

Memorandum

Date: July 27, 2020

To: Mayor and City Council

Subject: **City Growth and Progress 2016-20**



Since 2016, the City of Elgin has experienced a continuing evolution from a small rural town to a city on the verge of significant growth and development. Based on current data, Elgin could easily double in size in the next 3-5 years; which has necessitated “change” in various areas and created a wide range of challenges for city operations.

While there are still many issues to be addressed, following is a list of some of the major accomplishments resulting from the work of city staff - in conjunction with the Mayor and City Council - supporting growth of the Elgin community over the past four years:

Residential Development

Managing the largest residential development plan in city’s history (will triple the size of the Elgin community at full build-out)

- **Twelve (12)** residential developments that are planned to include **8,000+** homes have been approved or vested rights within the city or its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).
- **Four (4)** projects are now actively engaged in construction; and at least **three** more should begin construction in the next 6-12 months.
- Those **7** developments alone represent **3,854** homes planned at total build-out.

CITY

- **Homestead** - County Line Rd; 475 lots
- **Peppergrass** - County Line Rd; 285 lots
- **Stone Creek Ranch** - FM1100; 289 lots
- **Saratoga Farms** - Lee Dildy Blvd; 360 lots
Nearly 200 homes constructed
- **Eagles Landing 2-3** - CL Rd; 250 lots
- **Lone Willow** - County Line Rd; 770 lots
- **Rolling Meadows** - Carlson Ln; 21 lots

ETJ - Travis County

- **Brickston MUD** - USHwy290; 2,497 lots
- **Elm Creek 2** - USHwy290; 402 lots
- **Caesar’s Crossing** - USHwy290; 234 lots

ETJ - Bastrop County

- **Harvest Ridge MUD** - CL Rd; 1,200 lots
- **Trinity Ranch MUD** - Upper Elgin Rd; 1,716 lots

Private Investment in City Infrastructure

- Secured **\$3M** in developer contributions for upgrades to County Line Road (*first of its kind cost-sharing plan for City*)
- Secured commitment of **\$8M+** in unencumbered cash in payments from MUDs with no corresponding cost – (*\$8M to be spent at Council’s discretion*)
- Secured land sites for future EISD schools and facilities (*at no cost to schools or taxpayers*)

Capital Improvements & Investment

- Invested **\$23M** in city infrastructure and facilities (*including **\$6.5M** in funding from grants or other outside resources*)
- Constructed Lee Dildy Blvd, the best and highest quality road ever built by the City (*Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone funding – no cost to other city taxpayers*)
- Enhanced drinking water supply through historic interconnection with Aqua WSC (*Elgin is now the first City Aqua WSC has ever purchased water from*)
- **\$10M** invested in numerous upgrades and improvements to water and wastewater systems
- Completed largest one-time vehicle and equipment investment ever made by the City (*with no increase in fees or taxes*)

Parks & Recreation

- Designed and constructed City’s first Recreation Center/Emergency Shelter (*greatly expanding rec programs*)
- Upgraded highly visible courts at Memorial Park through a public-private partnership (*now in constant use*)
- Adopted new policy for payment of parkland fees by developers in lieu of land dedication (*providing City greater control and discretion over location/quality of new parks & parks facilities*)
- Constructed City’s first Parks Maintenance Building
- Received **\$200k** St. David’s Foundation “Healthiest Places Grant” - providing new playground equipment and fitness apparatus at Memorial Park

Community Development

- Developed Phase 1 of the **Ascension Seton Elgin Health Center** through a public-private partnership that will ultimately result in the construction of greatly expanded medical facilities and services (*including a ‘micro-hospital’*)
- Construction of Austin Community College – Phase II
- Created the City’s first *Truck Route*, diverting all large truck traffic from Main Street (*improving safety and enhancing overall quality of life for residents and downtown business owners*)
- Continued development of Elgin’s award-winning historic downtown that is at near full occupancy (*amongst highest occupancy rate in the City’s history*)

Staff Development

- Restructured/reorganized a professional senior management team (*5 new Dept Heads*)
- Established the City’s first true Human Resources Department
- Developed the largest and possibly most diverse Elgin Police Department (EPD) in City’s history

Financial Management

- Dramatically improved budgeting process, overall financial management, & reporting
- Developed City’s first Five-Year Capital Plan
- Developed valid funding & lease agreements with the Elgin Chamber of Commerce and Community Cupboard

City Services

- Developed and implemented **City of Elgin Coronavirus (COVID-19) Readiness Plan**
- Significantly enhanced Code Enforcement services and activity
- Initiated junk vehicle joint initiative of EPD and Code Enforcement (*abated nearly 200 junked vehicles throughout City*)
- Created the first Building Standards Commission (*to address substandard structures*)
- Upgraded operations staffing in response to overall increased demand for services
- Established new EPD minimum staffing policy (*Now at least 3 officers + 1 supervisor on duty 24-hours per day*)

Economic Development

- Acquired 60 acres of land, connecting US290 with 80 other acres of city-owned land, to create numerous shovel-ready sites for prospective new businesses
- Recruited One Point Solutions to relocate to Elgin, occupying a vacated building in the Business Park & creating 65 new jobs
- Supported private acquisition and clean-up of the Elgin Cotton Oil Mill (*abating numerous property code violations and long-time public eyesore*)

NEW RESTAURANTS/FOOD SERVICE

- Luigi’s Italian Restaurant
- Panda Express
- Laredo Taco
- Quick Trip (QT)
- Chemn Café
- Burger King (coming soon)
- Starbucks (coming soon)

****Coming Soon****

(Aug-Sept Ribbon-cuttings/Groundbreakings)

- **New City Council Chambers**
- **Sierra Apartments** (*largest and best apartment complex ever built in Elgin*)
- **Circle Brewery** (*one of a kind in Texas/historic project*)
- **New 'Welcome to Elgin' signs**
- **CARTS Station** (*downtown multi-use, mass transit terminal*)
- **Rivers Building** (*opening anticipated for August or September*)
- **New Memorial Park Restrooms and Playscape** (*likely completion by EOY*)
- **Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion**

This extensive list of achievements provides some insight to the unique set of challenges faced by city administration as growth and change has occurred in Elgin since the fall of 2016. While this list is significant, many other issues have been addressed as well.

Although Elgin's past is filled with many successes, it seems unlikely that any previous administration achieved as many significant and diversified accomplishments in any other four-year period in the City's history.

We are faced with great challenges at this time related to the pandemic and general civil unrest that unfortunately tend to generate negative feelings and frustration with government in general – and Elgin is not immune from that sentiment among some of our citizens. And while we will continue to face those challenges for the foreseeable future, there are many reasons for all to feel good about the many accomplishments the City of Elgin has achieved over the last 4 years – and to be very optimistic about Elgin's future.



Thomas L. Mattis
City Manager