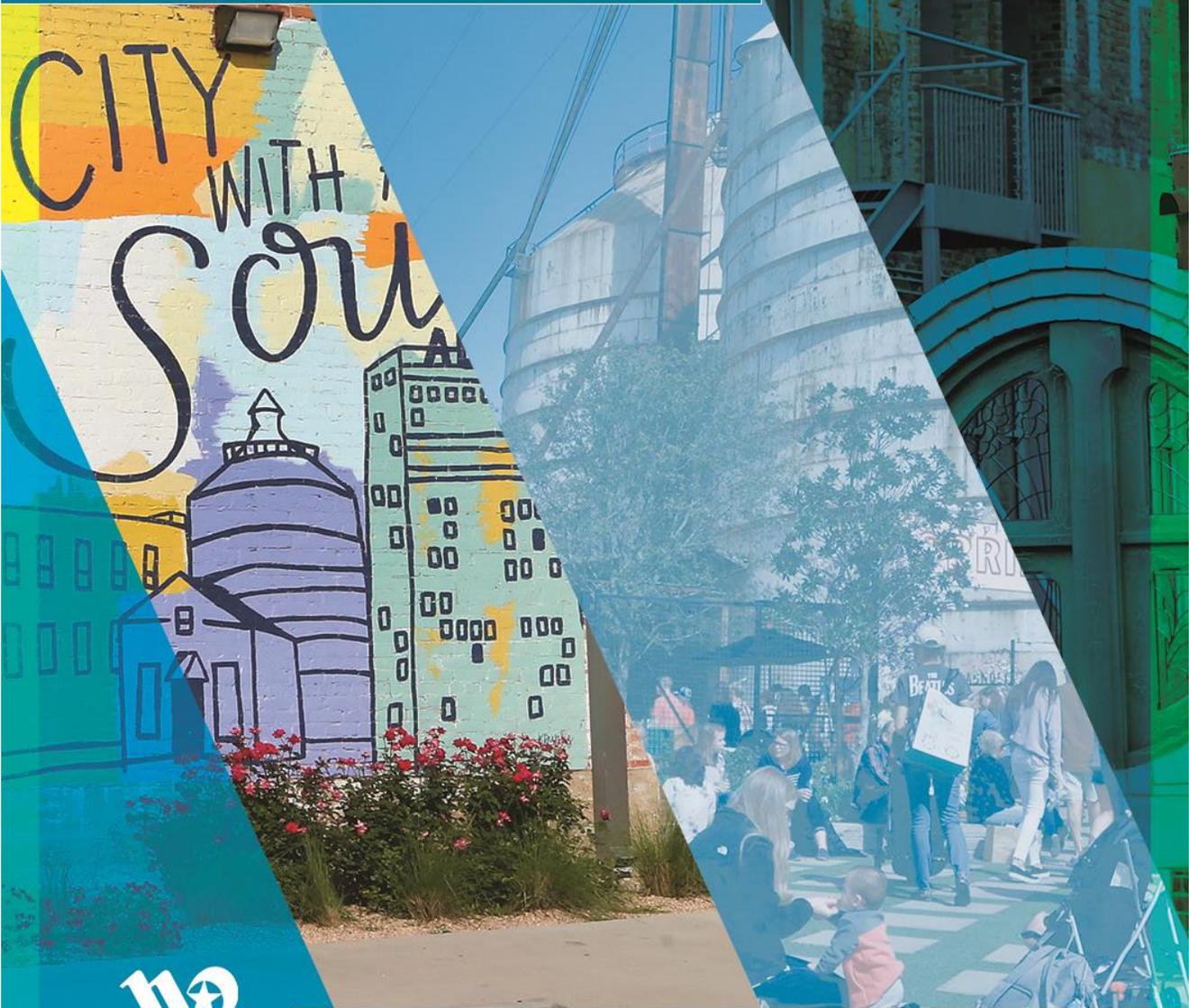


SALES TAX MONTHLY REPORT



MARCH 2023

Waco March 2023 Sales Tax Report

Background

The sales tax information is provided monthly by the Texas Comptroller. The sales tax information is reported 2 months in arrears; therefore, this report reflects January actual sales tax figures.

