

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

CITY OF MARBLE FALLS



IN SERVICE



*Craig Magerkurth
Place 1*



*Dave Rhodes
Place 2*



*William (Dee) Haddock
Place 3*



*Celia Merrill
Place 4*



*Richard Westerman
Mayor Pro-Tem*



*Meghan Klaeger
Place 6*



*John Packer
Mayor*

2018 CITY COUNCIL

FROM THE CITY MANAGER



It continues to be my honor and privilege to serve as the City Manager for Marble Falls. The support of the Mayor and City Council is invaluable as we endeavor to serve in the best interest of the residents, property owners, business owners. Everyday, I am encouraged by the professional and dedicated staff that take pride in their service to this community. Together, we are working to ensure Marble Falls has every opportunity to reach its potential as an even greater city in which to live, work, and play.

In 2018, we met our challenges head on. Whether it was rock crushers or rising rivers, we persevered. I am proud of all that we have accomplished and look forward to new challenges and new opportunities ahead.

Sincerely,

COUNCIL VISION UPDATE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Nextdoor is a free private social network for neighborhoods. It is unique to other social media platforms, as it localized, allowing users to be connected to their neighbors in their own community. In order to join Nextdoor, you have to verify that you live within that neighborhood's boundaries.

Municipalities started using the Nextdoor platform in 2014 to send targeted information to specific neighborhoods or the entire city. It allows two-way communication with residents which helps build trust and community partnership. The private accounts of residents' on Nextdoor cannot be accessed by public agencies.

The City of Marble Falls began using Nextdoor in June 2017. There are currently over 886 members in five neighborhoods.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

01**Park Phase 1A Design**

Design for the first phase of \$3.2 Million in park improvements was completed and approved by City Council in fall of 2018. The year-long process has prepared the City to kick off 2019 with three major construction projects in and around our park system.

02**Public Safety First**

The multi-year goal to fully staff the Marble Falls PD patrol division is nearing completion with one position to go! A total of four new officers have been added to the force over the last two years.

05**Property Tax Rate Cut**

For the second year in a row, City Council has mitigated the increased property valuations with a tax rate reduction. The effort has helped to ease the burden on property owners without jeopardizing City services or ability to meet our obligations.

06**Film Friendly Certification**

The City earned a Film Friendly Texas Community credential from the Texas Film Commission. The credential provides an opportunity to showcase all the unique qualities of our community and support economic opportunity for our local businesses.

09**The Green Scene**

The City worked with community partners to make a big impact on conservation this year. We partnered with Siemens Energy to conserve both water and energy; with LCRA and the City of Meadowlakes to reuse over 18 million gallons of water a year for irrigation of the golf course; and with Waste Management to implement door to door recycling throughout the City!

10**Emergency Management**

Historic flooding raged down the Colorado River during the early morning hours of October 16 on the way to Marble Falls. The response by City Staff, MFAEMS, County Officials and so many community partners was unprecedented and made us all proud to be part of such a prepared, responsive and caring community.

03

SAFER Grant

Marble Falls Fire Rescue was awarded the SAFER grant valued at \$314,614. The grant will fund a portion of salaries for three new firefighters and help launch the new squad program.

04

Brush Drop Off Program

The City introduced the Brush It Off! program to provide a convenient drop off location to assist property owners in managing yard waste. The service is free to city residents!

07

Development Code Update

The process culminated in October with the adoption of the new Land Use Regulations and Development Code. Over the course of two years, Staff met with consultants, committees, and members of the community to provide a comprehensive education effort for property owners ensuring full transparency.

08

Via Viejo Replacement

In August, a new 600 thousand gallon ground storage tank replaced the aging Via Viejo water tank. The upgrade will save thousands of gallons of water annually and greatly improve the security of the water distribution system on the east side of town.

SERVE WITH PURPOSE

Code Enforcement Officers, Joey Wray and Max Johnson

SPOTLIGHT**TEAMWORK.**

Value the goal. Commit to success through trust and accountability.

