



Mayor's Monthly Newsletter

Written by Mayor Andrew Mitcham

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Mayors Newsletter December 2019

Hello Friends and Neighbors,

Another year is drawing to a close as well as another decade! I started the 2010's as a bachelor living in a totally different part of the state and will end the decade as a husband, father, homeowner, business owner, and elected official. Quite the 10-year journey! I'm looking forward to the next 10-year journey with Jersey Village as my foundation and I hope you are, too.

With the next decade in mind, earlier this year, City Council directed staff to formulate for review a 10-year Capital Improvement Plan. Typically, the Council reviews a 5-year CIP each year during the budget retreat. The goal of this 10-year review was to gain a better understanding of big projects on the city's radar, how those projects impact long-term finances, and whether providing property tax relief to homeowners would be possible.

I'm happy to report that over the next decade, citizens can expect constant maintenance and improvements to infrastructure, parks, and facilities as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Citizens can also expect the highest level of support for their Police, Fire, and EMS services.

Council's review also set the stage for targeted property tax relief to Jersey Village homeowners. Following an increased focus on economic development, sales tax revenues are projected to be the highest ever for Jersey Village this year. We may soon see annual sales tax revenues outpace property tax revenues within the next few years— an important achievement as the Legislature imposes property tax caps. I applaud our Council, City Manager, previous City Manager, and previous Councils for seeing this limitation on the horizon many years ago and working diligently towards a secure financial future.

Combined with increased sales tax revenue, the city has secured, to date, \$6,553,093 in flood mitigation grant funding with another \$12,928,000 applied for. By utilizing flood-specific grant funds instead of city General Funds to implement the Long-Term Flood Recovery Plan, the city's financial projections never dip below our 90-day reserve, even without taking on any new debt. In fact, our city is on track to be 100% debt-free within the next 10 years.

With the 10-year CIP review complete, Council unanimously voted to increase the Homestead, Over-65, and Disabled Persons property tax exemptions. Due to these increased exemptions, Jersey Village homeowners saw a property tax bill 12% lower on average (thank you to my friend and colleague Councilman Bobby Warren for crunching the numbers!).

Entering 2020, the city will continue to find ways to put money back into the pockets of Jersey Village homeowners. Namely, the city has applied to join the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System (CRS). When officially accepted in May, people living in the 100 year or 500 year flood plain will see a 15% discount on flood insurance premiums. Folks living outside of the flood plain would receive a 5% discount on premiums.

As we enter the new "roaring '20's", I'm grateful for our community's tradition of long-term vision, diligent planning, and responsible fiscal stewardship.

From my family to yours, we wish a happy holiday season and a prosperous new year!

Best Wishes,

Andrew Mitcham

Mayor

Jersey Village