The city collected \$3,969,988 in January 2022. This amount continues the trend of above average collections. This amount is \$519,310 or 15.05% over the budgeted amount for the month.

	FY 23 Budget	FY 23 Actuals	Variance to Budget	FY 22 Actuals	FY 21 Actuals
FY 23					
Oct	3,813,659	4,572,933	759,274	3,987,666	3,358,924
Nov	4,351,059	5,207,763	856,704	5,022,083	4,084,701
Dec	3,705,236	4,253,706	548,470	3,975,154	3,450,354
Jan	3,629,811	4,539,320	909,509	4,520,451	3,329,482
Feb	5,105,306	6,021,931	916,625	5,365,589	4,652,710
Mar	3,450,678	3,969,988	519,310	3,889,036	3,297,481
Apr	3,422,393		-	3,666,717	2,870,347
May	4,303,919		-	5,059,187	5,370,413
Jun	3,455,392		-	4,226,780	4,236,094
Jul	3,700,522		-	4,265,084	4,031,318
Aug	4,388,772		-	4,875,255	4,531,386
Sep	3,813,659		-	4,454,956	3,941,023
Grand Total	47,140,406	28,565,641	4,509,891	53,307,957	47,154,233



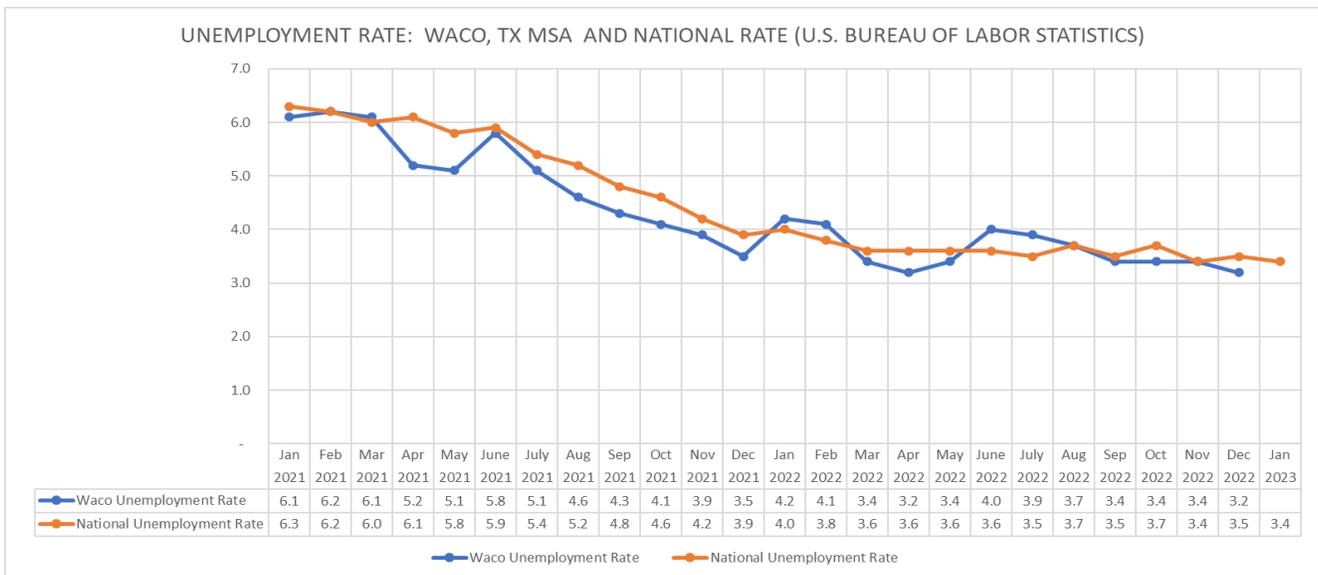
Sales Tax Factors and Forecast

The March report is the sixth report of the 2023 fiscal year. The city has seen a return to pre-pandemic activity. Sales tax collections for FY 22 were significantly above the \$43.6 million budget and were the highest that the city has collected. The collection was 22.3% or \$9.7 million higher than the budget amount and 13.1% or \$6.2M higher than collected in FY 21. The record collection is positive; however, the budget staff remains cautious as some of the increase in sales tax revenue is aided by other major factors occurring in the overall economy and there is a strong level of uncertainty in the overall economy right now.