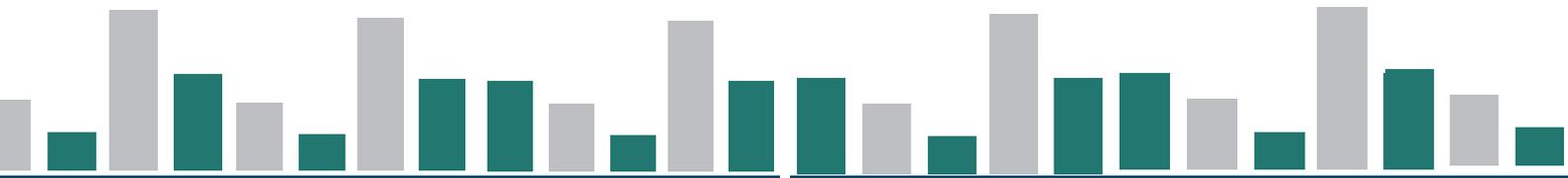
Two years ago, City Council charged Staff to build a better code enforcement program. Max Johnson and Joey Wray answered the call and have developed an effective, community-focused program. Their personalized approach has elevated code enforcement to a new level on several fronts such as illegal dumping, substandard buildings, neighborhood-wide clean-up initiatives, sign enforcement, and combat environmental crimes. These changes presented opportunities to create progressive

techniques and “best practice” methods that have been proven to produce neighborhood-wide compliance. One new initiative is the volunteer liaison program to assist special needs citizens in meeting compliance. Both Max and Joey have rolled up their own sleeves having cleared over 3 tons of recyclable material from one property alone. Together they have transformed code enforcement in Marble Falls and the results are evident all over town.



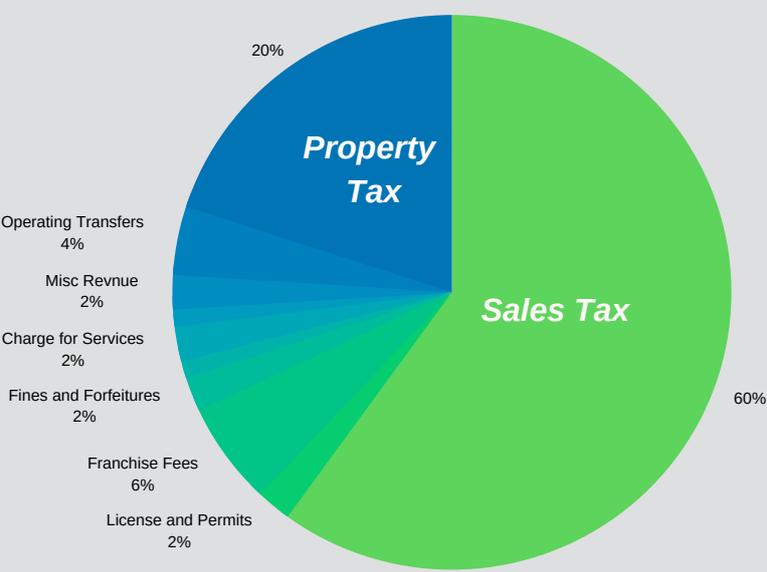
2018

FINANCIALS



FUNDING

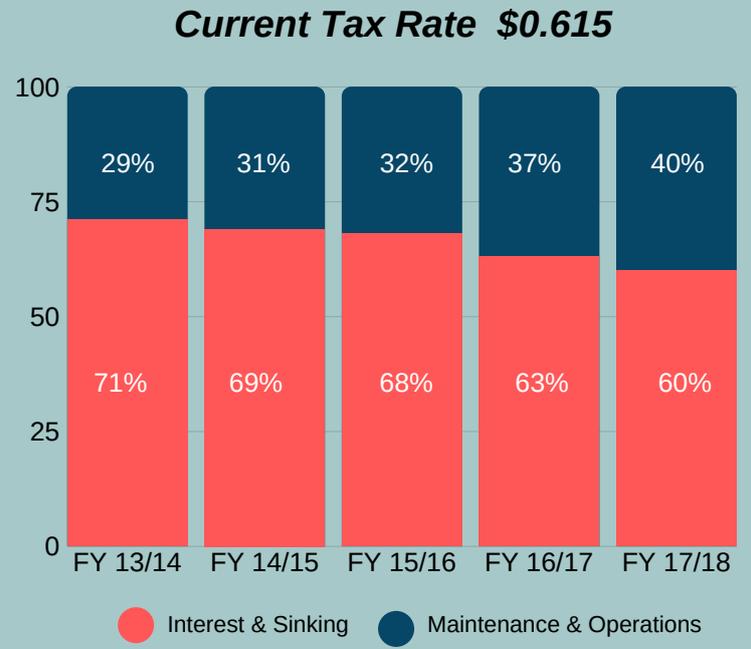
SPENDING



Sales Tax Receipts have been steadily climbing for the last 8 years. 2018 saw a 2.65% increase over the previous year with sales tax receipts totaling 8,837,583.

Property Valuations increased by 15%, in large part to new development, generating over \$450,000 over the previous year for operations in the General Fund.

While most communities have a solid property tax base, Marble Falls Annual Budget is heavily dependent on fluctuating sales tax which presents challenges for long term planning and projections. Over 60% of the General Fund Maintenance and Operations is dependent upon sales tax.



For the second consecutive year, the property tax rate was reduced. At the same time, we have continued to reduce debt. In the last three years, we have reduced the percentage of general fund revenues attributed to debt by almost 10%.

Additionally, within the next ten years over 50% of the City's current debt will be retired. This projection along with conservative budget practices consistently position the City for strong bond ratings and a positive financial outlook.

SAVING

Year after year, departments strive to operate under budget so that even in years of low to moderate growth we are building reserves. In 2018, the reserve fund grew to over \$1.86 MM. The reserve fund was almost depleted after the flood of 2007 followed by several years of recession. We are continuing to work towards the \$2 Million goal.

Reserve Fund Balance \$1.86 Million



For the 14th year in a row, the Finance Department has been awarded the Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Financial Officers Association (GFOA) as well as the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for 11 consecutive years.



2018 GRANTS

\$445,129

The City was awarded \$445,129 in grant funding in 2018 for public safety, training, wildfire response, spring break programming, workforce education, and the AMI water meter conversion project.



SERVE WITH PURPOSE

SPOTLIGHT

RESPECT.

Value everyone.

Have it. Reflect it. Receive it.



Having served as Maintenance Technician for almost three years now, Wesley has earned commendation as a natural born leader. He has undoubtedly garnered the respect of his crew members, and even more importantly, he displays respect in all he does. Wesley has instituted a personal goal of effective time management when it comes to his daily responsibilities in order to be the most productive team member he can be. He welcomes new challenges and has taken the lead on projects such as the much-needed face-lift of Johnson Park Ball Field, operation and maintenance of new equipment, serving on the Wellness Committee and working closely with artists for Sculpture on Main ensuring their works are handled with care. Wesley's reverence for his team members and the community he serves is evidenced by the standards he strives for everyday on the job.

Wesley Browning, Maintenance Technician



2018 presented a year of extremes. From wildfires to historical flooding, Marble Falls emergency response teams joined forces with agencies throughout the tri-county region to protect and serve.

Marble Falls Fire Rescue (MFFR) had previously conducted a wildland fire risk assessment and began implementing mitigation measures in high-risk areas with the assistance of the Public Works department. Thankfully, the City was spared and no major fires ignited within the city limits. Outlying areas did not fare as well.

