

**FEBRUARY 2024  
NEWSLETTER**



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# Jennifer Milele

## Mt. Juliet City Commissioner, District 4

Spring is around the corner so watch out for those March winds. Daylight Savings Time is Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup> when you set your clocks ahead one hour. Happy March birthday to my awesome husband, Pete. You are the best! Dates in March are; National Anthem Day is March 3<sup>rd</sup>, National K9 Veterans Day is March 13<sup>th</sup>, March 16<sup>th</sup> is National Freedom of Information Day, the first day of Spring is March 19<sup>th</sup>; March 29<sup>th</sup> is Good Friday and National Vietnam War Veterans Day followed by Easter on March 31<sup>st</sup>. March is also National Women's History Month and Red Cross Month.

### **NEW BUSINESSES:**

**TJ's Pizza & Wine** is now open at their new location at 1722 NMJRD.

**Leon's Famous Deli**, has a targeted opening of mid to late March. They are located at 2240 NMJRD.

**Wilsons Outdoor Center**, is having their Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting on Thursday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm. They are located at the old Minchey's property located at 10425 Lebanon Road.

**Glow Wilco**, is now open at 216 W. Division Street. They do concierge beauty, aesthetics & wellness.

### **UPCOMING**

**1) Tornado Remembrance Ceremony:** On Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, we will be laying a wreath to reflect on the tragic event that occurred four years ago when a devastating tornado went through our city resulting in widespread devastation and loss of life. The start time is 1 pm at the welcome station next to the entrance to Stoner Creek Elementary, beside West Wilson Middle School on NMJRD. All are welcome to attend.

**2) Wilson County Election Calendar (repeat/update):** The first election for 2024 is March 5<sup>th</sup>. [Registered voters can vote at any polling place within Wilson County. For a sample ballot you can click here.](#)

- **Primary Election March 5<sup>th</sup>** (*Presidential Preference Primary / County Primary Election*)
  - WC School Board Zones 1, 3, 5, and 7
  - Assessor of Property
  - [Presidential Delegates](#)

**3) MJ Senior Center (repeat/update):** On Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, the MJ Senior Center will hold their Annual Reverse Raffle, hosted by Exchange Club of West Wilson County. The Grand Prize is \$5,000 with other door prizes. Tickets are \$50 that includes a meal (must RSVP). Meals are served between 4-5 pm by Bar-B-Cutie Smokehouse, and the raffle will begin at 5:30 pm. Deadline to reserve meals is March 1<sup>st</sup>. If you have purchased a

ticket for the raffle, but have not ordered your meal, please call 615-758-9114,

**4) Wilson Rides:** If you would like to be a volunteer driver for Wilson Rides, they have orientation and training classes coming up beginning Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. You can see the class and location options by [clicking here](#). Wilson Rides Inc. is a 501c3 non-profit that provides transportation to seniors (55+) who live in Wilson County to local destinations within Wilson County.

**5) Hamilton-Denson Park Ribbon Cutting:** Sometime in mid-March, MJ Parks will hold a Ribbon Cutting for Hamilton-Denson Park. There is a playground, restrooms and eight practice sports fields. Watch for the date. Hamilton-Denson Park is located on Tate Lane off W. Division Street.

**6) Egg Stra Special Egg Hunt:** Volunteer State Bank will sponsor Egg Stra Special Egg Hunt in the MJ Community Center on Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> from 6-7 pm. This event is for Wilson County special needs only. It is a free event, but because of limited space, registration is required by March 15<sup>th</sup> at noon. To register, you can [click here](#). The MJCC is located in Charlie Daniels Park.

**7) March 21st Planning Commission, 6:30 pm:**

- **Andy's Frozen Custard:** A final Plat has been submitted to be located at 4024 NMJRD.
- **Primrose School of MJ:** A Site Plan modification has been submitted for a classroom wing addition.

