



# Mayor's Monthly Message

Mayor Elsie Thurman – December 2023

As the year draws to a close, we take the opportunity to look back. Each year brings changes to our City, and 2023 is no exception.

- The pace of building custom and spec homes has slowed from record levels in 2022.
- The interest rate increase impacted the real estate market and now “days on the market” are returning to more predictable time frames.
- The trend to escape urban living continues, and Horseshoe Bay has welcomed new “work from home” neighbors.
- Thanks to the availability of grant funds shared with our City by Llano County, three internet towers were constructed, and private providers are signing up new customers who can now enjoy much faster internet speeds.
- A comprehensive Impact Fee Study was conducted, resulting in a 35% increase in fees paid by future developers.
- The City has a very strong financial position and was able to lower the local property tax rate by a small percentage – from 27 cents to 26.73 cents per \$100 of valuation.
- Thanks to the statewide passage of H.B. 2127, most residents saw a significant decrease in their property tax bill due to the increase in the Homestead Exemption.
- Last but not least – Horseshoe Bay was recognized as The Most Scenic City in Texas for 2023!

There are changes ahead – some we know of and some we will address as they surface.

- There will be a Total Solar Eclipse on April 8, 2024, and our City expects a large influx of visitors to enjoy the spectacle. Our Emergency Preparedness Team has plans to lessen the impact on residents while remaining vigilant that any emergencies will be efficiently addressed.
- Construction of the new City Center will begin in January 2024, with completion expected by Spring 2025.
- Expansion of the West Fire Station will begin in early 2024. This upgrade will provide secure, enclosed storage for all emergency vehicles and much-needed housing improvements for the staff assigned to that facility.
- Upgrades to the water delivery system will be made in 2024, and engineering studies will be initiated to expand the West Water Plant.
- A Comprehensive Plan will be developed to address the developments proposed in the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction, primarily along Hwy. 71, to ensure proactive planning for the types of developments that fit the unique qualities of our community.
- The Transportation Committee will present their recommendations for improved traffic solutions within the City.



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- Horseshoe Bay leaders will continue conversing with other communities, TxDOT and county officials to ensure that, when the road over Wirtz Dam is built, it will provide connectivity to Hwy. 281 or Hwy. 71 and not stop at FM 2147

I am just settling into this job. There are many people with whom I will be consulting in the coming months to develop plans with actionable goals. But I already know my first priority for 2024. My goal is to lead in maintaining the quality of life that we experience in this exceptional community. Friends support each other, new neighbors are welcomed, daily activities are enjoyed, and a safe, healthy, and harmonious atmosphere prevails. We have been entrusted with a fantastic community, and our citizens are unique in many ways.

As we move into the Christmas season, join me in celebrating what we all treasure. Enjoy your friends and family, and remember that some in our community do not have as much to anticipate and celebrate as others. Bringing happiness to someone else is one of the most gratifying gifts you can give yourself. I wish you a very Merry Christmas!

*Elsie Thurman*, Mayor

City Website - [www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov](http://www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov)