

I am very thankful to you, Longview, for the progressive Council Representatives you have elected as together, we have been able to address many things in a short period of time. It is an honor and privilege to serve alongside these individuals, who serve with integrity. I wish this column had more space to allow me to brag on each one of them individually.

As I have shared with you in a prior letter, my Dad used to say, "You have to make hay while the sun is shining". And that's exactly what we are doing, Longview, and we are doing it together, with positivity. In 173 days, we have accomplished great things.

- We have removed the red light cameras.
- The city collaborated with the Thrive 360 Program and The Paula Martin Jones Recreation Center to provide a safe place for members of our community to exercise during the day and added an after school program for local children.
- We have increased police pay to market standards, which is already helping with officer retention and recruitment resulting in making Longview safer.
- We have redirected the focus of our Convention and Visitors Bureau funds.
- We are exploring additional ways to spur Economic Development through LEDCO.
- We have removed the backflow prevention requirements for residents.
- We are focusing on City Hall becoming a place where citizens can witness a "Can Do", "Want to Do", and "Go Giver" attitude and it is paying great dividends.
- We have instituted Mayor Mack's Challenge which you have embraced and supported throughout our community, to help those in need.

I am very proud that we have been able to accomplish all of this, while reducing our budget by \$7million from the previous year. Please continue to "Help Us Help You".

In addition to getting things done, honest and transparent communication is a priority of this Council and we are focused on opening the lines of communication between your City government, the Mayor's office and the citizenry of Longview through many facets, including: our interactive and ongoing Facebook communication; our online surveys which garnish your opinion on local matters; Letters to Longview which inform you of what is going on in the community and through our book club on Monday nights. But Longview, we aren't patting ourselves on the back. Because we are just getting started.

This week, you communicated to your City Council how you wanted us to proceed with Hinsley Park – which was to remove the park designation and consider selling the park back to the Cargill family; who so generously has donated so much to our community over the years. As I committed to you many months ago, I will bring issues like Hinsley Park before the voters, and ask you to direct your Council how to proceed. Whether you voted for or against the Proposition, I thank you for taking the time to let your voice be heard.

In order for Longview to progress, I would ask you to embrace the fact that it passed. Let's focus on the glass being half-full and consider all of the positives for our city associated with this Proposition passing: new shopping opportunities, increased

property tax values, increased sales tax revenue, water sales, new job creations, and increased income from people coming to the community. Plus, we will get a brand new state of the art park which is bigger, better and will service patrons in softball and disc golf. Not to mention that the park will have new amenities that the current park does not have: a playground, pavilions and ample parking. So, let's embrace the positives and make the best of it.

Upcoming Focus

This week, in Mayor Mack's Survey, I shared that if every household spent \$83 per month in Longview rather than spending it outside our local economy it would produce \$450,000+ dollars in revenue for the city. As you begin thinking about holiday shopping, supplies for your business and winter clothing for your family; please spend your dollars here rather than online or elsewhere. It makes a difference.

Reviewing the potential sales tax revenues by making minor spending changes has really piqued my interest. Because of that, I will be embarking on a vigorous campaign for Longview residents to shop local. So, my next letter, will be focused on this topic and how this can impact our community if residents, as well as businesses, make shopping locally a priority.

It sure is getting dark early, but it is getting light early as well.

Study hard, have fun and say your prayers Longview.

Andy Mack