



CITY PRIDE

MORGANTON, NC

July 2014 • Morganton's Citizen Newsletter



State increases sales tax on electricity

Starting July 1, 2014, electric customers in Morganton and across the state will pay more state sales tax on electricity and natural gas services.

As part of the North Carolina Tax Simplification and Reduction Act, the North Carolina General Assembly increased state sales tax on electricity to 7 percent, up from 3 percent. The state also created a new 7 percent sales tax on natural gas sales. The General Assembly passed the law last year.

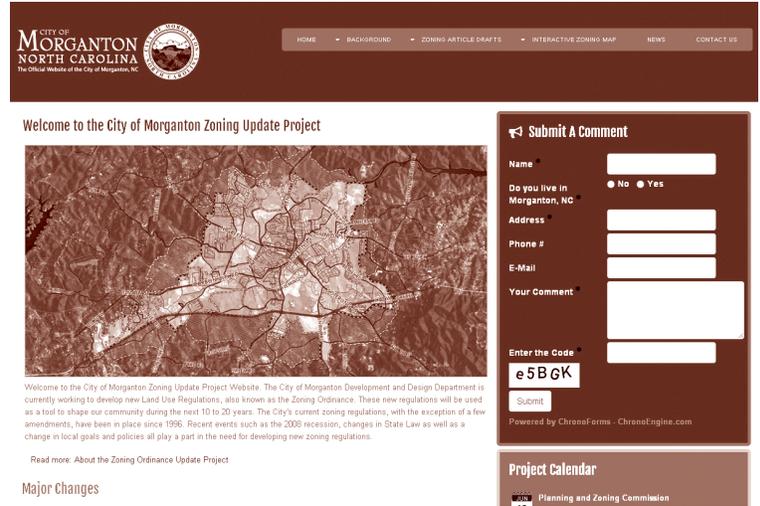
Money raised by this state sales tax increase goes directly to the State of North Carolina, not to the City of Morganton, or any other local governments or power companies. All electric customers in the state will have to pay this increased sales tax including customers of Duke Energy, Rutherford Electric Membership Corporation, and Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation.

The increase will be reflected on the itemized portion of City utility bills.

New website to inform about proposed zoning changes

The City of Morganton has launched a citizen education website to inform residents and property owners about the City's ongoing zoning ordinance update project. Development and Design Director Lee Anderson, who is leading the project, said providing information about the proposed changes and encouraging citizen feedback are two major goals of this public outreach campaign.

"We want our residents, property owners, and prospective developers to be informed about the proposed changes to the zoning ordinance, and more importantly, we want feedback on these proposals before the more formal public hearing process begins," Anderson said. "The website itself is designed to be user friendly to enable folks an opportunity to easily review the proposed zoning map, review the ordinance drafts, and review



VISIT THE NEW SITE AT WWW.CI.MORGANTON.NC.US/ZONINGUPDATE

the minutes of the workshop discussions where ideas are being discussed. We want folks to let us know what they think. The sooner we receive feedback, the more opportunity we will have to

incorporate that feedback into the ordinance that will eventually be offered for approval to the City Council."

See **ZONING UPDATE** on Page 2

"Feel the beat..." at CoMMA's newest MainStage season

Welcome to MainStage Morganton, 2014-2015, and what promises to be another stellar season on the CoMMA stage. The stars not only come out but they truly shine as the talents and stories come to life in grand fashion in Season 28.

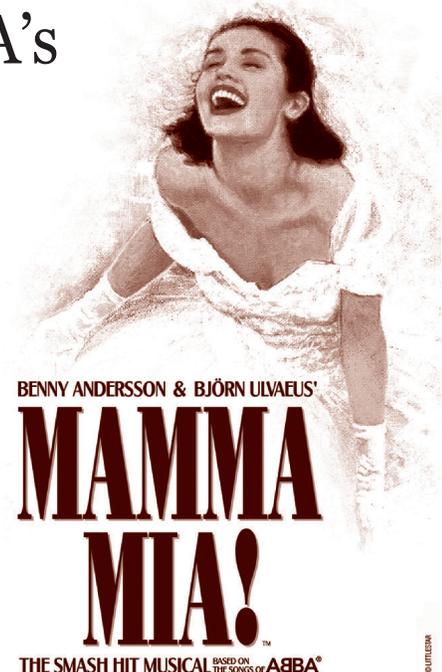
PAM TILLIS IN CONCERT
FRI. AUG. 22

OH WHAT A NIGHT!
A MUSICAL TRIBUTE TO FRANKIE VALLI & THE FOUR SEASONS
THURS. SEPT. 25

"MUTTS GONE NUTS" & DAVID PENDLETON (VENTRILOQUIST)
DOUBLE BILL
THURS. OCT. 2

JEKYLL & HYDE
NATIONAL BROADWAY TOUR
TUES. OCT. 21

See **MAINSTAGE** on Page 2



Morganton City Council

- Mel Cohen, Mayor
- John H. Cantrell, Mayor Pro Tem
- Forrest A. Fleming
- S. Sidney Simmons
- Ronnie Thompson

