

THE RIO REVIEW

VOLUME FOUR • EDITION ONE • JANUARY 2024



YEAR END REVIEW

**A LOOK BACK
AT THE BIGGEST
STORIES OF 2023**



EXPLORE OUR BEAUTIFUL CITY

The mission of the City of Rio Grande City is to provide quality municipal services in partnership with our citizens to build a progressive city and to provide a better quality of life for all our residents. Rio Grande City is rich in history and honors traditions. Come and explore a multitude of historical sites, take a walk run or bike ride through our Fordyce Trails, and enjoy our many festivals.

www.cityofrgc.com

THE RIO REVIEW

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2023 WAS THE YEAR the City of Rio Grande City sponsored the new RGC Roadrunner Semi-Pro Adult Soccer League. On behalf of the City of RGC and our City Commission we would like to congratulate Coach Zamora and the future RGC Roadrunner family! Go Roadrunners!



"2023 WAS ONE OF THE BEST YEARS IN THE HISTORY OF OUR GREAT CITY, AND WE OWE IT ALL THE HARD WORK AND DEDICATION OF OUR CITY STAFF. THANK YOU FOR MAKING RIO GRANDE CITY A WONDERFUL PLACE TO CALL HOME."

RGC MAYOR JOEL VILLARREAL

RIO GRANDE CITY HALL
5332 E. Highway 83, Rio Grande City, TX 78582
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Hours of Operation: Mon-Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Closed: Saturday - Sunday

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NEW WAVE



"Thank you for the opportunity to serve our great City!"

- Eric Flores
RGC Public Utilities Dir.



"We accomplished a lot of our goals for 2023, thanks to the efforts of our hard working staff"

- Elisa Beas
RGC Public Utilities

"Some of our more outstanding projects completed in 2023 were..."

- We completed trenching and water connections at Reyna St.
- Finished Rattler Logo Mural
- Completed Fleet (12 vehicles)
- Installed 12-inch Gate valve in Garcia Water Tower
- Sanitize and washed Garcia Tank
- Installed 6-inch water line at Church Lane
- Installed water line at Las Brisas
- Replaced five fire hydrants
- TCEQ Permits renewed and updated

PUD Administration:

- TCEQ Permits renewed and updated
- New Operators will acquire TCEQ license within a year
- Chief Operators have a TCEQ B license
- New Rate Study

PUD Billing & Collection

- Delinquent Account due to COVID reduced
- Participated with South Texas Development Council to assist customers with high bills
- Collection percentage increased
- Policy on adjustments for leaks
- Review of Inactive Accounts that lead to collection of unbilled water use

PUD Water Treatment Plant #1

- Clean-up and Identify which motors work
- PUD Water Treatment Plant #2
- Continue with repairing the flow meters.
- Established the Nitrification Sample Plan
- New Tank for the Chlorine
- New Pumps for the Back Wash
- Cleaned the Sludge Ponds
- Upgraded the SCADA

PUD Sewer Plant

- Developed process to clean the drying beds in less time
- Cleaned west clarifier.
- Installed Valve at Main Lift Station

PUD Sewer Collection

- Located the manholes that were "lost" in the brush
- Installed working alarms in 9 lift stations

PUD Distribution

- Replaced five fire hydrants
- Installed shut off valves to isolate leaks
- Automated two water tanks to operate from the WTP.



OPEN FOR BUSINESS



"2023 was an exciting year for the Rio Grande City EDC. Here's a look back at some of our proudest achievements..."

*- Dalinda Guillen
RGCEDC Executive Dir.*

- Coordinated and participated in 22 business Ribbon Cuttings and 2 groundbreaking ceremonies
- Negotiated utility relocation project to enhance curb appeal and support the City's beautification efforts on US Highway 83
- Secured RGVMPPO Approval and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Functional Classification for International Drive
- Completed Bore Project on South FM 755 to provide AEP service to Tractor Supply, negotiated a paving improvement project in exchange for the construction of Los Pinos Hardware, and completed a land clearing project at Ringgold Park for future park construction as well as a new automated gate and illuminated sign at Basilio Villarreal Municipal Park.
- Hosted annual RGC Employer Expo in collaboration with RGC Public Library, and entered into a partnership with RGV Partnership for One Region, One Voice
- Hired a new Main Street Coordinator, Yandery de la Cruz, and earned 7th consecutive Main Street National Accreditation by National Main Street America
- Hosted 2nd Annual Historic Preservation Month Dinner, Memorial Day Observance Event, Main Street Mixers, Main Street Facade Grant Workshops, and Commercial Investment Tour in collaboration with RGV Partnership
- Relocated Market Days to Britton Avenue and expanded vendor and guest participation and made them monthly



We Are THE CHAMPIONS



"In 2023 the Parks and Rec Department teamed up with the RGC Public Library to complete the StoryWalk at Basilio Villarreal Park and Miriam Vale Park. The Parks Department also facilitated the Connectivity Project at Veterans Middle School. We are also happy to support the Rio Grande City Roadrunner Soccer Team as they are undefeated!"

