



# SUNSET VALLEY *Texas*

---

From the Desk of Mayor Rose Cardona  
January 25, 2019

## State of the City, 2019

### **Dear Residents of Sunset Valley:**

Thank you for allowing me to serve you and this community. We are at a pivotal moment in our City's story. With the Facility Project in its final weeks, we are completing something that anchors us while setting the stage for our next chapter. We will now give fresh attention to money (how we spend, save, share and leverage it). Proper planning and execution will support our future needs for infrastructure improvement, subsidy stability and economic growth.

### **The next chapter:**

During 2019 and 2020, we will put focused resources and energy toward economic development. A few examples of many to be discussed: 1) Create something rich on the Uplands property rather than using it as an abandoned trash filter. Instead, leverage its potential for best use by residents and the greater community. It could be the keystone of identity for the next phase of our City and commercial zone.; 2) Utilize our key role being situated between two major trail heads of the Violet Crown Trail system before the second trailhead opens. Our commercial and City identity should not miss the marketing opportunity to tap into this new source of activity and spending.; and 3) Evolve our shopping center. It is wrong to say we cannot influence, plan or participate in how it changes because we do not own the property.

We cannot afford to compartmentalize tasks and issues to the extent that we lose the larger picture: public safety, transportation, impressive shopping options, diversity of offerings such as public greenspace, as well as community uniqueness----Not one of these elements can be ignored as we plan for the future of our City's financial success.

### **Personnel changes:**

Our City Administrator submitted his resignation yesterday afternoon, effective April 30, 2019. Clay Collins entered our City in 2009, with 26 years of city work already under his belt. Even though he was eligible to retire long ago, he served for 10 years in Sunset Valley. It is no surprise that Mr. Collins is moving forward in a constructive manner by staying with us to complete the Facilities Project as well as assist the City and staff with the transition. As a City we could not possibly ask more of him and we will properly recognize Mr. Collins' retirement in the coming weeks. **Until then, please join me in wishing him all the best in celebrating his retirement and the 10 years of diligent service he gave to Sunset Valley. His positive and consistent contributions have been felt in every facet of our community.**

I had previously committed to residents and staff to do a review of our managers/highest paid employees this quarter. I have adjusted this based on Mr. Collins' announcement and will now do the following:

- Meet with every staff member one-on-one by the end of February to obtain their thoughts and input on leadership, transition, and anything else they wish to contribute.
- Unless there is cause for termination, I will not be recommending any staff changes (salary, job description or termination) until after the new City Administrator has transitioned. At that point, I will provide my recommendations for review and potential support from the new City Administrator and Council.
- All contracts for service with the City will be reviewed with greater scrutiny this year by Council and changes will be made in conjunction with the new City Administrator.

#### **Timeline February-May:**

- February 5<sup>th</sup>—Regular council meeting
  - Review, edit and approve new job description and objectives for City Administrator position. We will do this again along with salary discussions at the Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - Presentation of recruiter options and authorization to fund this process.
- February 19<sup>th</sup>—Regular council meeting
  - Review and possible approval of recruiter.
  - Recruiter attend to present strategy and obtain any initial direction needed.
  - Council approve the review committee and process for selection of the new City Administrator.
  - Approve and authorize public posting of position.
- Agenda item at every meeting through May—Updates/direction/action
  - Goal to have new City Administrator start as close to May 1, 2019 as possible.
  - In March, Council will edit and approve the City employment contract for the next City Administrator and any transitional direction needed by staff.
  - Interim staff leadership--If a replacement City Administrator does not start on May 1, 2019, I am confident in the ability for Sara Wilson, Katy Philips, Chief Carter and myself to serve as a joint-interim team.
- Date TBD—full length, joint meeting of Council and Budget and Finance Committee
  - This meeting will allow us to start a new precedent: an annual public meeting to review the committee's action schedule and to provide clear direction on budget priorities from Council and the Mayor.
  - Our FY2020 budget process will not be compromised by other City business. Special thanks to our strong group of volunteers who serve on the Budget and Finance Committee.
- Facilities completion—On schedule, under budget
  - Council members will complete their final walk through of the Public Works facility next week.
    - If any resident wants to review or add to the comments and needs for the final punch list, their input MUST be received by me or staff no later than Jan. 30 (that is next Wednesday!).
  - The final punch list for the Public Works building will be reviewed and accepted in the next Council meeting (Feb. 5) in open session. CHASCO and the architect of record will also be at this meeting.
    - This is our opportunity to obtain answers, concessions, commitments and to keep completion on schedule.
    - It is imperative that Council members come to this meeting prepared and also work with staff and CHASCO in advance of the meeting to ensure we move efficiently at the Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - We will confirm the unused contingency money at the next meeting, as of today I can confidently say that we will move at least \$200,000 of the budgeted Facility funds back to the City Reserve Fund and I hope to return more.

**Accountable to you:**

I now invite you to help in holding us accountable. [Please keep this link](#) and reference its contents; it is your window into a portion of the business and communication between staff and elected officials.

- [City Project and Progress List](#):
  - Three tabs for 1) large-highest priority; 2) budgeted-scheduled projects; 3) all other regular and pending items in queue for Council/committee action.
- [“Close the Loop”](#):
  - Starting today, it will track pending items (unless private by request or legal necessity).
  - If you issue a need to staff, it will be documented here to provide me with notice and tracking for how long and when the issue is sufficiently addressed by staff.
    - For example, if a resident were to request to staff that a tree branch be removed from a trail. If it cannot be completed immediately upon receipt, then the receiving staff member places it on this list and documents how it has been handled and “closed”.
  - The second list will not overlap with the first. Items should be closed on this list ASAP.
    - If it takes longer than 2 weeks, then it should be escalated to Council or moved to the Project and Progress List.
- Please attend Council meetings, every extra set of eyes and ears in that room makes us stronger.

**Thank you:**

We have great volunteerism in our City. We have a strong and motivated Council. We have dedicated, seasoned staff. No matter what financial trends affect us from a National or Regional impact point, it will not change the fact that we are a single square mile within one of the fastest growing and historically stable metropolitan areas in the country. It is an incredible time of opportunity for Sunset Valley. Please join me in writing the next chapter of our City’s story.

With gratitude and energy to serve,



Rose Cardona  
Mayor, Sunset Valley