**8) Easter in the Park:** Kiwanis Club of MJ presents Easter in the Park on Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> from 11 am - 2 pm in Charlie Daniels Park. Sponsors are still needed. To see sponsorship opportunities you can [click here](#).

**9) Public Work Session (Ethics Code):** The BOC will hold a second public Work Session to discuss updating the City's Ethics Code on Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm at MJ City Hall.

**10) Mt. Juliet Help Center:** The energy bills from January's cold snap, along with reduced donations in February, leaves Mt. Juliet Help Center in need of financial help. If you would like to offer financial assistance for the non-profit help center, you can [click here](#) for their website. They are located at 3425B NMJRD.

## UPDATES

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**1) Ethics complaints (repeat/update):** All ethic complaints were either dismissed or pulled from the agenda during the MJ Ethics public meeting on February 21<sup>st</sup>. If you would like to watch the meeting you can [click here](#). The BOC is in the process of updating the City's Ethics Code to close up any loopholes and confusion. The BOC held a public work session with the MJ Ethics Commission on February 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss the updating process of the MJ Ethics Code. If you would like to watch the work session you can [click here](#). See above for a second public work session.

**2) Three-way intersection (repeat/update):** The utility (gas) construction has been completed. The remaining construction

to complete the three-way, is left to the contractor of the Waterford Park development. I know this intersection at S. Rutland Road/Providence Trail has been very frustrating for everyone and your continued patience is appreciated. The City has no recourse until the developer reaches the 100<sup>th</sup> Certificate of Occupancy (CO) in Waterford Park. That's not to say it won't be completed prior to. The current count on COs applied for is 68 (84 permits issued, 68 have been given Cos, 16 currently under construction).

**3) State of the City Address:** On February 21<sup>st</sup>, Mayor Maness gave his annual State of the City Address during the MJ Chamber Luncheon. If you would like to watch the Mayor's Address, you can [click here](#). Some of the information presented...

- The City of MJ received an unqualified opinion on its fiscal year '22/'23 audit showing no findings and receiving the highest opinion the City can receive.
- January 2024 was a record-breaking month for sales tax revenue (\$2.3M) which was a 13.6% increase over the previous January.

**4) TDOT meeting on Central Pike interchange:** TDOT held a meeting with the public on February 29<sup>th</sup> to discuss their plan for the I-40 Central Pike interchange and get public input. Several TDOT reps were present to answer questions about the Diverging Diamond Interchange. The City is committed to keep moving forward with its responsibility in an attempt to get the project shovel-ready in hopes that construction funding will be allocated sooner than the timeline. In addition, the City will pursue federal grants which would reduce the State's investment which could advance the timeline. If you would like to see a quick simulation (.mov) you can [click here](#).

- The project is committed in their 10-year plan and funded as a Statewide Partnership Program (SPP).
- The state and federal dollar budget is up to \$45.2M.
- The City of MJ has committed to contributing additional funds of \$25M.
- The project is in preconstruction activity in the design phase.
- Right-of-Way (ROW) acquisitions are scheduled for 2027, followed by construction in 2030 at this point.
- The City of MJ, Wilson County, and Nashville area MPO initiated the request in 2017, and TDOT developed a Technical Planning Report in 2022.

**5) Veterans Memorial Wall:** Initially, this non-profit fundraiser was to be built in Robinson Park (behind Dairy Queen), but MJ Parks is now leading the project and it will be built near the Town Center Clock Tower at the train station. After a contractor is selected, construction will follow soon after that.

**6) City public restrooms:** All outdoor public restrooms that were closed for the winter will reopen on Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>.

**7) Mt. Juliet Fire Stations:** Station #1 on Belinda Pkwy. will be getting upgrades and the new Station #3, to be located on Old Lebanon Road, was approved to begin design. This will be the

new location of Station #3, that is currently located on E. Hill Street behind City Hall.