The fires began burning in July and before the summer was out, thousands of acres had burned. MFFR and MFPD assisted regional partners in battling five major wildfires - the Inks Lake Fire, two Blanco Co. Fires, Co. Road 108 Fire and the Horseshoe Bay Airport Fire.

Our crews committed over 233 firefighter hours and 93 Command Staff hours, along with Brush Truck #1 and the Command Bus in order to assist our neighboring communities in on site emergency operations.

Did you know?

MARBLE FALLS FIRE RESCUE...

- Completed 2300 hours of training
- Responded to 1601 calls
- Increased fire safety inspections by 72% over 2017
- Conducted fire safety education for 1500 area elementary students
- Raised over \$4,600 for St. Baldricks in the fight against childhood cancer
- Partnered with KBey to collect over 4500 pounds of food and \$4,600 for the Helping Center...
- Was awarded the SAFER grant in the amount of \$341,614 to fund additional firefighters... **in 2018**

...AND FLOOD



Only weeks later, on the morning of October 16, Lake Marble Falls was inundated with waters flowing from the Llano and Colorado Rivers. The flood damaged over 70 properties. Municipal infrastructure including our animal shelter, parks, water and wastewater plants sustained heavy damage.

While the cost of property damaged quickly mounted into the millions, there was no personal injury or loss of life for which we are extremely grateful. Our first responders acted quickly in coordination with the activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The Public Works Department maintained City services throughout the event with very limited interruptions.

Most of all was the tremendous outpouring of support from the great people of Marble Falls and the surrounding area. Countless community partners joined forces together with the City to meet the needs of the community during the flood.

Our thanks go out to Marble Falls Area EMS, Burnet County, so many of the area churches, local businesses, and especially the Long Term Recovery Committees and their continuing service to meet the needs of those affected by the October Flood.

The Animal Control Facility was destroyed by flood waters on the morning of October 16. Capt. Talamantes and Sgt. Munoz utilized Marble Falls Rescue 1 to save and then transport the trapped animals. Many thanks to Granite Shoals for caring for our shelter pups and to HEB for replacing food and supplies!



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT & STREETS



- Construction of 600 gallon Via Viejo Ground Storage Tank
- Parks Phase 1A Design for Lakeside, Johnson Park and Hayes Addition
- 3600' 8" recycled water line for irrigation of Hidden Falls golf course
- Buena Vista water/wastewater lines for Downtown development
- One and a half mile Parkview 8" waterline in Mustang Ridge
- 6th St. and Avenue O Street Improvements including curb, gutter & sidewalk
- Level up and seal 1.5 miles of Loma Lane, West Oakridge and Nature Heights

SERVE WITH PURPOSE

SPOTLIGHT

INTEGRITY

Value honesty. Have the courage to do what's right.

Dennis is described by his crew members in the Public Works Department as hard working, positive, and fun to work with. He stays until the job is done and never complains. Dennis has earned the respect of his co-workers by always being encouraging and promoting a positive work environment. As a dedicated servant to the City of Marble Falls for eleven years, he recently received a well-deserved promotion to Equipment Operator. A team member like Dennis is invaluable to our organization, elevating our level of service and all those around him.

