



# Mayor's Monthly Message

Mayor Elsie Thurman - September 2025

As many of you may know, I have made the difficult decision to conclude my service as Mayor when my current term ends in October. This decision came after considerable thought and prayer, and I want to share both my journey and my confidence in our City's bright future.

## **My Time of Service**

My involvement with the City began in September 2019 when I was appointed to chair the newly formed Long-Range Planning Committee. Working with an outstanding committee to develop our long-range plan was both rewarding and demanding. I became deeply invested in seeing that vision come to life, which led me to run for City Council in November 2020 and ultimately serve as your Mayor beginning in 2023.

These past six years of service have been among the most gratifying and fulfilling of my life. It is with genuinely mixed emotions that I step away from this treasured role.

Like most Horseshoe Bay residents, Andy and I moved here with retirement in mind. Our children and grandchildren live in Ohio and California, and they're growing up far too quickly. Over these six years, there have been too many occasions when family needed us and Andy had to travel alone, and many times when my commitments required me to return to Horseshoe Bay rather than extend visits. While we've been blessed to travel extensively, I've carried that persistent sense of responsibility wherever we've gone. The time has come to fully embrace this next chapter of our lives.

## **Confident in Our Leadership Transition**

An outstanding succession plan developed when Jeff Jones joined the Council in January 2023. Jeff possesses all the qualities that will make him an ideal mayor. He brings youthful energy, sharp legal insight, and the rare ability to listen with genuine intent to understand. His strong Christian faith guides his daily decisions, and both he and his wife Candy are deeply embedded in our community and devoted to preserving Horseshoe Bay as the place we all cherish.

## **Our Achievements and Future Challenges**

Significant work lies ahead to preserve Horseshoe Bay as the small town, closely connected community we love. Our staff and Council currently are developing a Comprehensive Plan, incorporating work from multiple advisory committees. We'll present

our progress at the **Town Hall Meeting scheduled for September 25 at 3 p.m. at Quail Point Lodge**—an important opportunity for citizens to share their perspectives. The plan is expected to be completed by spring of 2026.

We have accomplished much together. Construction of the new City Center and West Fire Station is ahead of schedule. Our "Speak Up for Horseshoe Bay" program provided a platform for citizen involvement in state legislative activities. Our careful resource management has maintained the lowest property tax rate in our area. We've begun making our city safer for pedestrians, cyclists, and golf cart users through street striping, with more planned.

We remain hopeful about funding for the shared-use path connecting Cap Rock Clubhouse to Bay Market, across FM 2147 to the new Town Center, and on to Summit Rock, Slick Rock, and Yacht Club facilities. Construction has begun on our new walking trail at Town Center, funded through generous donations. Donations are still needed to create this legacy for our community. We've improved internet access citywide and nearly completed the fiber optic network connecting all City facilities. We're working with the Horseshoe Bay POA to improve Fox Park for HSB South families, and we will continue collaborating with developers to shape our City's future vision.

However, major challenges remain. The Texas Legislature continues moving toward preemption of local authority, which MAY eventually force city leaders to ask for property tax rate increases. While the state's move to reduce or eliminate property taxes appeals to us all, Horseshoe Bay's limited sales tax opportunities mean difficult decisions lie ahead about revenue generation or service reduction. Nobody wants to decrease first responder availability or compromise road maintenance, but these are expensive services.

### **Looking Forward**

Even though I'm stepping down as Mayor, my care for Horseshoe Bay remains unchanged. I look forward to playing more golf and pickleball and traveling without my computer or attending Zoom meetings. I move forward with complete confidence that we are in exceptional hands with Jeff Jones as Mayor and Jeff Koska as City Manager.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Mayor. I will always treasure the opportunity you gave me to serve this remarkable community.