2019 – A Year in Review

As we approach the end of another busy year, I’d like to share some of the incredible accomplishments of Fiscal Year 2019. From bringing the Sapphire Bay development to Rowlett, to crafting and adopting the 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update, to lowering the monthly base water rate – it’s been a very busy year. The last three years have literally been “groundbreaking” for the City as we began construction on the $1 billion in private investment we expect over the next five years. Speaking of groundbreaking – Sapphire Bay’s Crystal Lagoon has broken ground, the pace at which construction is taking place is incredible! With these achievements, as well as those on the following pages, it’s so exciting to see our community’s vision come to life. I hope you enjoy this year-end update about YOUR hometown!

I would like to take a moment to thank our incredible City staff. Without the hard work they put in daily, the accomplishments shared in this newsletter would not be possible. I would also like to thank my fellow Councilmembers for the exemplary leadership and direction they continue to provide this community and organization. Good governance is a key pillar to the success of any business and this responsibility to our citizens is taken very seriously.

The holiday season is all about gathering with those we love and enjoy - family, friends and community. My wish and prayer for you during this reflective time of year is that God continue to watch over you and your family, bringing health and prosperity now and throughout the New Year.

Mayor Tammy Dana-Bashian

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2019 General Election
The May 2019 General Election for Rowlett Mayor and City Council had a full slate of candidates. A special thanks to the Rowlett citizens who exercised their right to vote and make a difference at the local level.
Elected or Re-elected:

Mayor
Tammy Dana-Bashian

Councilmember Place 2
Brownie Sherrill

Councilmember Place 4
Whitney P. Laning

Councilmember Place 6
Martha Brown

2019 Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update
“This vision guides City Staff and decision makers to determine whether or not decisions are ultimately in conformance with the long-term aspiration for Rowlett as determined by its residents.”

In 2019, Rowlett updated the Realize Rowlett 2020 comprehensive land use plan, which was adopted in 2011. Little did we know then that in just a short period of time, we would have major projects in every part of the city and every strategically defined opportunity area. These projects are providing jobs and tax base benefitting our community today!

Rowlett is realizing its vision to balance Rowlett’s growth with its small town feel to provide a place with affordable and diverse housing, quality restaurants and retail, and major employers; while caring for its existing neighborhoods and maintaining its roads and infrastructure.

View the 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update

Development is Here!
As a result of numerous development projects, we have experienced $418.5 million in new private investment in the past three years and expect to see and additional $1 billion dollars over the next five to seven years. Potentially, this will add $7-$8 million a year in property tax revenues.

Recent and Planned Development Projects:
- 24 Hour Fitness
- Baylor Scott & White Hospital Expansion
- Canterbury Cove
- Home 2 Suites by Hilton
- Homestead @ Liberty Grove – Ph II
- Lakeside Villas
- Lakeview Seniors
- Magnolia Landing
- Northhaven Ph II
- Residents of Longbranch
- Retail (Golden Chick/Starbucks/Texadelphia/Jersey Mike’s, Panera)
- Sapphire Bay
- Shoppes at Lakeview
- Spec’s Wine, Spirits and Fine Foods
- The Mansions/Towers at Bayside
- The Mansions on the Lake
- The Orchard
- Willowood
- Woodmere
- Woodside

Rowlett is an Award-winning City!
The City of Rowlett strives to achieve the highest standards in all areas of business to demonstrate our commitment to excellence.

In 2019, Rowlett was named:
- Certified Scenic City - Gold Level - Scenic Texas
- Top 10 Great Small Towns to Retire - US News and World Report
- 8th Fastest Growing City in the Country – US Census Bureau
The Texas Comptrollers Transparency Star Program includes five areas: Traditional Finance, Debt, Purchasing, Economic Development, and Pension. The City of Rowlett was the 4th in the state, of over 4,800 governmental entities including municipalities and school districts, to earn all 5 of the stars.

Visit Rowlett.com to view the City’s Budget, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, Monthly Financial Reports, Investment Reports, Check Registers and Debt Information. In addition, you can read the City’s adopted financial policy and investment policy.

Rowlett Legislative Days

In February, members of the City of Rowlett and Rowlett Chamber of Commerce met with our State Representatives in Austin during Rowlett Legislative Days. This was an opportune time to share our concerns and issues about particular bills being considered and our legislative agenda.