citymayor@ci.morganton.nc.us
citycouncil@ci.morganton.nc.us

www.ci.morganton.nc.us

MainStage *From the front*

THE CLEVERLYS W/CHARLYHORSE
THURS. NOV. 6

"MAMMA MIA"
NATIONAL BROADWAY TOUR
WED. NOV. 12

BJ THOMAS "HOME FOR CHRISTMAS"
THURS. DEC. 11

THE SHOW 3
FRI. JAN. 16

THE ULTIMATE MJ EXPERIENCE
SUN. JAN. 25

"OVER THE RAINBOW"
A MUSICAL TRIBUTE TO THE ARTISTRY OF
JUDY GARLAND
FEATURING HILARY KOLE AND BIG BAND
THURS. FEB. 5

LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO
TUES. FEB. 10

"MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET"
NATIONAL BROADWAY TOUR
TUES. FEB. 24

"PETER AND THE STARCATCHER"
NATIONAL BROADWAY TOUR
MON. MARCH 9

RHYTHM OF THE DANCE
SAT. MARCH 14

BACK TO...BARRY BILLY & THE BEATLES
STARRING BRIAN GURL & THE FABULOUS FIVE
TUES. MARCH 31

THE TEXAS TENORS
THURS. APRIL 16

BLOOD SWEAT & TEARS
FEATURING BO BICE
THURS. MAY 7

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Mark your calendars for the Historic Morganton Festival!

"Come and play in the streets" during the 33rd Annual Historic Morganton Festival September 5 & 6!

Famous for its mile and a half of arts and crafts, the free Historic Morganton Festival always features two national country acts, four stages, fun, games, and food for all ages, plus more than a mile and a half of arts and craft vendors from all over the country!

National country music artists Casey James and Dustin Lynch will headline the City Stage on Friday and Saturday nights!

Lynch is best known for his singles "Cowboys & Angels", "She Cranks My Tractor", "Where It's At" and many more.

The ever popular Kids Zone and Teen

Zone will open Friday with ticketed rides and games along with a free craft area, Litter Critters, for children grades 5th and under, as well as a free performance stage featuring The Kazoobie Kazoo Show, clowns, and more!

For a complete listing of all the events including the Sunrise Run, music acts, shuttle bus routes, and more, call 828-438-5252; e-mail info@morgantonfest.org; or check out the website www.morgantonfest.org.

Remember, the festival is an animal-free event and will go on rain or shine.

ALL CONCERTS ARE FREE!

WWW.MORGANTONFEST.ORG

Zoning Update

From the front

Since October 2013, Development and Design Department staff, the City's Planning and Zoning Commission, and Benchmark Planning, a private consultant, have been working together to draft new land use regulations, also known as a "zoning ordinance". These new regulations will guide development in Morganton over the next 10 to 20 years.

One of the major changes in the proposed ordinance is to reduce the number of zoning districts from 13 to six, which simplifies the ordinance. This can be accomplished by moving from traditional use-based districts to intensity-based districts.

Under the current zoning ordinance, there are 13 different residential, office, commercial, and industrial districts. Generally speaking, residential uses are allowed in the various residential districts, office uses within the office and institutional district, and so on.

The new ordinance will eliminate the 13 use-based districts and replace those with only six intensity-based districts - Low Intensity District (LID), Medium Intensity District (MID), High Intensity District (HID), Central Business District (CBD), Exclusive Industrial District (EID), and State Institutional District (SID). Land Uses will be permitted in the various districts based on their particular

impacts to the surrounding properties.

This opens the door for land uses to be mixed if they have similar impacts.

For example, single-family homes, home occupations, family care homes, bed and breakfasts, greenhouses, day cares, and churches would all be allowed within the Low Intensity District (LID).

"There is a lot of information to review and understand, and that's why we've created the citizen education website," Anderson said. "We want people to have plenty of time and opportunity to review the proposals, ask questions, and give feedback."

The new website can be found at www.ci.morganton.nc.us/zoningupdate. There are three primary sections of the website - the zoning article drafts, the draft zoning map, and the comment box. Visitors can access each section from the main menu at the top of the website homepage.

Anderson said that he expects to have the first public review meetings in September this year. The Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council are scheduled to have a joint workshop to review the proposals in October, and the final public hearing on the changes is currently planned for November.

"Our goal is to inform as many people as possible about the proposed changes long before the public hearing in November," Anderson said. "This website is just one of the public outreach campaigns we plan to undertake before adoption."