

# The Baytown Sun

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## Officials: 2007 to be good year for city

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The new year will be all about growth for the city of Baytown.

The year of 2006 included many changes and accomplishments.

The Wayne Gray Sports Complex underwent a \$2.5 million makeover, the Youth Advisory Commission completed its first successful year of operation, 11 miles of streets were rehabilitated with the completion of the first year of work under the street maintenance sales tax, Time Warner Cable was used to broadcast City Council meetings on Channel 16, the groundbreaking of the new Northeast Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the completion of the Goose Creek Stream Phase 3 project.

City Manager Gary Jackson listed all of these as part of Baytown's year in review, but he is especially excited about the expanded 10-year Utility Capital Improvements Plan, which went up to \$147 million, and the voter-approved amendments to the city charter, two public safety sales tax initiatives.

There have only been two charter amendments, since its original adoption in 1948, said Jackson.

Now that 2006 has come to an end, Jackson and other city officials are looking at what 2007 will bring.

I think we can look forward to more businesses coming to town, more growth in our city, new housing starts, a better run city government, and improved services from the city, said Mayor Stephen DonCarlos.

Numerous construction projects will break ground around the city, expansions of some streets, and additional houses and businesses. Other projects, like the Fred Hartman Bridge renovations will be completed.

Councilman Scott Sheley agrees that the improvements made to the city will have a positive effect on Baytown commerce.

I think we're going to see a lot of retail come in because they recognize that we are a city that is growing, said Sheley. We're going to have a tremendous amount of growth.

He is interested to see the work that will be done to improve Baytown's downtown area.

There is a balance between fixing the old and maintaining the new infrastructure, said Sheley.

Councilman Sammy Mahan is also ready for 2007 and all it will bring.

2007 will be the anniversary of the Houston Raceway Park, said Mahan.

He said a celebration is already being planned, and will be announced next year.

He is also excited to see how the city continues in its positive growth pattern.

Mahan and Sheley anticipate meeting with the rest of City Council to discuss plans and strategies for the upcoming year.

Sheley would like for city officials to begin working more closely with Lee College and Goose Creek Independent School District board members in an attempt to better understand each other's needs.

He is also interested to see what issues city council will be addressing in 2007.

I think we're going to see some very unusual things come before council, said Sheley. We have some challenges, but I think we're going to see incredible things happening, he said.