

Christine Hall

FOR ROSWELL CITY COUNCIL

Recap 2020 Transportation Liaison



My first year on Council serving the residents of Roswell has certainly been eventful. As I reflect on the year just passed, I would like to thank you for your support because your goals, concerns, ideas are what it is all about for me. I believe it is my job as a Council Member to be “your” voice at the table.

In particular, my overarching goals in my approach to serving on City Council are:

- Better, productive lines of communication with residents
- Better accountability to residents for tax dollars spent
- Setting policy that aligns with the vision of the residents

In 2020, I served as the Transportation Liaison. These are some of the action items I focused on during the past year:

- Met with resident groups to help drive solutions to on-going and anticipated traffic issues.
- Initiated the Historic Gateway Citizens Advisory Committee to provide input for visual enhancements on the Historic Gateway Project. Hopefully, this will serve as a model for future citizen involvement and improved communication with the city about transportation projects.

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- Identified a more efficient electronic permit procedure instead of manual paper permits. This utilizes software already owned and used by other city departments, like Community Development.
- Fostered improved communications by encouraging the Transportation Department to update timelines on longer term projects on the city website.
- Initiated an update to the sidewalk metrics that considers the amount and speed of traffic on a road as part of the calculation.
- Initiated a Crowd Funding option for PTV Crossings, so that it is not a complete taxpayer burden.

In my work life as a finance professional, I have lived through many budget seasons, from both sides of the coin, so to speak. I approached my first budget review as an elected official with “fresh eyes”, with the goal to find the best balance between “lean and mean” and “investing for the best tomorrow”. I proposed changes to some of the budget categories (Details – CH4R FB Post – June 8, 2020). But ultimately, the budget and millage rate were adopted as proposed. I did vote against the proposed budget and millage rate because in my view:

- We needed to “true-up” to actual costs instead of using projections where new information was received during the process.
- We needed further work to find “10% more” in discretionary spending cuts.
- We needed to strive for a better balance between today’s operations and tomorrow’s investments.
- We needed to invest for the future in a more precise and targeted way.

Because COVID-19 created such a challenging budget environment, the Mayor instituted a quarterly budget review. In the new year, I will continue to evaluate the options as we proactively manage the city’s finances in a fiscally responsible manner.

My approach to the budget is admittedly more in-depth than average, which is one reason I questioned a revenue shortfall in the Occupational Tax when actual versus projected data was presented at a committee meeting during the summer. Ultimately it was discovered that a different IRS data source chart was utilized in the calculation process than the one that was the basis for the current OT schedule. This data source difference accounted for the significant shortfall. As we go forward, the original IRS data source chart will be used and in 2021 a one-time tax credit may apply for mitigation.

It seems like a lifetime ago, but back in March the East Roswell Economic Action Committee held a public forum where they discussed their report on their year-long study of the Holcomb Bridge Corridor. In related efforts, I voted for updates to the UDC that emphasize the creation of destination places in our Mixed-Use Districts, instead of primarily residential projects.

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During the budget process I supported the addition of an Economic Development Director to help position Roswell for future strategic growth. In the new year, economic issues will continue to be a focus, especially as businesses await the opening of another round of the PPP program. Ultimately, it is you, the residents of Roswell who will set the priorities for the coming year.

I would love to hear from you - your ideas, opportunities, concerns as we begin down the path of 2021. Thank you again for the opportunity to serve you and the city of Roswell. Happy New Year!