Board from a selection of designs provided by staff. These art-wrapped utility boxes enrich the visual character of Richmond’s streets and reinforce the city’s commitment to beautification—an effort that contributed to Richmond earning the 2025 Scenic City of the Year designation from Scenic Texas last month.



Commission Approves Professional Services Contract

Richmond City Commission approved a Professional Services Contract for \$100,000 to Burditt Consulting, LLC to update the Parks, Open Space Master Plan and Trails Master Plan. These updates will ensure that Richmond’s long-range vision of parks and recreation reflects the community’s evolving needs for the parks and recreation system.

The initial launch was an information gathering stage executed in November through a survey pushed out to citizens utilizing the city’s website, flyers at city offices and to area high school parents, city’s social media platforms and bandit signs placed in all the city parks with QR Code to be scanned to access survey requesting input from citizens.

This project aligns with the City’s Comprehensive Master Plan and demonstrates Richmond’s commitment to enhancing recreational opportunities while preserving the community’s natural amenities for future generations.

CONNECT. PLAY. EXPLORE.
IMAGINE RICHMOND!

Share your vision for Richmond’s parks and green spaces.

Scan the QR code or visit www.richmondtx.gov to complete the survey and a chance to win a prize!

SURVEY OPEN THROUGH DECEMBER 1, 2025



YOUR FEEDBACK WILL HELP IMPROVE:

- Park amenities
- Trails, paths and green spaces
- Programs, events and activities
- Future park planning

CONECTA. JUEGA. EXPLORA.
IMAGINA RICHMOND!

Comparte tu visión para los parques y espacios verdes de Richmond.

Escanea el código QR o visita www.richmondtx.gov para completar la encuesta y participar por la oportunidad de ganar un premio!

ENCUESTA ABIERTA HASTA EL 1 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2025.



TUS COMENTARIOS AYUDARÁN A MEJORAR:

- Comodidades en los parques
- Senderos, caminos y espacios verdes
- Programas, eventos y actividades
- Planificación futura de los parques

City Commission Approves Construction Contract for New City Hall

The City Commission approved a construction contract with Construction Masters in the amount of \$6,728,800 for the renovation of Richmond’s future City Hall, located at 1517 Thompson Road.

The project will repurpose the existing structure to create a modern, efficient, and community-focused facility while maintaining cost-conscious stewardship of public resources. Once complete, the new City Hall will bring together essential city services under one roof, providing a convenient central location for residents to pay utility bills, attend municipal court, participate in pre-development meetings, and engage in City Commission meetings. The facility will also house the Commission Chamber, Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and administrative

offices. Construction is anticipated to be completed by the end of the third quarter of 2026.

“This renovation represents a significant investment in our city’s future,” said Mayor Becky Haas. “By reusing an existing building, we’re being both fiscally responsible and environmentally conscious, creating a functional space that supports our staff, serves our residents, and reflects the character of Richmond.”

The new City Hall will serve as a central hub for local government and community interaction—an investment that strengthens Richmond’s foundation as the city continues to grow and evolve.



Subsidence Fee in Water Bill



Ever wonder what subsidence is or why there is a surface water fee in the Richmond utility bill? Access to drinkable water can be complicated to understand. Surface water comes from water above ground like lakes and rivers as opposed to ground water found beneath the earth's surface in aquifers. Ground water is often less abundant than surface water.

The Fort Bend Subsidence District, charged with lessening the water pumped from wells (ground water) to reduce subsidence, mandates a transition from ground water usage to an alternative water source. The City of Richmond utilizes two alternative water sources. One is surface water from the Brazos River treated by micro-filtration for drinking water; and the other is wastewater re-use for right of way watering. The surface water fee found in your water bill funds these projects as part of Richmond's overall groundwater reduction plan. These alternative sources have allowed the city to meet the Subsidence District's mandated requirement to reduce groundwater usage by 30 percent. The Fort Bend Subsidence District recently updated the mandate for 60% groundwater reduction deadline to 2030. Learn more: <https://www.fortbendsubsidence.org>.



