



City Administrator's Report

February 26, 2026

Strategic Planning Process

The FY2026 Budget includes funds for an update of the Strategic Visioning and Planning document completed in 2019. Five firms submitted proposals in response to an RFQ for this process. Earlier this month, a review committee comprised of Mayor Boley, Alderman Dana, Alderman Atkins, Cynthia Wagner, Gina Pate and Sergeant Phoenix Burns reviewed the submissions and interviewed three firms. A preferred firm has been identified and we are currently in discussions with that firm for scope and cost of work. Approval of a contract for this work had been anticipated for Tuesday's meeting, however, will not be ready until the March 24 Board meeting.

In order to proceed with the project in a timely manner upon contract approval, there are some things we can start working on to prepare for the strategic planning process. The process will include several stakeholder/focus group opportunities. Staff is requesting that each governing body member identify five to 10 (more if you wish!) residents to invite to participate in the stakeholder process. There will be other methods to identify and invite participants, but we want to ensure that a good cross section of the community receives specific invitations to participate. Gina will be reaching out to each of you to obtain names and contact information for your recommended participants.

Smith's Fork Park – Owner's Representative Process

Staff is proceeding with the selection of an Owner's Representative (OR) to assist the City with the Smith's Fork Park Project, based, in part, on the direction provided by the Board of Aldermen following the presentation regarding alternative delivery methods from staff on January 20, 2026. The OR will serve as the City's advocate and technical resource throughout project planning and construction, providing independent expertise related to project development, cost estimating, scheduling, constructability, risk management, contractor selection, alternative delivery methods, and RFQ processes, while ensuring fiscal accountability and protecting the City's interests.

Staff will be inviting five to six qualified firms to participate in interviews. The firms were prequalified by similarly situated governmental entities and identified by the staff through cooperative purchasing agreements and platforms previously used by the City.

It is anticipated that interviews will be conducted by a selection committee consisting of Cynthia Wagner, Matt Denton, one Parks and Recreation Committee member, and one Board of Aldermen member.

Following interviews, staff plans to negotiate a contract through the same purchasing cooperative agreement that prequalified the firm. Use of the purchasing cooperative agreement will further reduce the project timeline and ensure that the OR is held to the standard terms in agreements for similar project deliveries.

Development Update – Project Submission Anticipated

Jack Hendrix recently held a pre-development conference with the owner of the land north of downtown between the strip malls and Bridge Street/Patterson House Museum.

The applicant provided a rough layout of their intended applications for developing the vacant land in the area. Specifically, they are looking at building two 75-unit apartment buildings similar in appearance to the Main & Mill project buildings. They anticipate approximately 65 one-bedroom units, 75 two-bedroom units, and 10 three-bedroom units, subject to final design. The property is currently split between R-3 zoning on the eastern two-thirds section, and B-3 on the western third of the area. This split does not include the two strip malls on 169, which are contained within a separate parcel. Staff and the development team discussed the need to down-zone the B-3 area of the vacant property to R-3, with cross-access easements through the existing strip malls that front on 169. (They are currently finalizing updated facades on the larger strip mall that backs up to the river).

In addition to this down-zoning, they intend to submit a Conceptual Plan overlay district over the entire vacant property's project area that includes the current B-3 area with the existing R-3 area. In this overlay, they will incorporate the elements of the site plan review process (building features, landscaping, lighting, parking, etc.)

The proposed timeline for submission is by March 13, and would set the first public hearing at the May Planning and Zoning Commission meeting.

Missouri Municipal League Legislative Conference

Last week, Mayor Boley, Alderman Hartman, Alderman Kobylski and Cynthia Wagner attended the annual MML Legislative Conference. MML staff provided an overview of legislative issues of importance to cities. Lieutenant Governor David Wasinger, Attorney General Catherine Hannaway and State Auditor Scott Fitzpatrick also addressed the conference attendees. The Smithville delegation had the opportunity to meet with Representative Hurlbert and Senators Gregory and Nurrenbern regarding legislative issues of importance to Smithville.

Police Department Annual Report

The Police Department 2025 Annual Report has been completed and is available for review on the city's website:

https://smithvillemo.org/departments/police/about/annual_report.php

Smithville Parks and Recreation Featured in MML Publication

Emerald Ridge Park is featured in the January/February 2026 issue of MML's member magazine, *The Review*. The article is attached.

Pursuing MARC Grant Funding

At the January 20 work session, staff presented to the Board a list of potential projects for submission to the upcoming MARC Call for Projects grant application. Following discussion, the Board directed staff to move forward with applications for Streetscape Phase IV and the Eagle Parkway Trail.

The Streetscape Phase IV project would continue the established downtown streetscape aesthetic by implementing a simplified version of the current design—focused on upgraded sidewalks and pedestrian-scale lighting, without the use of brick pavers. Streetscape Phase IV is planned for Commercial Avenue, extending from E. Meadows to Church Street.

Phase I of the Eagle Parkway Trail will construct the first one-mile segment of a new multi-use trail in Smithville's Eagle Parkway area. This phase will extend from 180th Street to 188th Street, forming the initial portion of what will eventually be a 2-mile trail network. The project includes building a 10-foot-wide concrete path designed for both pedestrians and cyclists, improving safety and accessibility. Phase II will continue this route north from 188th Street to Little Platte North Park.

MARC's Call for Projects opens on February 28, 2026, and applications are due March 24, 2026. Due to timing of Board meetings in March, staff will prepare and submit applications for these two projects and will bring an action acknowledging that application to the Board at the March 24 meeting.