Results were mixed. While key initiatives including a bill authored by the City were approved, significant legislation was passed that reduced City revenues and financially benefits telecommunication companies. Other legislation passed which eroded municipal authority and zoning powers in favor of developers, and hamstrung the ability of local government to manage its budget affairs.

Closed Captioning for Public Meetings

This year, equipment was added to enable us to stream public meetings in HD with closed captioning...both live and on-demand. Closed captioning for streaming media is the method of displaying a text version overlay for the spoken words within a video. This assists viewers who may be deaf or who have reduced hearing capacity. Both the live-stream and archived videos of these Rowlett public meetings meet the FCC mandated ADA requirements for closed captioning.

Rowlett.com’s Streaming Video page was also enhanced - an indexed agenda now accompanies on-demand videos, allowing viewers to jump to meeting topics or agenda items that are most relevant to them.
**Emergency Response**

Response time is from the time call is received by dispatch until the first unit arrives on scene. Our Police and Fire Departments continually work to exceed their target six-minute response time. This year, while the Fire Department experienced a slight improvement on their average response time, Police response time increased nearly 27.2%. This led the City to add an additional eight Police Officers and one Communications Officer (911 dispatcher) to our FY2020 Budget.

The Fire Department experienced 5,615 total calls, including 33 structure fires and 3,737 for emergency medical service. The average response time for priority one calls was 6:19. 2,408 patients were transported to various hospitals and medical facilities.

The Police Department received 81,947 total calls, including 1,191 priority one calls and 5,357 calls to I-30 and PGBT to address accidents or requests for assistance. The average response time for priority one calls was 8:30. They conducted nearly 10,000 grid patrols and assisted with or conducted 431 crime prevention events.

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**Municipal Court**

Highlights of FY2019 include:

Judge Liston was elected President-Elect of the Texas Municipal Courts Association and the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center, which are the statewide entities in charge of education of municipal judges and court staff throughout the state.

Reconstituted the Office of the City Marshal under the Municipal Court.

Completed a pilot program through the Center for Court Innovation and the State Justice Institute to create a model website. Rowlett's court website is now a model of best practices not only throughout the State of Texas, but nationwide!

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**Emergency Management**

One of the most effective ways we make sure you and your family are safe is extensive planning for emergency situations. Every year there are major storm events, such as the EF4 tornado in 2015, Hurricane Harvey in 2017, and the two EF1 tornados this fall. The City’s advance-level Emergency Operations Plan was updated and tested in September of this year - emergency preparation has never been more important.

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**Community Engagement**

28 Citizens graduated the Citizen Police Academy Class #43 this year.

175 kids graduated from the six Rowlett Police Youth Academies held over the summer.

Rowlett’s Fire Explorer Post One took home 6 awards at the 2019 Explorer Fire Games, three of them being first place!! This was enough to give them the top award for First Place overall.

Fire Explorer training offers young adults real-life experience, training and exposure to the career opportunities available in the Fire service.

Rowlett’s volunteer Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) now has 120 active trained members.
Neighborhood livability touches the lives of Rowlett residents where we see it most—our neighborhoods. From land use decisions to code enforcement to loose dogs, we see the impact. In 2019, over $100 million in new construction is adding new businesses and residents to Rowlett. As a result of federal CDBG funding, the City provided $36,000 in assistance to our utility customers and $236,000 to residents for housing rehab. The City also responded to 2,212 Animal Service calls and maintained a 99% live release rate. We responded to 6,341 code enforcement cases and enjoy a 91% voluntary compliance rate—when Rowlett residents are notified of a violation, they take care of it.

### Streets & Alleys

The Community Investment Program (CIP) includes several projects for neighborhood street reconstruction. In the 2015 bond program, the final projects included:
- Dalrock Estates (Phase 1) — Done!
- Lake Country/Southridge Addition (Phase 1) — Done!
- Highland Meadows (Phase 1) — Done!

In the 2018 bond program additional phases were approved. Dalrock Estates Phase 2 is 67% complete, Highland Meadows Phases 2A and 2B are 75% complete.

