

[City column – May 2017]  
By Mayor Bill Droste

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As we on the Rosemount City Council consider the issues and opportunities before our community, we know that the decisions we make will only be as good as the information and feedback that go into them. That's why the Council this year has set a goal to intensify our emphasis on public engagement.

We saw the benefits of bringing more people into the work of City government during last week's Council meeting. We heard a report on the accomplishments of the Environment and Sustainability Task Force that we assembled last year.

The task force has studied projects in energy conservation and water quality. They range from being more careful about the use of road salt to exploring citywide leaf collections. You'll see members of the task force at Leprechaun Days, suggesting simple ways you can help preserve our environment.

As the chair of the task force, Rebecca Higgins, told us, it's all to make Rosemount "the smarter, more sustainable, more economically viable city of choice."

A few meetings ago we got the report of another task force, this one devoted to city facility needs. It recommended focusing in the next few years on new buildings for our Police and Public Works operations. The Council will use these recommendations as a starting point as we update the budget for building projects to cover the next decade.

What struck me as I listened to these reports is how fortunate Rosemount is to have the efforts of so many people who are experts on these topics. The City can get their professional-grade advice for free, thanks to their willingness to make their hometown a better place.

We are also strengthened by the participation of many in our business community as we review the vision for Downtown Rosemount. Members of the Downtown Task Force recently shared their updated vision for future redevelopment of our main street.

Previous projects such as the Steeple Center, Library, and the senior living facilities in Downtown were spawned by the original plan. We look forward to pursuing the next phase of projects inspired by the vision of this group.

Every month, the City benefits from the work of our advisory commissions. They dig into the issues and make recommendations about parks, planning, and the City utilities.

The newest of those groups also gave a report to the Council last week. The Rosemount Youth Commission meets with leaders on the City staff and tours our facilities. They join the Council as we try to reach the public during events like the Leprechaun Days parade and Night to Unite.

These young people have worked closely with the Rosemount Area Arts Council. And they plan to promote youth volunteerism so the next generation can develop skills and prepare to take on the future of our community.

These are the ways that the work of City government extends far beyond the five of us elected to serve on the Council. We hope to encourage more of that through the Council initiatives for the next few years, and we look to engage with you in new ways that leverage technology and social media. With the energy and wisdom of our residents, Rosemount will continue to offer a strong quality of life for those who live here, and those who want to join us.

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