In a typical year the budget staff expects sales tax collections to increase 3% to 6% year over year as the population and number of businesses increase. However, due to the abnormal economic factors the budget staff has set a conservative sales tax budget of \$47,140,406 for the 2023 fiscal year. All five collections this year, have exceeded budget and the prior year collections. The budget staff monitors sales tax collections and other economic factors throughout the year, to make any adjustments.

1. Decrease in Unemployment

The national unemployment rate decreased from 4.0% to 3.4%, from January 2022 to January 2023. This is close to the lowest unemployment rate since Covid shutdowns started in March 2020 and when unemployment peaked at 14.8%.¹ The national unemployment rate is also returning to pre-pandemic levels. The Waco Metro area’s unemployment rate is mirroring the national trend. The local unemployment rate decreased from 3.5% to 3.2% from December 2021 to December 2022 and peaked in April 2020 at 9.7% (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).² Local data is currently unavailable for January.



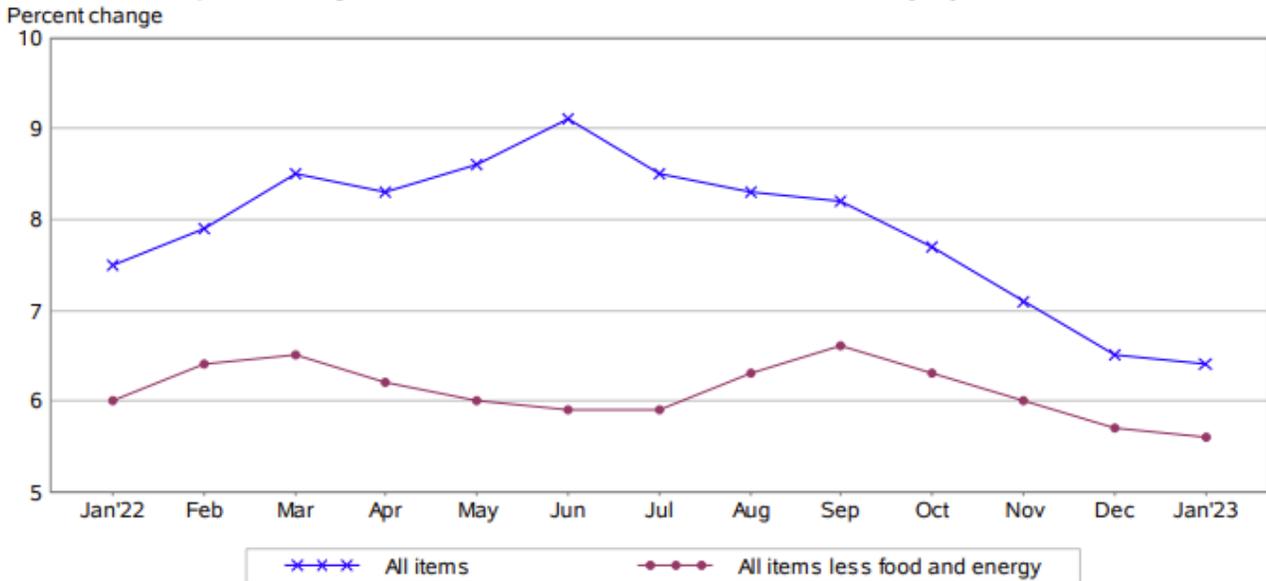
¹ <https://beta.bls.gov/dataViewer/view/timeseries/LNS14000000>

² https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.tx_waco_msa.htm

2. Inflation

The all-items index increased 6.4 percent for the 12 months ending January 2023, this was the smallest 12-month increase since the period ending January 2022. The all items less food and energy index rose 5.6 percent over the last 12 months. The energy index increased 8.7 percent for the 12 months ending in January 2023, the food index increased 10.1 percent over the last year; all these increases were smaller compared to the last year.³

