



Mayor's Letter
November 15, 2016

Hello Everyone,

THE HALLOWEEN HAYRIDE WAS a sweet success thanks to the work of our many volunteers. You can't have a hayride without hay and for the last three years, Mike Fritz of Pilot Point has stepped up and provided it to us at no cost. As he does each year, Councilman Gary Newsome acquired the hay, the trailers, and the drivers that successfully completed their mission of uniting children with candy. Many thanks to helpers Betsy Seiberling, Dick Seiberling, and Janie Newsome. The trailers were provided by Gary Schroeder, Chuck Place, Marv Moore, Van Freeman, and Gary Newsome and were expertly driven by Jonathan Anderson, Dan Tantalo, Jamie Tantalo, Darrell West, and of course Gary. Make that candy last, the next sugarcoated opportunity will be the Easter Egg Hunt on April 15th – only 150 days away !

CHRISTMAS COMES A LITTLE EARLIER IN THE VILLAGE THIS YEAR. It's a busy time of year for Santa and his schedule fills up quickly. The Village's holiday party will be held December 4th from 2pm to 4pm. and will include refreshments, ornament decorating, painting with Mrs. Claus, and as always pictures with the man of the hour. The earlier date will give everyone the ability to include the Santa photos in your holiday cards. We are also going to offer you the option to receive a digital copy via email, so you can personalize it and print whatever you need for the holidays. **As with all our town events,** you can leave the wallet at home, just bring the children and have a great time.

2017 - A MEMORABLE YEAR FOR LWV On April 26, 2017 Lakewood Village will celebrate our 40th anniversary. A lot has happened in forty years, and the new year will likely bring us even greater changes. Clearly, there is a lot of development activity all around the north metroplex area and we are positioned in the center of it. We face an unprecedented set of challenges – the toll bridge has brought a 200-fold increase in traffic and turned a dead-end Garza Lane into the Eldorado Parkway corridor and I-35 transit access way. Traffic counts will continue to rise and accelerate when the planned commercial development at FM720 and Eldorado occurs.

Closer to home, today we have almost two-thirds of our Town currently for sale or with active development plans. For some perspective, let me give you the numbers. **The LWV that we all see every day is about 260 acres,** that's all the houses and empty lots in town. The LandPlan property across from Town Hall and all of the adjacent undeveloped woods (that are all for sale, by the way) total 175 acres. On the north side of Eldorado, across from the Town entrance, there is another 180 acres for sale (including Steve Harvey's property), **and a developer currently has most of it under contract.** So imagine that on any given day, one developer could walk in the door and your Town will almost double – how do you plan for that? Now suppose that parts of some properties are in Oak Point's jurisdiction, some Little Elm's, some Denton County's, but the biggest parcels are in LWV's jurisdiction. And just to spice things up, try to figure out the area's utilities when the Public Utility Commission's water and sewer boundaries are split across four different providers, **and Lakewood Village isn't one of them.** It's understandable that it never entered your mind, but we've been negotiating and working on solving the utilities puzzle **for over three years.**

I was talking with Darrell West recently and he told me “you can't stop development; all you can do is manage it.” **He's exactly right.** We have a vision for the future Lakewood Village and the Council and I are spending a tremendous amount of time working the issues so that we can manage the growth when that developer does walk in the door. That's very likely to be in 2017 and when it happens, it's going to be complicated and there's going to be a lot of moving parts. We will be ready, and we're on top of it.

IMPACT FEES. At our November Meeting, the Town Council adopted and I signed into law our impact fee ordinance. Although it sounds kind of dull, **this was a tremendous achievement for the town.** Impact fees allow the Town to collect from developers their fair share of our cost of expanding town utilities to serve the new construction. Without impact fees, the entire cost of expanding our wastewater facilities or adding a water well would be paid for by the existing customers, meaning you and me.

Seems pretty simple, so why didn't the Town already have this in place? Several reasons. **First**, the Texas Legislature imposes a lot of complicated procedural steps that must be followed exactly, which is difficult to navigate without hiring an expert. The town actually tried to impose impact fees over twenty years ago, but they didn't do it correctly and it didn't survive a court challenge. **Second**, it isn't cheap; we spent over \$50,000 with Kimley-Horn performing the engineering and running the process. We actually kept the cost down by providing a lot of the data collection and analysis ourselves. The engineers can't do the calculations without access to accurate data so a couple of years ago we implemented a new system of data collection for the wastewater and water facilities performance which Clint has worked diligently maintaining on the LWV cloud. Throughout the process, Clint Bushong and I had many meetings with the engineers both in LWV and at their offices in McKinney to resolve various issues and design parameters. Starting two years ago, we had our own George Stuyck create surveys and GIS mappings of all of our water and sewer lines, valves, manholes, hydrants, lift-stations, power-lines, and all the water tanks and wells which were invaluable to the engineers. As you can see, the process actually started years ago. I think of it like an iceberg – what you actually see is only a small part of the effort that goes on and the years of planning. And most importantly, I'm very appreciative of the hard work and dedication by the impact fee citizen volunteers. This is just the latest example of how we are **managing** for our future development.

THE TOWN AUDITORS were here October 31 – November 4th. This year's audit took an extra day due to the extensive capital improvements that we made last year. If we look a little tired, it's because we undertook 11 different infrastructure investment projects during the last year, from fire hydrants to water tanks to the handicapped parking lot at Town Hall. I will go into more detail on our financial year-in-review in my January letter after the auditor has presented his findings at the January council meeting.

The Holidays are getting close; keep your eyes out for the new banners at our entrance. **It's never been a better time to be in Lakewood Village.**

Dr. Mark E. Vargus
Mayor



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