Dennis Gleason
Equipment Operator



GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

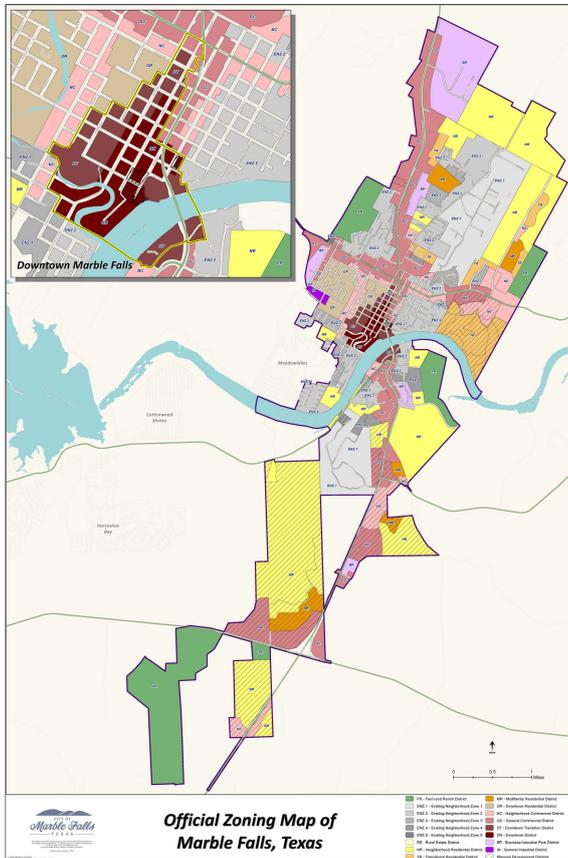
Managing growth and promoting responsible development was at the forefront in 2018 with the review and update of the Development Code. The Development Code outlines zoning and land use within the city limits. The revision was a priority action in the Comprehensive Plan and lays the ground work for responsible development moving into the future.

Streamlining regulations, consolidating zoning districts, and enhancing standards for physical development and buildings all play into how our community looks and feels as well as protecting property values.

The Zoning Advisory Committee oversaw the entire Development Code Update and conducted several

public meetings, informational forums and one-on ones to ensure the community was able to provide valuable input and vet the proposed land use regulations as they apply to the building and development practices in Marble Falls.

The result of which is a great accomplishment and one of the foremost tasks outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.



SERVE WITH PURPOSE SPOTLIGHT

PRIDE

*Value our accomplishments.
Individual contributions make
the difference.*

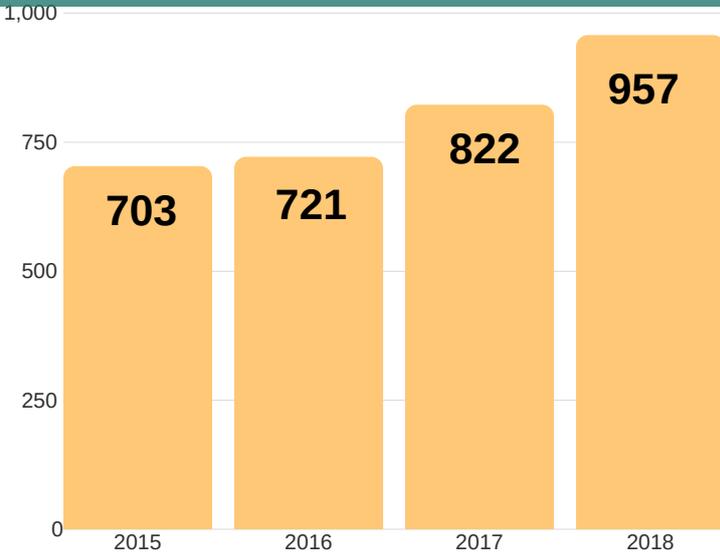
As the City's only GIS Analyst, Chelsea is an invaluable resource for city operations across the board. Every department has benefited from her ability to conduct in-depth data analysis, bring a big picture perspective to projects, and deliver top-notch results. In addition to her work in maintaining all of the City's geographical data, she works closely with public safety and conducts weekly geovalidation on the 911 system ensuring the accuracy of our emergency dispatch. She developed street evaluation software for Public works saving the City thousands of dollars and has taken copious amounts of raw data and turned it into an impressive searchable cemetery database. She serves on multiple committees and is a lead on the city's website and information distribution process. Chelsea's contributions elevate all we do at the City, how we serve our citizens and preserve our history.



