



## *Mayor's Letter*

July 15, 2020

**ROAD UPDATE.** On July 1st, Ed Bell Construction workers removed the forms and began work on the new concrete in preparation to pour the opposite lane. That evening, as I examined the concrete on my daily golf-cart drive by, I noticed significant damage to the center-line edge of pavement.



After consulting with Councilwoman Serena Lepley, Mayor Protem Darrell West, and Kimley-Horn engineers, that night I issued a stop work directive to Ed Bell. After walking the road on July 2nd, we determined that workers had used an unapproved method to extract the steel L-Bars which are used to tie the lanes together. Following an on-site inspection with Ed Bell representatives, we determined that 89 of the 245 fifteen-foot-wide panels had excessive spalling and would need to be fully or partially replaced. Ed Bell accepted responsibility and we agreed that 13 panels would be fully demolished and repaved. In addition, Ed Bell would hire concrete specialist W.O.E. Construction to sawcut

the entire length of the street to remove the remaining damaged areas and all L-Bars. Afterward, W.O.E. will use precision drills to install and epoxy new rebar in place of the L-Bars.

The problem was caught very early in the project and **will have no effect on the overall timetable.** I still expect the project to be completed early. Since the work was defective, **there is no financial impact to the Town,** the contractors are fully responsible for all of the repair and repaving costs. To eliminate any future issues, Ed Bell will discontinue using the L-bar method. Instead, we have approved the installation of two-piece D.O.T. steel splicing couplers which are typically used on interstate highway type projects. Ed Bell will absorb the additional material costs. The problems are solved, I am confident in Ed Bell's commitment to Lakewood Village, and I expect no issues moving forward.

**REPUBLIC** The quarterly bulk trash pickup will be on Saturday August 8th. **There will be no bulk trash pickup on Stowe Lane. No bulk on Stowe.** Due to construction traffic, grading, and utility relocates, the area near the street must remain clear of all trash and debris. For Stowe residents who cannot wait until next quarter, there will be a designated location on Melody Lane where you can place your bulk trash. Let me be absolutely clear. **Republic will not pick up any bulk trash on Stowe.** The same procedure will apply each quarter for whichever street is under construction at that time.

Regarding trash collections. In June, at my request, Republic changed the driver's route so they pickup Stowe first when they reach Lakewood Village (usually just past 7 am). This allows them to work ahead of any construction vehicles. Let me point out the obvious. **Stowe lane is one-way during construction.** If you don't put your garbage cans on the open side of the street, they can't pick it up. If you put your cans behind the barricades instead of across the street with your neighbor, they aren't going to pick it up. **And, they take pictures ! So, don't bother complaining, they will not come back.** We have six more streets and 11 months to go, we're very busy (see above) and we aren't going to spend any time on this type of silliness.

**OVER ↘**

**SUDDENLINK** Last week, after consulting with our engineers, I approved Suddenlink's request to begin installation work on Stowe. They have rapidly completed boring and installing cable on Melody and Carrie Lanes. Obviously its very crowded now on Stowe with everyone trying to keep out of each others way. Suddenlink will be installing the main connection hub near the intersection of Melody and Stowe. After the future Lakewood Village Drive is constructed nearby this will allow for a direct fiber connection up to Eldorado Parkway. Once the current installation is complete, we will have a public information session at Town Hall where potential customers can meet with Suddenlink representatives (remember, under my emergency decree, no door-to-door soliciting is allowed).

**OUR 2021 BUDGET.** Over the last two meetings, the Town Council has discussed next year's Fiscal 2021 budget. The Town and MDD budgets will be voted on at our August 13th Meeting. For the next four years, we must make two bond payments for the two concrete road projects. The combined payments for next year total \$409,176. However, in my proposed budget the debt servicing property tax rate will generate only \$222,000. Why don't we just raise the tax rate to cover the whole payment ? **That would be easy.** But we don't need to do that. We have other revenue streams which allow us to keep the tax rate low. The largest and most important is the sales tax you pay. Two percent of every purchase goes to Lakewood Village.

**SALES TAX.** In case you are new to Lakewood Village, there are several Towns that share our 75068 zip code, including Little Elm and Oak Point. Little Elm is the most populous and has the post office, which is why everyone tries to put that on your mail, packages, bills, and even your checks. **But you don't live in Little Elm, you live in Lakewood Village.** You must insist that merchants use the correct address. **Do NOT let anyone tell you that you live in Little Elm.** When you order online, of course they are going put the city as Little Elm - because it's 30 times our size. **You MUST tell them you live in Lakewood Village.** You have to pay the sales tax anyway so it's in your best interest to make sure it comes here. Without it, your taxes would be significantly higher.

This year, our sales tax collections have increased by 55 percent. When our current fiscal year ends in September, I expect we will have received **almost \$80,000 in sales tax.** This is an all-time record for us. And, think about it, we don't have any commercial businesses in Lakewood Village - we are 100 percent residential. All of our sales taxes come from online purchases, deliveries, and cell phone bills. Yes, cell phone bills have city taxes. So, check and see what billing address they have for you. It's easy. If it says 123 Melody Lane, Little Elm, that's not right, you need to change it. It's really important for everyone to watch this. **The Texas Comptrollers office is proposing new rules on sales taxes that would favor the destination location rather than the shipping point.** That's could be really great for us.

We're working harder than ever to keep moving everything forward, and our future looks brighter each day. **There's never been a better time to be in Lakewood Village.**

Dr. Mark E. Vargus  
Mayor



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