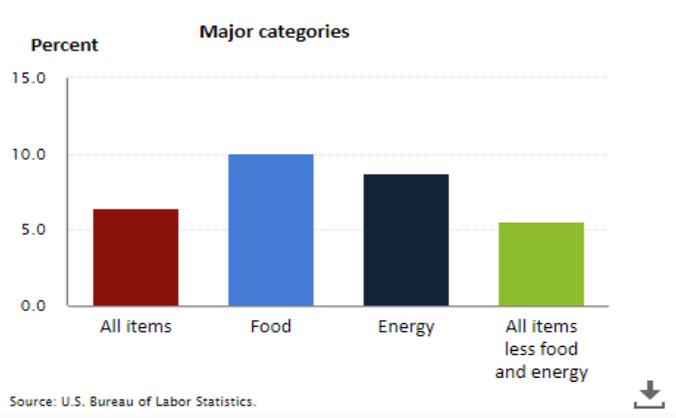
Chart 2. 12-month percent change in CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), not seasonally adjusted, Jan. 2022 - Jan. 2023



2. Oil Market

On February 24, 2022, Russia launched an invasion against Ukraine. While the United States and other countries have not entered the conflict directly, they have imposed international sanctions on Russian imports. The United States further expanded sanctions to ban Russian oil. While Russian oil accounts for less than 10% of supply in the United States the ban will result in lower supply.

12-month percentage change, Consumer Price Index, selected categories, January 2023, not seasonally adjusted



³ <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2022/consumer-prices-up-9-1-percent-over-the-year-ended-june-2022-largest-increase-in-40-years.htm>

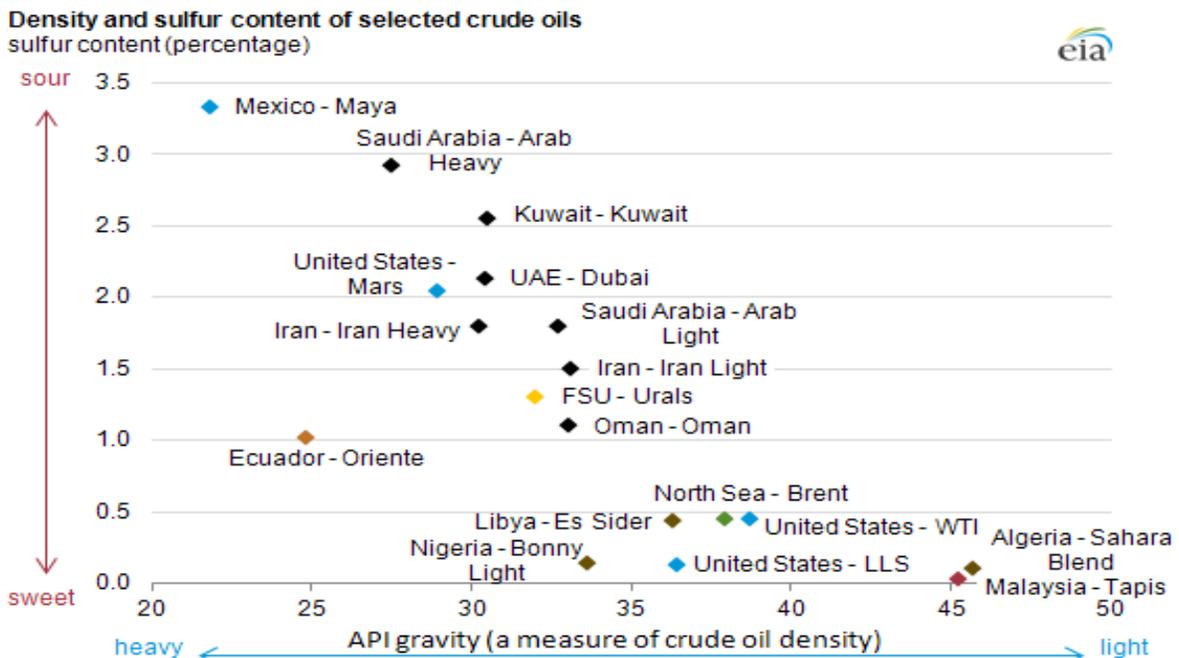
On May 31, 2022, the European Union (“EU”) imposed a ban on Russian oil like the United States. The policy’s goal is to ban 90% of Russian oil by the end of 2022. The EU heavily depends on Russian oil. The EU imports 41.1% of natural gas, 26.9% of crude oil and 46.7% of solid fuel from Russia.⁴

On October 4, 2022, The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (“OPEC”) announced it will cut the daily supply of oil production by 2 million barrels per day. Further reducing the global supply. This coupled with the increase in demand from the return to pre-pandemic activities will result in higher gasoline prices and other byproducts.

