

[City column – December 2016]
By Mayor Bill Droste

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We always think of the start of a new year as a time for beginnings, but that seems especially true in Rosemount City government at this season. I'd like to share some things that will be different in 2017, and some that will not.

On the Rosemount City Council, we are saying goodbye to one member, Vanessa Demuth, as we welcome a new member, Heidi Freske. Heidi has been meeting with key personnel in the City. Like the rest of us on the Council when we began our service, she will attend orientation sessions offered by the League of Minnesota Cities. We look forward to her perspective on the issues the Council will face next year.

Last week we honored Vanessa at a reception before her final Council meeting. She has been busy during her term with a wide range of activities, including creation of our Environmental and Sustainability Task Force. I am sure she will stay involved in work for the community.

We are also seeing a change in the position that oversees City government's workforce. Dwight Johnson retires this week after a long and successful career in public service. We value his efforts over the past eight years to keep services on track and the budget under control. Taking over the position next week will be Logan Martin. We look forward to his expertise on economic development to keep our community strong.

Early in the year, we will add two new positions to the City staff, including a Police patrol sergeant and a parks maintenance person to make our expanded facilities run efficiently. In addition, we will convert a contracted engineering position to a full time employee. Even with those changes, Rosemount's tax rate continues to be competitive.

You'll be seeing the start of other projects around Rosemount. Work to improve traffic flow and safety at Highway 52 and County Road 42 will begin in 2017. We will continue to improve our parks and recreational facilities. Home construction is going strong in several neighborhoods. And to cope with it all, City staff will be busy completing the Comprehensive Plan for development in Rosemount out to the year 2040.

Setting the priorities for those needs will be the mission of the City Council's annual goalsetting meetings, to take place early in the winter. Our budget process will begin in the spring.

Of course, what City government does is only a portion of the changes ahead for our hometown. We expect new businesses, soon to include the long-awaited Chipotle restaurant. Our volunteers for the Arts Council and Leprechaun Days are constantly coming up with new entertainment for Rosemount.

We have another big celebration coming up this fall as Rosemount High School opens a year of activities marking its centennial. And once again, its band students will represent the school and the community on a national stage, this time in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in Manhattan.

All this change is exciting. But it shouldn't obscure what won't change in Rosemount. At the City, the day-to-day commitment of our employees serving the public is constant, as they plow streets, answer calls for assistance, and patrol our neighborhoods. We always look for efficiencies, but we strive to maintain the work that supports our quality of life in Rosemount.

On behalf of my colleagues on the Council, I wish you and your family the best in the holiday season and in the year to come.

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