- Frank Eguia
RGC Parks & Rec. Dir.



Track & Field 2023 Accomplishments:

- Joe Mijares got 1st place in the long jump in all summer track meets.
- Joe Mijares got 1st place in the 200-meter run in all summer track meets.
- Joe Mijares got 1st place in the 400-meter run in all summer track meets.
- Joe Mijares won champion in long jump and 200 meter run in region 2 track meets.
- At the Texas State Games in Brownsville, Joe Mijares got 6th place in 400 meter run and got 1st place in Long Jump.
- Gerardo Tervino got 1st place in the shot put in the Texas State Game in Brownsville.



UNDEFEATED CHAMPS!



FIRE POWER



"In 2023 the RGC Fire Department implemented a new Cadet Training Program which allowed us to hire a new Firefighter. Amongst our many accomplishments, we were thrilled to acquire an army truck through a TFP Grant, and add a Captain position to our personnel."

***- Manuel Muniz
RGC Fire Chief***

NEW COPS ON THE BLOCK



2023 DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

The Rio Grande City Police Dept. was awarded the following grants:

- Operation Stone Garden
- Local Border Security Grant
- Violence Against Women Act Grant
- Crimes Victims Grant
- Rifle Shield Grant
- JAG Grant
- Department did a rabies clinic with Dr. Margo's Office where 100 animals received their rabies vaccine.
- Continued with our annual

events.

- Department now has a officer certified in accident reconstruction.
- Purchased a new drone.
- Received 4 2023 Chevrolet Tahoes through OPSG.
- Send 5 citizens to the police academy (All are now working as patrol officers)



"A big thanks to all of our staff for their hard work throughout the year"

- Noe Castillo
RGC Police Chief
RGC Deputy City Manager.

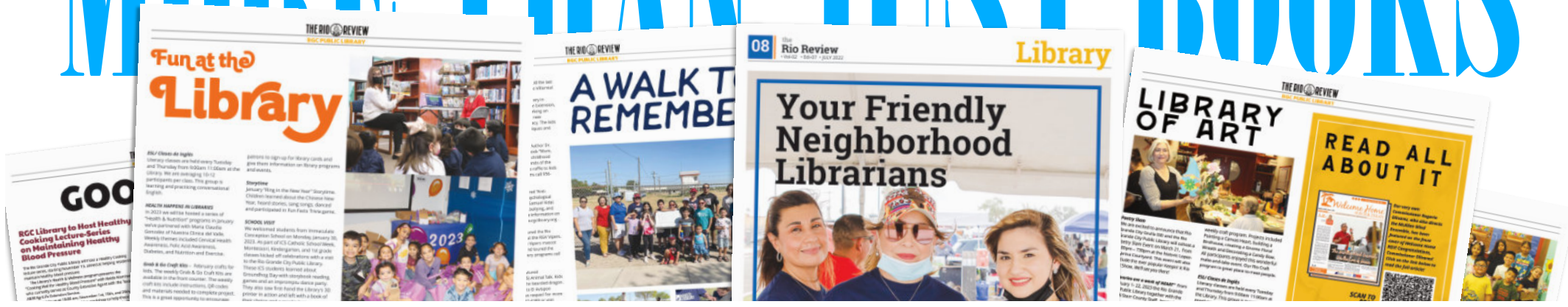


"2023 was a year of big changes to our department, and exciting new additions. Not only did our team expand with new faces, but we also acquired a new state-of-the-art drone, and four new vehicles were added to our fleet. We are also really looking forward to moving into the new Public Safety Building."

- Joey Solis
RGC Assistant Police Chief



MORE THAN JUST BOOKS



“Last year the Rio Grande City Public Library was honored to receive the TMLDA Libraries of Excellence Award. We supported the ATT Laptop Giveaway, and received the Texas Book Festival Grant”.

**- Norma Fultz
RGC Public Library Dir.**



LIVING HISTORY



Thanks for the Visit!