Chelsea Seiter-Weatherford
GIS Analyst

STATS AND GROWTH TRENDS

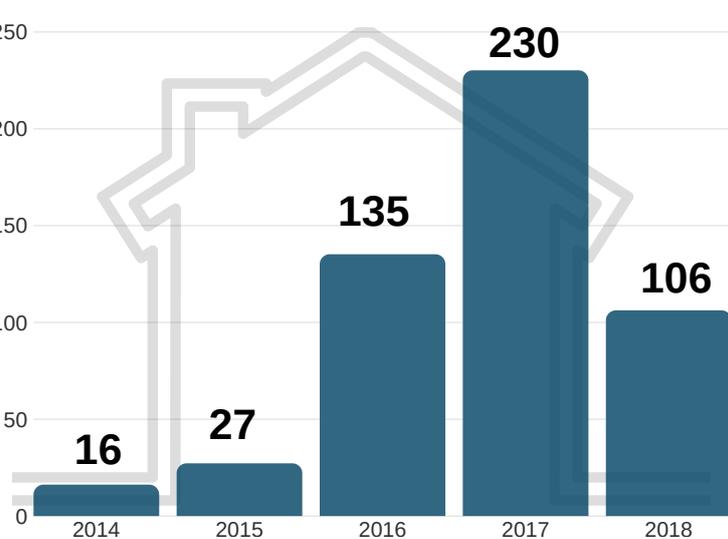
TOTAL NUMBER OF PERMITS ISSUED



Permits were up 16 % in 2018 over the previous year with a total valuation of over \$40.2 Million.

Commercial projects permitted or completed include the HEB Fuel Station, Bear King Brewery, the new Vitology Skin Care facility and more.

TOTAL NUMBER NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS



41 new single detached residential units were permitted in 2018 with an average home value of over \$300,000. In addition, 4 multi-family buildings were permitted for Phase II of the Homestead at Mormon Mill Project bringing 65 new rental units to the market.

SERVE WITH PURPOSE SPOTLIGHT

PROFESSIONALISM:
*Value a higher standard.
 Strive for the best..*

Sergeant Barry Greer was selected to attend the National Computer Forensics Institute (NCFI) in Hoover, Alabama, in the fall of 2018. The NCFI training facility is operated by the US Secret Service and provides training for agencies to conduct their own digital forensic exams on computers, cell phones, and other similar equipment. Sergeant Greer was selected as one of only twenty-four from across the nation. At the conclusion of the five-week training, he was granted the equipment necessary to conduct digital forensic exams locally, reducing the turn-around time on forgery, counterfeiting, identity theft, and child exploitation cases, from years to weeks or even days. He has also established an invaluable network of professional support and connections throughout the country in the field of digital forensics that will further benefit investigations. The equipment, valued at over \$45,000, as well as the training and all associated expenses, were provided by the U.S. Secret Service and came at no cost to the City.

Sgt. Greer is currently obtaining his Bachelor of Arts in Law and Society through Penn State University and is set to graduate in Spring 2020. His professionalism is evident in not only obtaining the honor of being selected to such an exclusive program but for striving to better serve the MFPD and the citizens of Marble Falls.

Sergeant Barry Greer



AT THE CORE

**TO SERVE WITH
PURPOSE THROUGH
TEAMWORK, RESPECT,
INTEGRITY, PRIDE AND
PROFESSIONALISM.**



THE PROCESS



City Staff began a journey in 2017 to explore the organization's mission and core values. The process culminated in February of 2018 with the roll out of our new Mission Statement:

*TO SERVE WITH PURPOSE
THROUGH TRUST, RESPECT,
INTEGRITY, PRIDE AND
PROFESSIONALISM.*

The statement defines why we are here, what we are working for each and every day in our roles at the City and how we intend to get the job done. It also incorporates aspects of character Staff holds most valuable when it comes to ourselves, our co-workers, and in our service to the community.

