



Mayor's Message – December 2021

Thankful, grateful, and blessed in Horseshoe Bay. It is holiday season in HSB – no place better.

City News

Join me in preparing for the change in season **with safety on the mind**. We don't anticipate another SnoVid, but we learned that preparation is everything. The City has purchased generators, stocked up on relief supplies, and double-checked water systems (as well as secured an engineered review of the whole 50 year old system). PEC has installed a larger second transformer so overloads can be avoided – as well as ensured our critical infrastructure of water/wastewater and medical facilities are on separate electrical grids.

The council will join the staff in a "mock Emergency exercise" to be sure everyone knows their role if needed. Having emergency access to resources, providing a stocked shelter if it comes to that, and having a communication pipeline (particularly to get to fragile/alone citizens) is essential to getting to the other side of an emergency quickly and successfully. Throughout the year, we will conduct these practice exercises for timely seasonal preparation (tornado, flooding, fire...and winter storm). Our over 100 Citizen's Academy graduates will be reached out to for a network of citizen prepared forces across the community.

For YOU...individually, **get prepared**. There is a listing of safety reminders on the website https://www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3535/ready_checklist (or in the packet available at the front desk of City Hall). We will also be handing out safety info at the upcoming HOLIDAZE (see below). Be sure you have working flashlights, water in your storage space, some edibles (breakfast bars, etc.), blankets, and contact/medical information readily available (get your neighbors numbers as well to check on them if needed). Clean out that fireplace and have wood handy (PLEASE...no RED OAK logs as we are guarding against Oak Wilt spread). We are doing all we can to be proactive...and take pride and comfort in remembering the 'pioneer spirit' you displayed last year.

This week, **Thursday, Dec. 2nd** we will join the annual **HOLIDAZE** celebration at 5:30 (courtesy of the Business Alliance of HSB) with a collaboration of the City with the new

Christmas Tree lighting at 6:15. Get out those ugly sweaters and **come join in** the caroling, booth strolling, hot cocoa, Santa, and neighbor connections. We all loved (and appreciated) the return of the fabulous Holiday Bazaar last month. Our area churches will host multiple music and fellowship options as well as benevolence drives for those in need. **Give yourself the gift of knowing you have provided a smile/toy/meal to a child.** (Note: The City is also gathering Coats for Kids as well at the front desk or HOLIDAZE booth).

THEN...mark your calendars for the **Grand Opening of the Nature Park** (on Golden Nugget) on **December 20th at 4 pm**. Take in a walk through native plantings and watch the sunset overlay this impressive effort by community donors and the committed work of the Board. What a point of pride for our City....with promises of new phases of development. The HSB POA and City Parks/Transportation committees will begin conversations to extend hiking paths from the Nature Park for those in HSB West and other trails in HSB Proper and South.

With family in for the holidays, keep community care in mind. **Golf carts** are welcome on side streets and cart paths (drivers must be 16 or older or with adult). FM 2147 is NOT a path for carts (by State law), but you can cross from one side to the other at intersections. Make sure your cart is in good shape – and use safe driving protocols. Also...while celebrations will abound – **be aware of parking, noise, and late hour ordinances** out of respect for others. Our officers will be checking on VRBO areas for non-residents who may not know our guidelines.

Please take any opportunity to **THANK Pct 1 Commissioner Jones and Judge Cunningham (as well as the other Commissioners)**. This past week they helped put the final piece of this near 3 year long puzzle of negotiations with funding for an Internet Artery in HSB West and Summitt. With Spectrum and Vyve (formerly Northland) finalizing their contracts to get hard fiber run, the resort entering into a five year committed payment for their portion with a wireless component on a Caprock tower, and City mapping their Phase I and II (and ultimate III) needs, **Llano County stepped up to allocate 25% of the American Rescue Funds** they received toward Rural Broadband in HSBay (one of the five categories where these funds can be spent). The remainder of the County funds will go to other county wide internet efforts, emergency management projects, and critical care hospital support. **Burnet County is similarly reviewing** plans for support the Burnet side of HSBay. Though we pay less than 1% of the property taxes for Burnet County (over 50% for Llano), Judge Oakley and our Commissioner Dockery recognize us as part of the ‘County family’ plans.

BUT....We don’t expect to see any ‘dirt turned’ until after the beginning of the year....though at least we have the puzzle complete and a plan in motion now. Now the details of trenching down street right of ways (which, YES, will impact yards) has to be calendared out before actual connections to homes can occur. First step, get the main artery in place and added tower/s.

Speaking of ‘plans in motion’ – the hidden gem of HSB is no longer a secret. This month has seen **a half dozen large developers** (interested in our ETJ areas along our City borders) bring forward suggested plans. As a part of our ‘managed growth’ we are working closely to ensure any development mirrors the quality of build and desired image of our community. Keeping property values secure and managing any stress on our infrastructure/traffic flow are always at the forefront of discussions. We have already begun an “image corridor” (i.e. greenspace setbacks) for any development along Hwy 71. Impact fees for add-ons to our water supply and wastewater treatment will allow us to stay ahead of needs. We have identified areas where high density would not be able to be supported (and developers have adjusted), and are negotiating ways these new neighborhoods can contribute to the overall benefit of the City.

While they will bring new tax revenue, that does not fully offset the required additional ongoing staffing costs (especially in and resources/equipment needs. Development Services where plan reviews and detailed analysis work is stacking up). I am so proud of the protocol in place in this department where every aspect of any new development is scrutinized in a round table format (fire, police, utility, zoning, financials) before any forward action can be taken.

There is **significant residential development** within our City as well (currently about 170 homes under construction). **You are seeing some sit idle** (frustrating if you live nearby) as these builders are awaiting arrival of materials. Windows, etc. are backlogged. We are reviewing any new permits with a discussion about ‘front loading’ orders for materials they might not need for a while so that they have time to be delivered even if not needed for 6-9 months. For existing properties, our Dev Services Director will be meeting with Builders on solutions.

I have been meeting on varied City needs this week with State Rep. Murr, local Mayors, and just today US Rep Pfluger’s office with a focus on **Post Office solution**. The city nor the State have influence over this federal agency, but we can all help raise the urgency of need. Pfluger’s office has recognized our level of challenge and is in discussions with federal offices for solutions. In the meantime, it is ESSENTIAL that any Postal losses you experience get reported. Go to <https://pfluger.house.gov/contact> and enter your information. Be sure to include details (even tracking #s if available). It takes about 5 minutes....but the more data they have, the closer we come to the possibility of our own Postmaster which is a major option for change.

Your City Council members/Mayor are donating hundreds of hours of personal volunteer time each month to the benefit of us all. I want to thank them (and our City staff) for the gift of their work I see every day. I know so many of you are similarly contributing to our quality of life with volunteer activities in so many areas of the community – and with your active participation in the many social groups that keep us active and healthy. **A special appreciation to the over 20 citizens who stepped forward this month** to offer to serve on committees for the new year. Their time and talent is a treasure to benefit of us all.

As we head into our seasons of Thanksgiving and faith, family, and festivities, we are reminded of the blessing of living in HSB – I wish you safe travels and all the joy of the season.

cc Cynthia Clinesmith, Mayor
City Website - www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov