



## **LEON VALLEY BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS**

( Fiscal Year: 10/1/ 2022 – 9/30/23 )

One of the major responsibilities of the city council is to set the property tax rate which generates ad valorem taxes to help pay for all the city services you receive (police, fire, EMS, public works, library, parks, court, city administration, code/animal enforcement).

A major goal of the city council in setting the budget for 2023 was to bring our employees' salaries up to average pay in the area. We were losing experienced employees to other agencies due to pay issues. This goal is met in this year's budget.

The council discussed the tax rate at length and adopted the tax rate at the September 20th council meeting. With property appraisals increasing an average of 19%, the prior tax rate of 0.534 cents per \$100 valuation could be reduced

## Mayor's Message

By Mayor Chris Riley

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*"If you want to go FAST, go alone. If you want to go FAR, go together."*  
- African Proverb

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to a tax rate of 0.484 cents, to keep revenues the same as last year (the no-new-revenue or NNR rate).

City Manager Caldera recommended the city council adopt the NNR tax rate of \$0.484 cents per \$100 valuation because the money generated would cover the basic services of the city, including substantial increases in salary and merit pay for all employees (\$879,222).

After a robust debate among council members over three meetings, the council majority (Councilors Stevens, Hefner, Orozco and Bradshaw) voted to adopt the no new revenue tax rate of \$0.484 cents per \$100 valuation, which is a significant reduction from last year's tax rate. Councilor Martinez voted no. This budget will still raise more revenue from commercial and residential property taxes than last year's budget by an amount of \$322,774 or 6.14%.

At the end of the budget process, the council amended the budget to add one police officer (\$85,000), bringing the total employees in the police department to 41, and to provide a 2% Cost of Living increase to all employees beginning January 1, 2023

(\$185,159), both to be paid from the American Rescue (ARP) funds.

What is the effect of the new tax rate on the average homeowner in Leon Valley? The average home value in 2021 was \$217,912, which increased in 2022 to \$259,591. The average Leon Valley property tax paid in 2021 was \$1,120. With the adopted tax rate of \$0.484, the average taxes paid in 2022 will be \$1,118, an annual decrease of \$2. If you are over 65, your property value and tax rate are frozen at the amount you paid at age 64.

Some other highlights in this year's budget of over \$25 million (including general fund, water, sewer and stormwater funds):

1. Also, added one detective to the Police Department.
2. Added a full-time Custodial employee in place of using a contractual service.
3. Some notable capital projects in this year's budget:
  - \$100,000 for Linkwood side-walks;
  - \$200,000 for the Hike & Bike Trail, segment II;
  - \$70,000 for a Skate Park on

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## Mayor's Message

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Shadow Mist at Crystal Hills park (from American Rescue funds (ARP));

- \$250,000 to replace sewer mains; and
- \$800,000 for a new fire truck, ½ paid down from ARP funds, and the remaining balance financed for five years.

4. The \$50,000 cost to conduct a staffing level assessment was not budgeted. This study would have determined the number of staff needed in police, fire/EMS and public works through an independent analysis. This study may be funded later through ARP funds.

Our city remains in excellent fiscal condition. Our General Reserve fund is approximately \$ 3.1 million. Sales tax revenues are projected at \$3.3 million, up from \$2.9 million budgeted in 2022.

Special thanks to City Manager Dr. Crystal Caldera, Finance Director Kevin Rule, Assistant Finance Director Yvonne Acuna, and all department heads for preparing a budget which is balanced and meets the needs of our city for the next fiscal year. The FY 2023 budget is online and very detailed. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

### HOME RULE CHARTER PROPOSITIONS PASSED

All 13 propositions which were unanimously proposed by City Council and voted on by the citizens of Leon Valley in the November 8th election, passed. The lowest margin was 55.96% (Proposition D – deleted the requirement that a council member forfeit their

office if violating the charter) and the highest margin was 70.84% (Proposition J – the City Attorney shall be appointed by the City Council, and report to the Council).

These changes to the Charter eliminated the Section 3.12 hearing process, which led to 3 years of council infighting and cost taxpayers huge amounts of attorney fees and staff time (Props. B, D, F & M). The amendments further clarify 1) that the city manager works for the City Council and has the same executive powers & duties as the city manager had before the Charter was adopted (Props. A, E, G, H, I & J); 2) confirm the basic principle that “All powers of the City shall be vested in Council” (Props. A, I, K, & L); and 3) restores the Mayor’s ability to speak on any matter before the Council (Prop C).

No official tabulations are available at the time of this writing, but based on the unofficial tabulations I received, there were approximately 3,700 total votes cast, a 49% turnout rate (based on 7500 registered voters in Leon Valley). Thanks to everyone for your participation in this democratic process.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- **AMAZON HUB LOCKER-** Thanks to the initiative of Councilman Josh Stevens, the City of Leon Valley has been designated as an Amazon Hub Locker in time for the holiday season! The self-service locker will be located at City Hall’s main entrance at 6400 El Verde Rd. to the right-hand side of the doors. Instead of having a package delivered to your home or business address, you can have

it delivered to city hall and collect your package at a time that best fits your schedule. Amazon will send you a delivery confirmation email with instructions on how to pick up at the Locker. Collect your packages within three calendar days. If you don’t pick up your packages within this time, Amazon will take back the package and give you a refund. The City will collect sales tax on the products delivered.

- **COMING SOON:** Our city’s own Leon Valley App which citizens can download and use to communicate with City Hall on any issue you may have. This App when activated, will help take the place of ON-IT, used to report code and other violations. More details will be forthcoming.

- **SAVE THE DATE:** Saturday, January 28, 2023 from 8:30 – 12:30 pm will be the 12th Annual Town Hall meeting in the Conference Center. A postcard with the discussion topics will be mailed to you in early January. Hope to see you there!

On behalf of your city council and staff, we wish everyone a joyful holiday season – be safe!

Sincerely, Chris

Cell: ((210) 618-2092)



Leon Valley Police Department

# 2022 Blue Santa Project

The Leon Valley Police Department Blue Santa Project was created to provide local families in need with assistance in providing their children with Christmas gifts that they would otherwise not get. Leon Valley families who are indigent/low income and those needing a little help can apply for this program online through the following links below.



For Applications use QR code or link below:



<https://forms.gle/rinQNiPCufTdpiXc6>

The Leon Valley Police Department wants to wish everyone a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!

For more information please contact the Leon Valley Police Department at 210-684-6557



## A WORD FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Honorable Mayor, Council Members and the Residents of Leon Valley,

As City Manager of Leon Valley, I am proud of the services provided by our city staff. This inaugural report is a new initiative from the City Manager’s Office to highlight major accomplishments from the previous fiscal year. The city’s budget for FY 2021-2022 as approved by the City Council, provided an array of services to the community, including over 19,000 LF of mill and overlay, 264 programs at the library, responded to 368 open records requests, over 2,000 calls for EMS services, over 18,000 calls for Police services, processed over 1,200 permits and handled over 45,000 various transactions. This report is a culmination of countless departmental accomplishments made possible through their commitment, collaboration and leadership. Our City government is committed to improving the delivery of effective and efficient services by building upon our success to become even more responsive, innovative and proactive in meeting the needs of our entire community. We are fortunate to have dedicated public servants who strive every day to improve the delivery of services. My sincerest gratitude to all the Leon Valley team members for all that has been accomplished this past year for our city, our residents, and our business community.

*Crystal Caldera*

CRYSTAL CALDERA, PHD  
CITY MANAGER

For a copy of the annual report please go to website: <http://www.leonvalleytexas.gov>



**“Elizabeth Aguilar ”**

Elizabeth grew up in a military family, eventually settling

## Meet your Leon Valley Permit Technician

roots in Leon Valley. She is a Lackland High School graduate and attended Northwest Vista where she earned an Associate Degree of Arts in Science. Elizabeth worked for an environmental firm initially as a receptionist, but went on to become an environmental technician where she conducted tests for lead-based paint, asbestos, mold and other environmental issues for 12 years. Elizabeth applied at Leon Valley in 2022 for the Permit Technician position and

she states “I have enjoyed my new career ever since”.

Elizabeth has been through three kidney transplants but that hasn’t slowed her down. She continues to be a hard worker, very efficient, and has impeccable organization skills! We are grateful to have her part of the team!

When Elizabeth is not working she enjoy spending time with her two children, baking, cross stitching, crafting and gardening.