The Kelsey Bass Museum opened its doors to approximately 500 eager visitors in 2023. Wonderful people came from all over the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, and even Asia. These guests, especially those “home grown, first timers,” are always astonished at the different array of exhibits on display at our small but mighty museum. Great things ARE happening at YOUR Kelsey Bass Museum.

Honoring Our Veterans

The Kelsey Bass Museum, the RGC Public Library, Medina Electric Co-Op, RGV Food Bank, along with other sponsors, hosted a Veterans Appreciation Luncheon at Basilio Villarreal park on November 8, 2023. Each veteran received a bag filled with goodies, loads of food items, a piping hot lunch plate, and a heartfelt THANKS from all in attendance. It was indeed an honor to personally meet and greet these men and women who put God and Country first. Thank you, Veterans, for your service and sacrifice.

Sharing Their Stories

The Kelsey Bass Museum invited veterans from different eras to tell their service stories. The video entitled “Our Hometown Veteran: An Oral History Series” gave these gentlemen the opportunity to recount their time in the military, to share some their more difficult memories, as well as to offer advice to those looking into serving our country. This video and their stories can be found on The City of Rio Grande City FaceBook page, the City of RGC-Kelsey Bass Museum FaceBook page, and RGC-TV YouTube channel.

Tell Me a Story

The Kelsey Bass Museum was honored to host award-winning author, Stephen Michaud, and local author, Rosario Ozuna for book talks during the summer

months. Both authors spoke about the inspiration, and writing process for their respective books, and were happy to sign copies to the many guests who showed up to meet and greet these incredible writers. Both events were extremely well-attended and NEED TO Finish

Honoring Our Roots

The Kelsey Bass Museum hosted several events in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month. First, the museum opened its doors to traveling exhibits sponsored by LUPE (La Union del Pueblo Entero) and the San Antonio Eye Bank. The LUPE exhibit commemorated the impact of the United Farm Workers Movement in our community. The San Antonio Eye Bank set up an altar in the museum chamber room filled with photos of “hero donors” from the Rio Grande Valley, with two donors from our very own Rio Grande City. The museum also set up a “Recuerdame” wall and invited city employees and museum visitors to display photos of their loved ones, and the museum, joined the RGC Public Library and RGC Main Street Program to host the 2nd Annual Grito en el Kiosko.

Making Spirits Bright

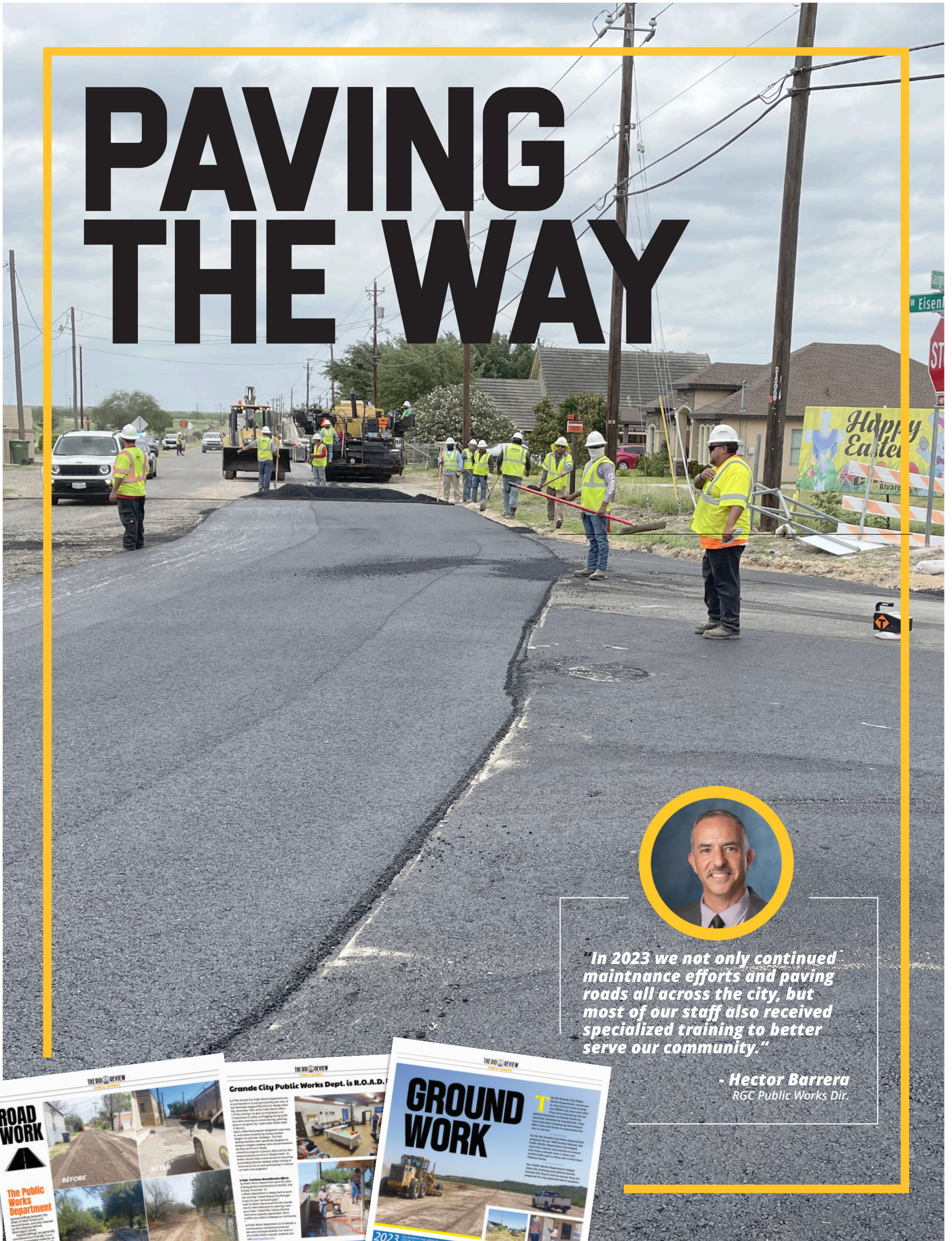
The Kelsey Bass Museum staff member, Cathy Rubio, participated in several holiday events hosted by the City of RGC and other businesses and organizations. Mrs. Rubio was proud to attend the Parade Marshal Dinner sponsored by the Greater Chamber of Commerce of Rio Grande City. She was also the Mistress of Ceremony for the annual Lighting of the Christmas Tree and the annual Lighted Christmas Parade. Further the museum hosted a “Posada Platica” which detailed the origins and traditions of this culturally significant event.