The City has created a dedicated page on our website where residents can review the proposed submissions and provide feedback. Staff will continue developing the applications over the next few weeks and will update the website with additional information as materials are completed. The public can visit the City's website for project details and to submit comments: [Project Feedback](#)

State Petition Audit

Staff from the State Auditor's Office were on site on Monday and Tuesday of this week continuing their fieldwork related to the petition audit. Staff continues to provide information as requested. As was outlined at the last meeting, it is anticipated that work on the audit will continue throughout the fiscal year.

Personnel Updates

Britain Burnette started on Monday, February 23 as the city's new Finance Analyst. We are excited to welcome him to the team, as he brings experience in budgeting, municipal finance, and municipal operations, having previously worked for the Cities of Grandview and Kansas City, Missouri.

A conditional offer for the Parks and Facilities Manager position has been extended. This is a new position included in the FY26 Budget. This position will oversee Parks Maintenance staff and manage citywide building contracts, general city facility maintenance, park facilities, and overall park maintenance.

The following positions are in recruitment:

- Streets Maintenance (1) - Crew Leader posted internally
- Police Officer (4)
- Wastewater Plant Operator (1)

Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Mayor Boley and I will be attending the National League of Cities Congress of Cities Conference in March, creating a conflict for the March 17 meeting. He has recommended moving that meeting to the following week, Tuesday March 24.

The September 15, 2026 meeting falls during the MML annual conference and has also been cancelled by the Mayor. This meeting will likely be rescheduled later in the month pending receipt of property tax assessed valuation information from Clay and Platte Counties in order to set the tax rate for the coming year.

Finally, the November 3, 2026 meeting has been cancelled as it falls on Election Day.



SWINGING FORWARD: *Emerald Ridge Park And The Future Of Play*



Emerald Ridge Park in Smithville, Missouri.

In 2021, the city of Smithville approved a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, funded through the parks and stormwater sales tax, establishing a long-term vision for reinvesting in the community's park system. The plan's first few years focused on renovating and enhancing neighborhood parks to quickly demonstrate the positive impact of the sales tax fund to community members.

Emerald Ridge Park, located on the south end of Smithville, was identified for improvement in year three of the Master Plan. Prior to renovation, the park consisted of a single playground installed around 2003. The space lacked ADA access, sidewalks to the play area, and inclusive play opportunities. The space no longer met the needs of nearby residents or the standards of today's parks and playgrounds.

In August 2023, the Smithville Parks and Recreation Committee began the redesign process with an overall budget of \$450,000. Over the next eight months, the committee met regularly to evaluate park layouts, accessibility options and amenities. Conversations included input from community members, site evaluations and collaboration with vendors to determine what would best serve the neighborhood both now and in the future.

A key focus during the planning process was to ensure meaningful inclusion. Rather than focusing solely on minimum ADA requirements, the committee challenged itself to think beyond compliance and consider how the park could create shared play experiences for children and families of all abilities that were not already in the area. This

information guided decisions regarding the layout, equipment selection and amenities.

In April 2024, the Parks and Recreation Committee recommended to the Board of Aldermen to proceed with ATHCO and Landscape Structures through a purchasing cooperative agreement with Greenbush.

That vision came to life in March 2025, when Emerald Ridge Park reopened as a vibrant, inclusive neighborhood destination. One of the most notable features of the renovation is the Volo Smart Play system, designed for children ages 5–12. The Volo is a modern, interactive structure offering 20 connected activities, layered play routes, and opportunities for creativity, movement and social interaction. Emerald Ridge is home to one of only two Volo structures in Missouri and the first of its kind in the Kansas City area, making it a unique asset within the region.

It was equally important to ensure that younger children had a space designed specifically for their developmental needs. A separate play structure serves children ages 2.5–5, providing safe, age-appropriate play opportunities that allow families with multiple children to enjoy the park together.

As mentioned, accessibility was a central focus of the project. The renovated park now includes full ADA access, sidewalks leading to the playground, and a walking path that loops around the play area, encouraging both



MML
WEBINARS

Missouri Municipal League

Quality Training Without Leaving Your Home or Office!



LEARN MORE AT:
www.mocities.com

**SAFE DIGGING STARTS WITH YOU.
EVERY DIG.
EVERY TIME.**

**Join us in our
commitment to
keeping Missouri's
underground
infrastructure safe.**



MISSOURI 811 **MISSOURI-811.ORG**



recreation and connection. A key feature desired by the Parks and Recreation Committee was the installation of the We-Go-Swing, a wheelchair-accessible swing that enables children of all abilities to enjoy swinging with family or friends. The We-Go-Swing has quickly become a focal point of the playground and a visible symbol of the park's commitment to inclusion.

Additional amenities were included to support a wide range of users and activities. These include a half-court basketball court, a shelter, multiple swing options, and open green space for unstructured play. Together, these features have transformed Emerald Ridge Park into a welcoming and functional community hub.

The project's success was driven by strong teamwork among city staff, the Smithville Parks and Recreation Committee, active residents, and trusted partners like ATHCO and Landscape Structures. Open communication, shared objectives and careful evaluation of options helped create a final design that balanced professional standards with community needs.

Since Emerald Ridge Park opened, it has experienced a large increase in visitors compared to 2024. "We're thankful to everyone who contributed, from our community partners to our dedicated team, who went the extra mile even after the opening to ensure everything was perfect for the ribbon-cutting," said Matt Denton, parks and recreation director.

Matt Denton is the Parks & Recreation Director for the city of Smithville, he can be reached via email at mdenton@smithvillemo.org.



ATHCO

Your Premier Athletic & Recreation Source

ATHCO has helped customers with stock and custom gym equipment, LED scoreboards and displays, commercial playground equipment, playground safety surface, splash pads, shade, prefab picnic shelters, site furnishings, classroom desks & furniture, casework, tree grates & bollards, playground inspections, turnkey installation, and gym inspections!



Contact us

canderson@athcollc.com
913-469-5600