Through the process we discovered that the passion that drives us varies wildly and that it cannot be learned but rather extolled in each one of us to aspire to do great things in the work that we do. The process encouraged us to search our purpose in our daily responsibilities, individually and organizationally, with the goal of providing the best service possible to the citizens of Marble Falls.



FROM THE CVB *Worth Every Trip*

If you are from Marble Falls, you have heard a similar story before. One that details visits to the lake as a child or trips to the Hill Country to see the grandparents. All grown up, we come back. There's something special about Marble Falls that keeps people coming back. Some of us are lucky enough to live here, for visitors, it just makes sense to want to be here. With so much to offer, it's no wonder travelers from across Texas love to visit again and again. Every time they return, they find more ways to fall in love with Marble Falls. This repeating story is at the heart of the new tourism campaign. After an exhaustive search, a lot of collaboration and intense planning, a partnership was developed with a new firm, the CVB, the EDC, and the City. The result is an exciting new direction for the marketing of tourism.

Campaign highlights include a dedicated website for the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Website sessions were up over 35% in 2018. The new website along with a detailed digital marketing campaign will further drive web traffic and increase user engagement. Demand is up and the new website structure is set to meet that demand. Fresh photography, a heavy PR push, and all new digital and print advertising are underway to increase awareness of our area as a tourist destination, educate visitors on what we have to offer and shine a light on the features that make us unique. Marble Falls is THE place to get that genuine hill country experience.

We have enjoyed tremendous success with continuously increasing tourism over the last 10 years. Hotel Occupancy Tax Receipts were up again this year over 7%. Tourism dollars support our lodgers and local businesses. They allow the City to embark on projects that have a big impact on quality of life such as the park system upgrades and improved waterfront access. Improvements that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.



The "Bluebonnet Map" drew more than 1,100 wildflower hunters into the Visitor Center during the month of March alone.



For the last 10 years Marble Falls has seen a steady increase in hotel occupancy tax receipts and 2018 was no different. HOT receipts were up 7% over the previous year.

it's all in the details.

The new website, VisitMarbleFalls.org, will be dedicated solely to tourism and will unveil a microsite for adventure seekers to build a custom itinerary full of the best the region has to offer. The interactive planner will guide visitors to that perfect hike, historical places of interest, the best burger and brew, or whatever strikes their fancy.



The Visitor Center welcomed over 7,000 visitors in 2018, hailing from 48 states and 20 countries across the globe from Sweden to South Africa



FROM THE MFEDC 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

6 For the sixth year in a row, the MFEDC received an Economic Excellence Recognition from the Texas Economic Development Council.

200 MFEDC provided assistance to 35% of the businesses that received certificates of occupancy in 2018. Additions and expansions resulted in more than 200 new jobs in the community.

\$4,500 The MFEDC's Sign Replacement Program awarded more than \$4,500 to five businesses in 2018.

\$18,000 The MFEDC contributed over \$18,000 for a High Demand Job Training Grant administered by the Texas Workforce Commission. The first cohorts of plumbers and electricians completed their coursework in April, with the second class of plumbers already underway!

\$25,000 The Community Leverage Program provided over \$25,000 in matching funds for art at the skate park, the Fire Station Location Study and ISO Improvement Plan, equipment for movies in the park, Downtown lighting, and more.

\$38,000 The Business Improvement Grant Program put more than \$38,000 back into the community through local businesses including Old Oak Square, The Centre on 281, Save the World Brewing Co., ACI Pest & Lawn, Rae's R-Bar & Grill, and 200 Main.

\$72,994 The performance agreement with BS&W Hospital wrapped up this year with the MFEDC providing a \$72,994 reimbursement for jobs created at the hospital and clinic.

\$500,000 Sales contracts amounting to more than \$500,000 in Phase 3B of the Business and Industrial Park were executed in 2018.

and more... Visit www.marblefallseconomy.com for information on the Hotel & Conference Center, new parks land and more!



PROUD TO BE
A Certified *Scenic* City