“The Kelsey Bass Museum opened its doors to approximately 500 eager visitors in 2023. Wonderful people came from all over the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, and even Asia.”

- Cathy Rubio
Kelsey Bass Museum Coordinator

PAVING THE WAY



"In 2023 we not only continued maintenance efforts and paving roads all across the city, but most of our staff also received specialized training to better serve our community."

- Hector Barrera
RGC Public Works Dir.



NONSTOP GROWTH



“Rio Grande City experienced an explosion of growth in 2022 that continued into 2023, and there’s no end in sight”

***- Gilbert Millan
RGC Planning & Zoning Dir.***

PLANNING DEPARTMENT 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Planning Department has processed construction building permits with a total valuation of Commercial: \$22,826,515.00 and 127,277 square feet of improvements Residential \$13,788,199.00 and 251,154 square feet of improvements
- This is more than 36.6 million dollars worth of investment in our community. This is close to 3 million more than the previous year. This includes new projects that include retail stores with over 5,000 square feet of construction, school improvements and single family homes.
- In accordance with ISO and insurance management rating evaluations for cities in Texas, the City of Rio Grande City has successfully adopted the 2018 International Building Codes, 2018 Fire Codes and 2018 Energy Conservation Codes, making the City to have one of the best ISO ratings ever!
- As the City has grown, so has the number of certified inspectors. We have now 4 Registered Certified Code Enforcement Officers, 3 Texas Department of Agriculture Certified Pesticide Applicators (Vector), 2
- ICC Certified Inspectors, 8 Food Manager Inspectors, 1 OSSF Septic Inspector and a Certified Public Manager (CPM).
- The Department attended the Texas Environmental Health Association (TEHA) 20th Annual Conference at South Padre Island from December 6 to the 8th, 2023. At this conference, participants not only collected the required continuing education hours (CEU's) for the respective licenses, but also learned new methods and legislative updates on Emergency Management, Food Establishments, vector Control, Animal Control, Code Enforcement and Environmental Health. At the conference, the director received an award of recognition from TEHA for dedication and commitment to the cause!
- The Texas Department of State Health Services has sent reports of the Mosquito tests performed by the Planning Department in different areas of the City and has shown negative results for Zika, West Nile Virus, and Dengue among others.





On behalf of the City Commission of Rio Grande City
and the Rio Grande City EDC Board of Directors,
we would like to wish everyone
in our community a very

Happy New Year

May your 2024 be filled
with health,
happiness, and hope!