The CIP also includes alley reconstruction projects. In addition to the combined $9 million included in the 2015 and 2018 bond programs, the City budgets approximately $800,000 each year using the Pavement Maintenance Fee you see each month included on your utility bill. Since 2015, 14 of the top 50 worst alleys have been reconstructed, with many more scheduled for reconstruction.

- 48% of alleys in Rowlett need reconstruction.
- $63 million is needed to reconstruct the worst alleys.

### Improved Land Development Process

To support efficient development patterns and communicate clear policy guidance our focus is to improve our land development processes and customer centric business models. This year, Development Services began to identify and improve processes. These include:
- Creation of the Development Assistance Center with a customer-centric focus.
- Enabling On-Line Payments
- Introducing Paperless Submittals
- Remaining Current on Building Codes

### Neighborhood Life Programs

These programs help residents beautify their neighborhoods, encourage participation in local government, and build neighborhood spirit.

- **Property of the Season**
  - 12 properties chosen each year by Rowlett Code Enforcement and Keep Rowlett Beautiful

- **Texas Smart Yard**
  - 2 properties awarded each year from submitted applications

- **Light Up Rowlett!**
  - 4 properties chosen from submitted photos on the City of Rowlett Facebook Page

- **HOA Assistance in FY2019**
  - 10 Associations were assisted with their Block Party planning
  - Co-hosted the Neighborhood Leadership Summit 2019

- **Block Party Trailer**
  - In 2019 the Block Party trailer was used for 40 Crime Watch and Neighborhood events.
Rowlett offers many amenities to residents and visitors.

In FY 2019, the Rowlett Community Centre had 224,082 visits and the Wet Zone Waterpark experienced 31,335 visits.

The Rowlett Public Library hosted 166,538 physical visits; however, that doesn’t tell the entire story. The Library also had 52,308 “virtual” visits, with patrons utilizing its many apps and websites. All in all, 325,783 items were checked out!

Rowlett is a lakeside destination surrounded by natural beauty and recreational, cultural, and entertainment opportunities.

Expanded Public Access to Lake Ray Hubbard

In an effort to improve and expand public access to Lake Ray Hubbard, the design of Lakefront at Pecan Grove has officially kicked off. Phase one will include a non-motorized boat launch, retaining walls along the lake, open space and picnic stations. Final design public input sessions will begin this month.

Waterview Golf Course Improvements

The 2018 Bond included $1.1 million to fund extensive renovations, planned and executed in partnership with the American Golf Corporation and the Golf Advisory Board. The course was closed for the summer and received a complete greens replacement, bunker renovations, three new retaining walls and a myriad of other improvements. Now open, the course will see additional work over the winter including cart path replacement, and a public grand re-opening will take place this spring.

Rowlett Public Library

For the 14th consecutive year, the Library was a recipient of the Achievement of Library Excellence Award from the Texas Municipal Library Directors Association. Of the 548 public libraries in the state of Texas, only 51 received this award. Your library is in the top 10% of all public libraries in the State.

Park Improvements

FY2019 was a busy year as we worked toward creating a destination-centered parks system. Through funding from the 2018 Capital Improvement Bonds, many existing parks received lots of love.

This includes new playground features at Springfield Park and Twin Star Park; two new reservable practice fields at Springfield Park and Shorewood Park; and a new feature slide, entertainment system including new outdoor speakers and new lighting at the Wet Zone Waterpark.

Parks and Recreation also added a mobile outdoor stage this year, perfect for the Downtown Events Series!
Economic Development

The City has seen phenomenal growth since the adoption of Realize Rowlett 2020 in 2012, and FY2019 was no exception. The City added over 35 new businesses; saw private investment of over $58 million in commercial projects including the opening of a 70,000 sq. ft. expansion of Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Lake Pointe, and the creation of over 200 new jobs. Since the adoption of Realize Rowlett 2020, the City has seen over $418 million in new commercial construction; sales tax growth averaging 5% annually; over 2,500 jobs created and has another $1 billion in planned development and private investment underway.

Sapphire Bay

In August, the City reached an agreement with Sapphire Bay Land Developers to develop Sapphire Bay. Construction is currently under way on this is a $1 billion mixed-use development! With features such as a Crystal Lagoons amenity (a groundbreaking ceremony for this feature was held last month); an island entertainment component with an incredible synchronized water and video show; a resort and conference center; a world class marina; and a Surf and Beach Club - Sapphire Bay will become a national destination for conferences, vacationing families, residents looking for a unique place to call home, and businesses who want to locate where their employees can live, work, and play.