City Modifies Boards and Commissions Applications

The City of Richmond remains committed to transparency and community engagement as we continue to improve the process for selecting qualified candidates to serve on the City's Boards, Commissions, and Committees. Staff proposed updates to streamline the application and review process, emphasizing fairness, accessibility and transparency. These updates encompass:

- -Consideration of longer-term lengths to promote continuity and reduce administrative workload.
- -Beginning the term-expiration and reappointment process three to four months in advance.
- -Allowing participation via both Zoom and in-person meetings to provide greater flexibility.
- -Considering revisions to existing criteria, as appropriate, to encourage participation from a broader population.

The effort also includes refining the reappointment process while ensuring opportunities remain open for new applicants.

Boards and Commissions such as the Board of Ethics and Compliance, Richmond Historical Commission, Building and Standards Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and the Parks and Recreation Board, along with the Development Corporation of Richmond Board are central to shaping the policies and priorities that affect residents across the city. These bodies help address issues ranging from land use and historical preservation to ethical governance and community development.

The City encourages residents from all backgrounds to learn more about these boards and consider applying for upcoming vacancies. By participating, residents have a meaningful opportunity to help guide Richmond's future and represent the diverse voices of the community.

CHECK OUT ALL THE OPPORTUNITIES TO

VOLUNTEER

& SERVE IN RICHMOND

WWW.RICHMONDTX.GOV/GOVERNMENT/BOARDS-AND-COMMISSIONS



Commission Approved Professional Services Contract for Traffic Mobility Plan

Richmond City Commission approved a Professional Services Contract for \$100,000 to Halff and Associates to prepare a comprehensive Traffic Mobility Plan for the City. The plan will take a holistic look at mobility in Richmond, addressing not only vehicular traffic, but also pedestrian, bicycle, and transit needs.

While the City has conducted individual traffic and trail studies in the past, this will be the first citywide mobility study that combines all modes of transportation into one plan. The project will include strong public engagement, a detailed crash analysis, and the evaluation of up to five intersections for potential safety and operational improvements. Recent policy changes, including the ordinance allowing golf carts and low-speed vehicles, will also be factored into the study.

This initiative supports the City's Comprehensive Master Plan by strengthening transportation connections and expanding travel choices for residents, businesses and visitors.



Making Requests Just Got Easier - See something we need to fix?



Tell us in just a few clicks!

Our new Public Works Request Form is now live on the City's website.

Visit www.richmondtx.gov →
Departments →
Public Works to find it.

Click on:
Public Works Requests

Public Works Request

 **NEW FEATURE** 



**Introducing our new
Public Works Request
Form!**

Quickly submit requests for:

- Street Problems
- Water or Sewer Concerns
- Drainage Issues
- Sidewalk Repairs

Simple. Fast. Online.

FIRST FRIDAYS EVENTS

Every Month in Downtown Richmond

Beginning at 4 pm with Richmond Farmers Market!!



CITY OF RICHMOND
RICHMOND
 FARMERS & ARTISAN
MARKET

MARCH 6TH 4-8 PM
402 MORTON ST.



Seasonal Produce • Artisan Goods • Food Truck

MOVIE Night

AT WESSENDORFF
 Wessendorff Park | 500 Preston St.

2026 LINE-UP

January 2: NONE	<p><i>All Shows Begin at Dark</i></p> <p>Free Popcorn provided by Rotary Club of Richmond</p>
February 6: Frozen 2	
March 6: Inside Out 2	
April 3: Lilo & Stitch	
May 1: The Mitchells vs Machines	
June 5: Luca	
July 3: Cars	
August 7: Matilda	
September 4: The Secret Life of Pets	
October 2: Zootopia	
November 6: Zootopia 2	
December 4: Elf	





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 SCENIC CITY OF THE YEAR 2025