

MAYOR'S NEWLETTER
JANUARY 2010

Recently, the City of Jersey Village asked the United States Postal Service for a unique zip code. In the past, the USPS has asked that Jersey Village residents and businesses use Houston, TX as our mailing address; this is confusing and insulting to our civic pride. While the postal service denied our request for a unique zip code, they did change their data base so we can now use Jersey Village as our mailing address. As an example:

16310 Lakeview
Jersey Village, TX 77040

Among those confused were the people that collect sales tax and pay the amounts to the various cities. Most of the sales tax money collected goes to the state, but 1.5% of the purchase price of sold goods goes to Jersey Village. The amount collected is significant for our city totaling 25% of our gross revenues.

Retail operations collect sales tax at the point of sale and send all that money to the state. The state, in turn, is supposed to send each city their share of the collected sales tax. We have suspected that we are not receiving all the money earmarked for Jersey Village; we suspect that a lot of money is sent to Houston either by omission or errors in accounting. In 2006, our Finance Department made a thorough audit of the tax collection process and was able secure a one-time payment of \$ 600,000 in unpaid sales tax plus an additional amount of about \$ 200,000 annually.

We don't need to make the transition immediately, but the hope is that businesses and residents will begin using Jersey Village as their address in bills and on correspondence. The effect will be two-fold: (1) using "Jersey Village" will get the city's name more attention and instill more civic pride and (2) it should allow the city to capture more of its rightful share of the sales tax revenue since the state will be able to identify Jersey Village as the appropriate recipient of the taxes. The tax collected on accounts like cell phones and delivered services like bottled water should be credited to Jersey Village; by using Jersey Village on the account, companies and tax offices should be able to get that properly credited to our city.

Circling back to last month's subject, the city is quickly moving forward on our preliminary study of the possibility of a Transit Oriented Development (TOD). Our consultant is studying the possibilities of TOD and the effects of such a development on Jersey Village as we know it. There will be public hearings to share information on the study and to get public input on the project. This type of project will only happen with the suggestions and support of the residents of Jersey Village.

The sessions will be held at City Hall on January 12 and 14 at 7 PM. The session on January 12 is designed to collect input from all stakeholders including residents; the results will be reported at the meeting on January 14. I invite all residents to attend to listen, learn and direct comments to the consultants and to your city council members.