INVEST IN TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Rowlett is well-connected to local and regional transportation networks and provides high quality and sustainable roadways and utility systems.

The Utility Operations team performs many vital functions to keep our water safe. They maintain 272 miles of water line and 230 miles of wastewater mains, as well as 4 elevated water storage tanks, 3 water pump stations, 2,834 manholes, 747 cleanouts, and 25 wastewater lift stations. This infrastructure delivers 4.1 mgd in winter and 9.2 mgd in summer. To maintain quality 840 water quality samples were tested in FY19, 1,144 valves exercised, and 2,749 fire hydrants maintained.

Capital Improvements

The successful 2015 Bond Election included three propositions totaling $25.7 million for streets, alleys, parks and facilities. Most projects are now complete. The final streets project, Main Street Reconstruction and PGBT Right Turn Lane is underway with completion anticipated in early 2020. The roadway section will match what was installed west of the roundabout, with on-street parking, street trees, aesthetic street lighting, and wide sidewalks on both sides of the street.

In 2018, the City held another successful bond election that also included three propositions totaling $59.9 million for streets, alleys, parks, and facilities. Those projects are in full swing, updates and information can be viewed on the interactive CIP website.

Work is ongoing via the Community Investment Advisory Board to identify projects for a potential 2021 Bond Election.
Water!

Water Quality
Rowlett is ranked as a Superior Water Service by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the state’s highest water quality designation. The Utility Operations team’s highest priority is to provide safe reliable drinking water. The City delivered 2,262,731,000 gallons of water in FY2019, and had 1,622,373,000 gallons of wastewater treated.

Water Rates
This year, we also lowered the monthly base water rate for our residents! Despite a 2.4% increase in cost from our water provider (North Texas Municipal Water District), and modest increases in our sewer and refuse costs by our suppliers, our average residential customer is realizing a monthly savings equivalent to nearly two cents on the property tax rate. This reduction was possible by utilizing a more measured approach to capital investment over time. This has two benefits. First, it provides a direct benefit to today’s customers. Second, it allows future customers to help pay for the cost of the system over time. And probably the best news of all, this approach is expected to keep future increases more modest while still taking care of the utility infrastructure that our community needs.

Fleet Services
The Fleet team maintains 450 pieces of City equipment including vehicles and heavy equipment. In FY2019, they completed 1,189 work orders, 145 state inspections, replaced 187 tires, sold 26 vehicles at auction, repaired 12 vehicles post-accident, handled 3 total loss accidents, and replaced the City fuel pump.

Facilities
The Facilities team maintains and services 18 City facilities, and cleans 151,311 sq. ft. of occupied space. In FY19, the team completed 488 work orders, and handled many special requests and projects including the installation of ballistic material in the Municipal Court, foundation repair at City Hall, emergency repairs at the RCC, repainting the Coyle House, replacing a fire riser at Public Works, remodeling the Fire Administration building, installation of security fencing and gates at the Police Department, and remodeling and relocating the Development Services team to 5702 Rowlett Road.

PROMOTE OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE
Rowlett is a high-performing organization that delivers exemplary service through a well-trained and responsive workforce.

A focus on operational excellence provides significant services to our citizens, and this begins with City staff. 3,764 applications lead to 76 new full-time employees. 631 total employees, including seasonal staff, were active during FY2019. Those employees were provided with 25 employee engagement events and 505 hours dedicated to health and wellness events.

Rowlett provided 2.2 billion gallons of water to 20,846 customers. 20 active grants saved citizens over $3 million, including a $1.5 million FEMA SAFR Grant funding the first three years for 9 additional firefighters at Station 4, IT cybersecurity blocked 2.4 million emails containing potentially malicious content and 4.5 million emails were processed.

Facilities Assessment
Funded through 2018 Bond Program, a consultant is completing an assessment formulating space needs and determining uniform space standards. Public meetings were held this fall to garner citizen input about a new library. The final report will be completed in early 2020 and will serve as a guide for future facility decisions.

Stay tuned, Fiscal Year 2019 held some amazing progress – and there’s more to come in Fiscal Year 2020!

Mayor Tammy Dana-Bashian