The United States’ oil production has different characteristics from those used in most refineries. The oil produced in the United States, mostly in Texas, is considered “light and sweet” crude oil. While conversion to gasoline is possible, the national infrastructure is overwhelmingly set up to refine “heavy and sour” crude oil. An increase in domestic oil production will not have an immediate effect on gas prices as most of the oil production will be exported.⁵

The major events listed above have drastically affected supply and demand in the global oil markets and may lead to significantly higher gas prices. The energy index rose 17.6 percent over the past 12 months. The gasoline index increased 17.5 percent over the same time span and the fuel oil index rose 68.5 percent. The index for electricity rose 14.1 percent over the last 12 months, and the index for natural gas increased 20.0 percent over the same period.

Crude oils have different quality characteristics



⁵ <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=7110>



As of March 6, 2023, the average price for gas is \$3.38 per gallon in the United States down from the peak of \$5.00 on June 13, 2022.⁶ In comparison, the price the City of Waco last paid for unleaded fuel was \$2.51 and Diesel fuel was \$3.06. The instability in the oil market will persist as long as the conflict in Ukraine continues, and interest rates fluctuate. This is an area that the Budget Team will continue to track and monitor as it has a potentially significant impact on the prices of goods and services the City purchases and receives as well as the fuel that the City uses in its operations. Further, as consumers spend more on fuel it leaves less funds available for discretionary purposes if wages don't increase at a corresponding rate.

3. Monetary Policy

At the start of the pandemic, the Federal Reserve lowered the interest rate banks pay to between 0.0% and 0.25%. This was done to make it easier and cheaper for banks to loan money out to the public and to avoid an economic recession or depression. However, as the country returns to pre pandemic activities the Federal Reserve increased interest rates by 0.25% in March, by 0.50% at the start of May, 0.75% in June, July, September, and November, 0.50% in December, 0.25% in January, and February to help lower the soaring inflation.⁷ This will



⁶ <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/GASREGW>

⁷ <https://tradingeconomics.com/united-states/interest-rate#:~:text=Interest%20Rate%20in%20the%20United,percent%20in%20December%20of%202008.>

increase interest rates consumers pay on loans, which should in theory reduce the supply of money available in the economy and lower inflation. If inflation continues to increase the federal reserve can continue to increase the rate. Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, vowed to raise interest rates to fight inflation “until the job is done.” Mr. Powell made the remarks during the 40th Annual Monetary Conference hosted by the Cato Institute.⁸

Forecast

The reported amount for March was higher than budget for the sixth straight month of this fiscal year and each month has also exceeded the prior year collections. The significant variance demonstrates the effects of the factors noted above as well as the resiliency of Wacoans. The budget staff is cautious as to whether this increase will continue to benefit the city long-term. The higher sales tax revenue does not necessarily mean a higher economic output by consumers. It simply could be that consumers are paying higher prices for the same goods.

If the conflict continues with Russia and Ukraine, gas prices may continue their volatility. This could have an impact on tourism with lower revenues for enterprise funds as well as sales tax revenues.

