



Westworth Village

December 1, 2020

Neighbors and Fellow Citizens:

While most of the world is rightfully eager to see 2020 in the rearview mirror, careful reflection will reveal that 2020 was a very good year for Westworth Village.

Allow me to take this occasion to congratulate our four new councilmembers, Mike Dingman, Brian Libbey, Abe Elizondo, and Dore Hendrix. While we lost a lot of council experience, these new councilmembers bring a wealth of new ideas and fresh perspectives to our governing body. I am already enjoying working with them as we try to build a better city.

I would be remiss if I did not thank our departing councilmembers, Tiffany Aller, John Davies, Sharon Schmitz, and Christina Cowden, for all their time and selfless efforts on your behalf.

So ... why was 2020 a good year for Westworth Village?

Seeking to address our citizens' needs, we completed a survey of the issues on your minds ... and we acted upon that input. We 1) lowered the speed limit on our residential streets, 2) adopted a drainage plan requirement for all new construction, 3) funded and began implementation of new streetlights, 4) instituted new street parking requirements, 5) updated and improved the Burton Hill Elementary crossing signal, and 6) not insignificantly, funded and have begun planning the first true city parks in our history.

Financially, the city's operation outperformed its budget, finishing fiscal year 2020 in the black. Our cash reserves continue to grow. We have improved our already enviable financial position.

Despite the pandemic, our sales tax revenue has continued to increase *vis-à-vis* the property tax, shifting the burden of paying for the city's operation away from our homeowners and property owners.

With a stronger bond rating, we refinanced our relatively low bonded indebtedness, saving our citizens \$360,000 in interest expense over the next decade.

After years of losing money and operating at a deficit, our golf course operation has turned around, and for the first time the budget contemplates the golf course operation breaking even. It is already outpacing current budget projections, and we now expect the golf course to show operational profit for fiscal year 2021.

For decades, the town's largest infrastructure deficiency has been stormwater drainage. We are at long last addressing this problem, as we will soon engage the city's engineers for a comprehensive master drainage study, and a long-term implementation plan.

In a similar vein, the council recently passed a moratorium on further high-density development, and its resultant increased drainage discharge. This gives our P&Z and the city council an opportunity to determine how these issues should be constructively addressed moving forward. New zoning regulations should be implemented shortly after the first of the year.

So ... as the world suffered through a once-in-a-century pandemic, in looking back, 2020 was still a fine year for Westworth Village.

I hope you enjoy the new holiday lights on City Hall. Our public works director Cody Morse and his team have done a marvelous job bringing Christmas back to City Hall. To my knowledge, the building has never been lit up for the holidays.

As 2020 draws to a close, and we look forward to a better 2021, on behalf of the city council and your excellent city staff, we all wish you a healthy holiday season, and our best wishes for a New Year of peace, health, and prosperity.


Mayor Kelly Jones