**“Lisa S. Hernandez ”**

Lisa has over 20 years of municipal government experience; beginning her career in the Office of the City Secretary for the City of Poteet, the City of Fair Oaks Ranch, and the City of Converse. During

## Introducing your Leon Valley Human Resources Director

her tenure, Lisa also served as City Administrator for the City of Natalia for six of those years, and now joins the City of Leon Valley as the Human Resources Director.

Lisa was raised in Poteet, Texas, and has continued to make the small rural town her home, with her son, Joe Michael who served in the US Marine Corp, and her spouse, David, an Agriculturalist and local strawberry farmer. Lisa graduated from Poteet High School, attended the Business School of Everest Institute in the certification program for Business and Accounting. She is current-

ly a student at San Antonio College working on her Business Administration Degree in Financial Management, and a Registered Texas Municipal Clerk working on her fourth certification through the Texas Municipal Clerks Certification Program at the University of North Texas. Lisa is also a member of the Texas Municipal Clerks Association Inc., Alamo Chapter TMCA, Poteet Lions Club International, and Rossville Historical Community Center. During her free time, Lisa enjoys playing golf, traveling, and enjoys competing in barbeque cook-offs with her team GTC.



**Winter Holidays are a time for families and friends to get together. But that also means a greater risk for fire.**

**Follow a few simple tips will ensure a happy and Fire-Safe holiday season.**



### **Holiday Decorating**

- **Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.**
- **Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.**
- **Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.**
- **Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.**
- **Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.**
- **Keep decorations away from windows and doors.**
- **Turn off light strings when going to bed or leaving the house.**



### **Holiday Entertaining**

- **Test smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.**
- **Keep children and pets away from lit candles.**
- **Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.**
- **Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stovetop.**
- **Blow out lit candles when going to bed.**



**Contact the Leon Valley Fire Department with any questions about Fire Safety at 210-684-3219**



## Keeping it Fresh!

### Huebner Elevated Water Storage Tank Rehabilitation Project

All four of the City's water tanks are inspected in March of each year, as mandated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). At its last inspection, both the interior and exterior of the Huebner Elevated Water Storage Tank were found to be in fair condition. Water tank rehabilitations typically last fifteen years and this tank was last rehabilitated in 2001.

The project was bid in September and in November, the City Council awarded the bid to Tankez Coatings in the amount of \$312,000. The project is scheduled to begin in December of 2022, as this is time of year our customers use the least amount of water. Once completed, all of the tanks will have been newly rehabilitated and good to go for another 15 years!

## HAPPY TRAILS!!

### Huebner Creek Greenway Hike & Bike Trail Segment 1

The City Council awarded a bid to TCL Construction Enterprises, LLC in the amount of \$986,220 to construct the first segment of the Huebner Creek Greenway Trail in Leon Valley. The trail will run from Shadow Mist Drive (off Grissom Road) to just under the Bandera Road bridge near the end of El Verde Road. The trail will connect to the City of San Antonio's Crystal Hills trailhead on Shadow Mist. TCL Construction expects to start construction in January of 2023 and hopes to complete the project by this time next year, weather permitting.



### Linkwood Addition – Pavona Place Trail

At the end of Evers Road (near Huebner Road), there is an old, abandoned trail that was originally developed in the early 1990's. The trail surface has almost disappeared, and the trees and other vegetation got so overgrown that the trail was forgotten. Last year, the Public Works Department cleared most of the vegetation out of the way and installed an outdoor fitness station near the alley that separates Linkwood from Pavona. Quotes have been received to install a cedar split rail fence and once installed, we will resurface the entire length of the trail. This will connect the Linkwood Addition and Pavona Place neighborhoods and provide the Linkwood residents a way to get to Raymond Rimkus Park without having to drive. We expect completion of the improvements in February of 2023. For more information on these and other park improvements, please visit our website at [www.leonvalleytexas.gov/parks](http://www.leonvalleytexas.gov/parks) and click on the link to our Parks Master Plan.

## Winter Sewer Averaging



Just a reminder that sewer rate averaging takes place from November to March, so please use the least amount of water as possible during this period (and remind members of your household to do the same!), to keep your sewer rates low for the next year.

## LEON VALLEY OFFERS FREE HOME WATER AUDITS

### What is Home Water Audit?

A Home Water Audit is an assessment of how much water is used and how much water can be saved in the home. Conducting a water audit involves helping calculate water use and identifying simple ways for saving water in the home.

### What are the Benefits of conducting a Home Water Audit?

Conducting a water audit can help you save money by reducing your water bill, making you aware of how you use your water, and helping you identify ways you can minimize water usage by implementing simple conservation measures without drastically modifying your lifestyle.



### How do I request a Home Water Audit?

To request your personal Home Water Audit appointment, please call the Public Works Department at 210-684-1391 ext. 224.

### Winter Prep – Protect the Pipes!

October and November are the best months to prepare your home for the sometimes-freezing South Texas winter. Wrap exposed pipes, insulate pipes that run along exterior walls, cover all outside spigots, and replace any damaged or missing weather strips. Other items to consider for your winter preparations include:

- ◆ Have your heating system inspected
- ◆ Install a carbon monoxide (CO) detector in your home
- ◆ Assure your smoke detectors are in good working order
- ◆ Clean out gutters and repair any roof leaks
- ◆ Have the chimney cleaned and inspected
- ◆ Have a safe alternative heating source at the ready



Leon Valley City Hall  
6400 El Verde Road  
Leon Valley, TX 78238

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### CITY COUNCIL

- Mayor** Chris Riley  
[mayorriley@leonvalleytexas.gov](mailto:mayorriley@leonvalleytexas.gov)
- Place 1** Benny Martinez  
[benny.martinez@leonvalleytexas.gov](mailto:benny.martinez@leonvalleytexas.gov)
- Place 2** Josh Stevens  
[josh.stevens@leonvalleytexas.gov](mailto:josh.stevens@leonvalleytexas.gov)
- Place 3** Jed Hefner  
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- Place 5** Will Bradshaw  
[will.bradshaw@leonvalleytexas.gov](mailto:will.bradshaw@leonvalleytexas.gov)

### LION'S ROAR

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**The Lion's Roar**  
City of Leon Valley - 6400 El Verde Road  
Leon Valley, Texas 78238  
(210) 684-1391, x. 228

### CITY STAFF

- City Manager**  
Crystal Caldera  
684-1391 x 219
- City Secretary**  
Saundra Passailaigue  
684-1391 x 216
- Finance Department**  
Kevin Rule, Director  
684-1391 x 223
- Planning & Zoning Department**  
Mindy Teague, Director  
684-1391 x 234
- LV Public Library**  
Regina Reed, Director  
684-0720, x. 240
- Fire Department**  
Michael Naughton, Fire Chief  
684-3219, x. 281
- Police Department**  
David Gonzalez, Police Chief  
684-3215, x. 255
- Public Works**  
Melinda Moritz, Director  
681-1232, x. 203
- HR Director**  
Lisa Hernandez  
681-1391, x. 212

### CITY MEETINGS

All meetings at City Hall unless otherwise specified. All meetings subject to change due to Covid-19

- City Council**  
1st & 3rd Tuesday - 6:00 p.m.
- Board Of Adjustment**  
Meets as required
- Citizens Police Advisory Committee**  
Quarterly, 3rd Wednesday - 6:00 p.m.
- Coffee with the Mayor**  
Quarterly, 4th Saturday - 9 -11 a.m.
- Earthwise Living Committee**  
2nd Wednesday -  
5:30 p.m. City Hall
- Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee**  
Meets as needed
- Library Board**  
2nd Tuesday - 5:30 p.m. - Library
- Park Commission**  
2nd Thursday - 6:00 p.m. -  
Conference Center
- Tree Advisory Board**  
2nd Monday - 6:00 p.m.  
Public Works
- Planning & Zoning Commission**  
4th Tuesday - 6:30 p.m.

### CITY NUMBERS

Keep these numbers handy

- Emergency Number for POLICE, FIRE and EMS** 911
- City Web Site Address**  
[www.leonvalleytexas.gov](http://www.leonvalleytexas.gov)
- City Hall** 684-1391
- Animal Control & Code Compliance** 210-684-6557
- Non-Emergency Fire** 684-8897
- Police** 684-3219
- CAT** 684-ONIT (6648)
- Human Resources** 684-1391
- Dead Animal Pickup** 210-684-6557
- Public Works** 681-1232
- Library** 684-0720
- Tiger Sanitation** (210) 333-4287
- Community Center Rental** 684-1391 ext. 228

City Hall, non-emergency Police and Fire operations may be contacted at the above numbers Monday - Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed weekends and holidays.  
Public Works Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

