



Mayor's Monthly Newsletter

Written by Mayor Rod Erskine

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Traffic Woes

Over the past couple of months, I have heard many concerns regarding traffic issues in Jersey Village; both the volume of traffic and drivers who violate the law. While these are not new complaints, recently the problem has gotten worse due to school starting and the volume of traffic at both JVHS and Post, and the ongoing construction at the Hwy. 290 interchange with Beltway 8. Suggestions I have seen include lowering the speed limits, adding stop signs, installing speed bumps, and deployment of additional police officers at specific locations to ensure compliance with traffic laws. While all of these could result in safer driving, possibly only temporarily, some would also potentially have unintended consequences by simply shifting traffic to other streets. We could also add additional police shifts - but be forewarned that each additional shift will cost the taxpayers (you and I) approximately \$300,000 per year, most of which would come from tax increases. Revenue from traffic fines is not adequate to fund the police force because, as some of you know, the State of Texas takes about 50% of each fine we collect. Proceeds from traffic fines are not a large source of our revenue on a percentage basis, and is capped by state law. Funding for additional law enforcement would likely have to come primarily from the taxpayers.

However, none of these steps addresses what is the real issue in my opinion - it is just too easy to cut through JV between Jones Rd. and Beltway 8. Philippine St. and Gulf Bank Rd. provide easy access from Beltway 8 to Jones Rd. via Seattle St., Lakeview Dr., and Jersey Dr. to Rio Grande St., and then out to Jones Rd. either using Village Dr., or by cutting through the golf course parking lot. You are very aware of this if you live on these streets, or use them during rush hour.

Compare driving through JV to trying to drive through some of the neighborhoods in the Memorial area where you feel like you are wandering around in a maze - because there are few through-going streets. The residents know how to get around but visitors easily get lost. I suspect there is little cut through traffic. If we wanted to, we could make it more difficult for non-residents to cut through our city by selectively breaking a few of our streets into non-through going segments. Residents would know how to get around the city, but most cut through drivers would find it far more "inconvenient" than it is today. For example, if Seattle St. was a dead end at the intersection with Solomon St., there would be no cut through traffic, and no need for speed bumps. This could also be used to better control school traffic.

Like most things, there are pros and cons to this idea, and some will be supportive while others will object. Careful consideration would need to be given before we would actually commit to doing something like this, particularly to any potential impact on emergency services. But, I would like to find a long term solution to both the cut through traffic, and managing the drivers around the school. I would appreciate you sending me your thoughts and comments via email (rerskine@ci.jersey-village.tx.us).

Until next month.

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