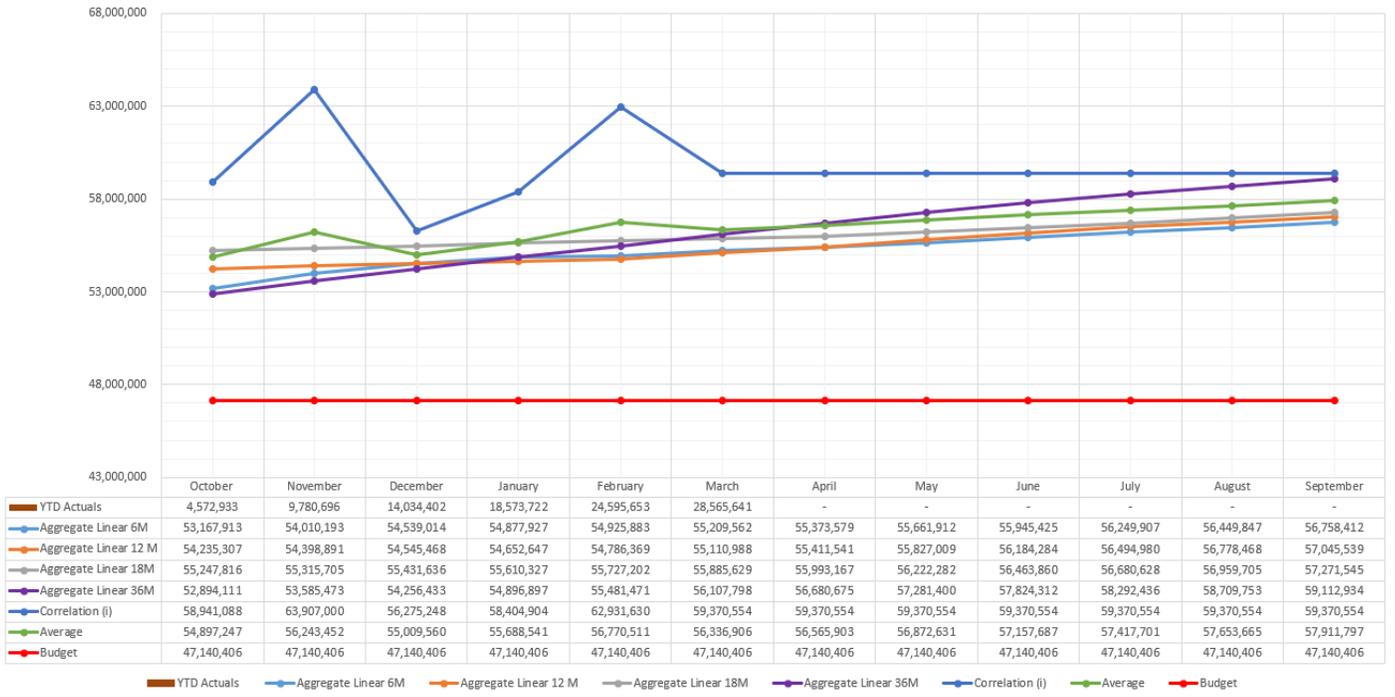
Furthermore, if inflation in the overall economy continues to stay high but wages do not increase, then spending on discretionary goods or non-essential products will decline. The city does not collect sales tax on most food and energy commodities, which are considered necessities. If prices continue to increase, it could lead to a lower number of visitors from outside the City or different purchasing patterns by residents.

Finally, Federal Reserve rate increases decrease the amount of money available to spend on discretionary items as consumers will pay more in interest payments. An increase in rates has a direct impact on economic output, as increasing rates are meant to limit the amount of available money in the economy. Further, increases in rates cause businesses to reconsider capital investments and growth as borrowing costs rise.

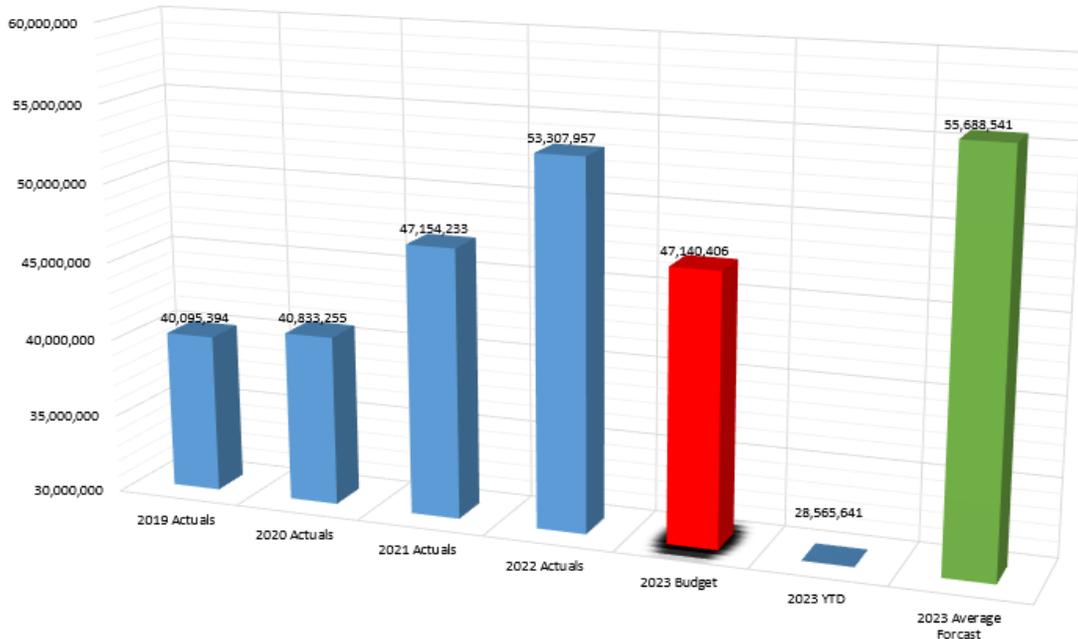
As a result of this and the most recent data, the forecast model is showing a significantly higher amount compared to the budget. As more data points are received, the projection for the year will tighten within a more predictable range.

⁸ <https://www.c-span.org/video/?522707-1/fed-chair-jerome-powell-discusses-monetary-policy>

Sales Tax Forecast



Sales Tax history



Texas at a Glance



- The State of Texas total net payments for this Period: \$ 633,219,482.51; Comparable Payment Prior Year: \$ 581,673,365.31; Percent Change: 8.86%.

All of the top 30 cities saw an increase in the period, except for Arlington.

The City of Waco ranked 30th in the state for the March net sales tax payment report.

Rank	City	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change
1	Houston	\$69,293,501.24	\$62,037,096.61	11.69%
2	San Antonio	\$35,476,020.39	\$33,161,153.47	6.98%
3	Dallas	\$32,062,606.70	\$28,650,902.68	11.90%
4	Austin	\$26,667,279.24	\$23,614,650.69	12.92%
5	Fort Worth	\$17,339,918.41	\$15,791,083.46	9.80%
6	Arlington	\$13,242,057.69	\$14,404,749.68	-8.07%
7	Frisco	\$10,085,532.63	\$9,507,244.18	6.08%
8	El Paso	\$9,883,311.33	\$9,339,132.87	5.82%
9	Round Rock	\$9,780,362.16	\$9,562,658.45	2.27%
10	Plano	\$8,876,401.30	\$7,749,109.94	14.54%
11	Irving	\$8,177,283.06	\$7,712,605.32	6.02%
12	Amarillo	\$7,408,222.99	\$6,976,928.55	6.18%
13	Lubbock	\$7,325,301.88	\$6,859,266.99	6.79%
14	Corpus Christi	\$6,960,059.34	\$6,453,897.70	7.84%
15	Grand Prairie	\$6,798,354.33	\$5,616,357.42	21.04%
16	Midland	\$6,723,062.52	\$4,917,108.69	36.72%
17	McAllen	\$6,672,895.17	\$6,326,487.78	5.47%
18	Odessa	\$6,213,368.55	\$4,145,624.08	49.87%
19	McKinney	\$6,148,030.35	\$5,992,894.28	2.58%
20	Sugar Land	\$4,982,571.51	\$4,777,526.35	4.29%
21	Richardson	\$4,978,297.68	\$4,353,366.54	14.35%
22	Abilene	\$4,940,429.24	\$4,050,190.08	21.98%
23	Conroe	\$4,885,261.77	\$4,418,753.46	10.55%
24	Tyler	\$4,756,454.89	\$4,185,356.79	13.64%
25	Laredo	\$4,591,156.39	\$3,950,665.87	16.21%
26	Grapevine	\$4,312,294.69	\$4,150,656.83	3.89%
27	Brownsville	\$4,192,069.85	\$3,988,552.13	5.10%
28	Allen	\$4,050,629.74	\$3,793,789.02	6.77%
29	Mesquite	\$4,009,827.18	\$3,922,587.39	2.22%
30	Waco	\$3,969,987.52	\$3,889,035.83	2.08%