**8) Lawsuit settlement:** Last year when the BOC passed the (trial period) food truck ordinance to allow mobile food vendors in residential and industrial zoning, we established higher fees for out-of-city vendors. There were a few vendors that filed a lawsuit. Even though the City had authority to establish its own fee structure and a defensible case, the City attorney suggested we settle instead of going to court, which would have cost taxpayers additional funds. We approved charging the same fees for in-city and out-of-city vendors and paying The Beacon Center \$5,000.

#### **STATUS REPORT: PROJECTS/CONSTRUCTION/DEVELOPMENTS**

*(Note: updated information since last month is in color.)*

**Three-way stop at Providence Trail/S. Rutland Road:** Please see note above under Updates #2. Please use caution around the sidewalks. If you would like to see a rendering with added turn lanes, you can [click here](#).

**Providence Pkwy.:** The portion of Providence Pkwy., west of Creekside Apartments, resumed construction to five lanes this past Monday. There are two developers responsible for the widening of Providence Pkwy. to Central Pike.

**Beckwith Road:** The consultant is currently working on preliminary design. In addition, they are also evaluating and designing for a quick start project at the four-way intersection to make temporary turn lane improvements. The City has begun ROW acquisition on the quick-start improvements. This area of Beckwith Road is between I-40 and south to the four-way intersection at S. Rutland Road/Posey Hill Drive. Currently, all pre-construction phases are being funded by the city and are 10% complete. The City plans to apply for grant funding to cover 80% of the construction costs, when they become available. Construction for the quick-start improvements is targeted for 2025.

**Beckwith Point:** The Beckwith Point project on 75 acres between Belinda Pkwy. and I-40, is expected to break ground in March/April. This project closed on the contracted property on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. It will consist of three distribution warehouses with a road connecting from Beckwith Rd. to Belinda Pkwy., across from Meadowview Drive. To review the plan, you can [click here](#).

**SMJRD widening:** The MJ BOC approved the consultant contract to start the design process. TDOT ROW is in the early stage of acquisition, and utility relocation coordination. Field work has begun for survey, with ongoing environmental phase, final design, and engineering. This TDOT project is 80% complete with preconstruction activity. The TDOT ROW acquisition and utility relocation phases will take around three years to complete. TDOT announced in December, this project is 100% funded over their 10-year plan. TDOT construction is estimated to align with the interchange project.

**I-40/Central Pike Interchange:** TDOT phase is in surveying, environmental, preliminary design and engineering. Project is 50% complete with preconstruction activity. TDOT announced in December, this project is 100% funded over their 10-year plan. [See #4 under Updates above for additional information.](#)

**Central Pike widening:** This TDOT widening project to 5 lanes extends from SMJRD to Old Hickory Blvd., and currently TDOT has finalized and approved the transportation report. Waiting for TDOT to fund the next phase. Project is 10% complete with preconstruction activity. TDOT has budgeted to begin NEPA and preliminary engineering phases. Phase 1 is between I-40 and SMJRD. A consultant firm was approved by the MJ BOC to begin design for Phase 1. The City funding the engineering/ROW acquisition will likely save many years on the ultimate completion of Phase 1. The Phase 2 TDOT project will be from I-40 to OHB. TDOT announced in December, construction will be 100% funded in their 10-year plan, and they will manage the ROW acquisition. [TDOT construction is estimated to align with the interchange project.](#)

**Mundy Park:** [Installation of the new playground expansion is ready for construction. I do not have a timeline.](#)

**Wingwall repairs in Belinda City:** [TDOT has determined that two wingwalls need repairing within Belinda City. You should see construction begin soon. One is located on Belinda Pkwy. at the bridge over Stoner Creek between Stoner Creek Apartments and Grace Baptist Church. The second one is on Creekview Drive.](#)

**Cedar Creek Greenway Phase 2:** Phase 2 will connect Charlie Daniels Park to Lebanon Road, and the grant was approved. Currently, a consultant has been chosen and approved, and is in design. If you would like to see a map, including the Phase 1 connection to Golden Bear Gateway (GBG), you can [click here](#).

**Town Center Trail Connector:** This greenway extension will run along S. Greenhill Road from W. Wilson Blvd. to Town Center Trail on W. Division. Project is 75% complete with construction activity. This project will be constructed along with the S. Greenhill Road roundabout.

**Town Center Trail Phase 3:** Design for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Phase of the TCT has begun that will extend from S. Greenhill Road to Mt. Juliet Elementary School. Currently in preliminary design, and NEPA studies under TDOT review. Project is 20% complete with preconstruction activity.

**Town Center Trail Phase 4:** The City received approval from the Nashville and Eastern Railroad Authority (NERA) and RJ Corman for an easement to install a greenway trail in the railroad ROW. This trail will be installed by the Lynwood Station developer from the Train Station east to Clemmons Road. Then, the trail will follow alongside Clemmons Road to the Lynwood Station site. To see a map, you can [click here](#).

**Hamilton-Denson Park:** Located on the south end of Tate Lane (off W. Division), the project is **nearly complete**. A **Ribbon Cutting for the park will announced in mid-March**.

**Lebanon Road sidewalks Phases 2 & 3:**

- Construction has begun and is 30% complete. This includes both sides of Lebanon Road from NMJRD to Park Glen, including a portion of Park Glen. Completion is expected around June '24.
- Phase 3 will be between Nonaville Road and Green Hill High School and is 95% complete with preconstruction activity, and is currently in ROW acquisition phase. NEPA and final design are complete. Construction is expected to start in 2024.

**MJRD Phase 2 ADA upgrades:** This project will be upgrading ADA requirements on MJRD sidewalks between Weston Drive and OLDRD. It is currently 20% complete with preconstruction activity. NEPA has been approved by TDOT, and waiting for them to obligate funds for final design.

**Signal improvements Phases 2 & 3:**

- Traffic signals along MJRD between Central Pike and Division will be undergoing improvements in Phase 2. Waiting for RJ Corman to approve agreement to cross the railroad, and for construction fund obligation from TDOT/FHWA. Phase 2 is estimated to begin construction this spring with a fall 2025 completion. Project includes installing fiber optic communication between each of the 13 signals (Central Pike to Division) that will connect to City Hall. The project is 100% complete with preconstruction activity, and will take about 18 months to complete.
- Phase 3 is in final design, which will extend from Curd Road to Lebanon Road, covering six signals. This project is 30% complete with preconstruction activity, and in final design. NEPA was approved. Phase 3 is estimated to begin construction in fall 2025.

**Traffic signal on GBG and Volunteer Blvd.:** This grant-funded project was approved by TDOT. Bid has been accepted and approved, with construction to follow in a few months, due to long lead times on signal components.

**Traffic signal at E. Division/GBG:** Installation for this (Amazon contribution) signal is currently in the construction phase. The contractor is waiting on signal equipment.

**GBG/Beckwith Road Interchange Lighting:** Contract between MJ City/TDOT to improve lighting at the interchange was finalized and TDOT has begun design. Project is 5% complete with preconstruction activity.

**Traffic signal at W. Division/S. Greenhill Road:** Signal is being upgraded to steel poles and mast arms with signal equipment and railroad safety components. Bids recently opened. Estimated completion is Spring 2025.



**S. Greenhill Road roundabout:** The project just entered Phase 4 traffic control plan, which is the last one. The intersection is now operating as a true roundabout. Construction is underway and 85% complete. Completion is expected the end of April '24. The signal at S. Greenhill/W. Division are undergoing improvements as well. It will include steel poles, mast arms, and upgrading the signal equipment, along with railroad safety components. If you would like to see a map of the final layout, you can [click here](#).

**Old Lebanon Dirt Road widening:** Currently in process of appraisals for ROW acquisition and utility coordination. The City's sewer consultant is currently preparing design and drainage plans. Project is 90% complete with preconstruction activity. The City has closed on 75% of the tracts. Estimated construction is early 2025, depending on utility relocation.

**Lebanon Road widening (Park Glen to GBG):** Project is 50% complete with preconstruction activity, waiting for TDOT to fund the ROW phase. The City has applied for the Statewide Partnership Program and allocated \$3 million toward the ROW Phase to get TDOT to fund the remaining cost for ROW. Total cost for ROW is estimated around \$15 million. In the TDOT announcement in December, this project was not included in their funding plan. We do not know, or understand the reasons.

**Pleasant Grove Road widening and realignment:** The widening will be a 4-lane median divided roadway from Old Pleasant Grove Road to Central Pike with multi-use paths on each side. Project is 10% complete with preconstruction activity, and performing preliminary design and NEPA phases. A new consultant has been approved and hired. The ROW design is estimated to be complete by July 2025. To see a map, you can [find it here](#).

**Golden Bear Gateway widening (Eastern Connector Phase 2):** The widening on GBG between the Cedar Creek bridge and Palermo/Curd Road is 80% complete with preconstruction activity. Utility relocation and ROW acquisition have begun. Construction is estimated to begin during 2026.

**E. Division Street widening:** The consultant, along with performing environmental technical studies, has collected the survey data and traffic data, and is currently developing the planning report for the whole corridor, which determines what the roadway typical section needs to be based on future traffic projections. In addition, they are currently designing a quick start project at the intersection of NMJRD and E. Division Street, which includes turn lane improvements. The project is 10% complete with preconstruction activity, and will include a 4-lane median divided roadway with multi-use paths on each side, from NMJRD to just east of GBG.

**Western Connector:** The BOC Resolution deciding where the connection will begin and end has been deferred indefinitely. Project is 10% complete with preconstruction activity.

**Sunset Drive widening:** This project is 75% with preconstruction activity, and working with utilities on relocation. Design is complete.

**Sewer upgrade projects:** There are/will be maintenance and upgrade projects being performed on sewer lines around the city.

- Belinda City lateral lining project. They are working in different areas off of Belinda Pkwy. and project is 75% complete with construction.
- Stoner Creek Interceptor Upsizing project has begun construction and is halfway completed. It is preparing to cross Old Lebanon Dirt Road (OLDRD).
- Timber Trail Pump Station Rehab project is 10% complete with construction. Once contractor receives materials, construction will begin.
- Old Lebanon Dirt Road (OLDRD) West Pocket Plan project is 100% complete with preconstruction activity, which will install sewer along OLDRD and Page Drive. Design phase is complete and ROW acquisition is being finalized. Construction will coincide with the widening project.
- John Wright Pocket Plan project is under construction.
- EQ Basin on OLDRD will be the biggest sewer project the city has seen since the late 70s/early 80s. Currently, this project is in the design phase which should wrap up sometime during 2024, followed by construction bidding the end of 24/25 fiscal year.

**Project note:** To save you the time and effort, I provide a list of various updates for your convenience. The information listed is reflected on the city website and is updated each month, as referenced here [Capital Projects Selector](#) and [Development Tracker](#).

## **MJ BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETINGS**

**The BOC meetings in March will be Monday the 11<sup>th</sup> and Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm at City Hall.**

**NOTE:** The public is welcome to come and speak and/or submit comments/questions to Sheila Luckett until 4 pm prior to the meeting at [sluckett@mtjuliet-tn.gov](mailto:sluckett@mtjuliet-tn.gov). The meeting is also aired live on MJTV (Comcast channel 3 or TDS channel 6) and on the City's website, as well as YouTube. It is too early for the agenda, therefore look for notices prior to each BOC meeting.

If you have any questions, suggestions, ideas, comments, complaints, or just something to share, please let me know. If you would like to sign up for my monthly email newsletters, you will find the option to do so on my website. It is an honor serving you and being your citizen advocate.

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