



May 14, 2024

Mayor, Council Members, and Van Alstyne Citizens
The City of Van Alstyne
152 North Main Drive
Van Alstyne, Texas 75495

I often close my messaging with a statement that reads “We are more than rooftops; we are a quality-of-life community”. I believe this to be more than a slogan, this is a mission and purpose as we plan and guide our city’s future.

This month, I aim to focus on city parks. The goal of this communication is to underscore the significance of parks to our community.

Social Importance

- * Parks are a tangible reflection of the quality of life in a community. They provide identity for citizens and are a major factor in the perception of quality of life. Parks and recreation services are often cited in surveys as one of the most important factors of a community’s livability.
- * Parks provide gathering places for families and social groups, as well as for individuals of all ages and economic status.
- * Parks and recreation programs provide for health and well-being that are accessible by persons of all ages and abilities.
- * Parks hold a value for communities that goes beyond monetary investment. They foster a sense of public pride and unity within the community.

Economic Value

- * Quality parks and recreation are consistently among the top three factors that businesses consider when making relocation decisions. (*Quality of Life for employees*)
- * Parks add to the local tax base as they contribute to improved property values. (*Texas A&M, National Recreation and Parks Association*)
- * As a central gathering place or destination, parks contribute to the local economy by attracting patrons to surrounding businesses, thus generating revenue.



Health and Environmental Benefits

- * Parks and recreational facilities are where people go to pursue health and fitness goals, promoting well-being within the community.
- * According to studies by the Centers for Disease Control and prevention, creating, improving, and promoting places to be physically active can improve individual and community health and result in a 25% increase of residents who exercise at least three times per week.
- * Parks are proven to improve the quality of the air we breathe, provide buffers to development, and provide a place for children, families, and communities to connect and recreate together.
- * Parks and recreation programs and services contribute to the health of children, youth, adults, and seniors.

Van Alstyne leadership has been very strategic in its approach to parks and events. During the November 2019 City Council meeting, Van Alstyne City Council passed an ordinance assessing a “Community Development Fee” of \$1,250.00 on each new single-family lot permitted within city limits. Additionally, a like fee for multi-family development was imposed. These funds are restricted in their use, meaning, the city can only use this money to pay for debt service on parks loans, provide funding for recreation centers, park development, community-based events, and enhancements. During this fiscal year, Community Development Fees have been used to pay the debt service on Hynds Park, provide funding for the renovation of the old Columbia College Gymnasium, soon to be the “Van Alstyne Recreation Center”, supplement sponsorship money that will provide entertainment at the Central Social District, and provide funding for community events. So why is this important for you to know? Utilizing Community Development Fees, the city can make enhancements, pay debt and provide community activities and events with very limited use of tax dollars. These types of facilities and events are not being accomplished at the expense of other city needs. We are receiving the benefit without impacting our available taxing resources. This is something that could not be done prior to November of 2019.

Looking ahead, the city plans to update the Parks Master Plan and include a trails master plan helping to shape our community well into the future. Community meetings, surveys, and input will be solicited from our citizens with the express goal of producing the best master plan possible.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lane H. Jones', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Lane H. Jones – C.M.O.
City Manager

City Manager Report

May 14, 2024

Elevated Storage Tank Update

Project is running on the approved schedule. We anticipate substantial completion in early December, 2024. Commissioning could proceed by early January 2025.

As of May 10, the base and concrete pedestal has been completed with fourteen (14) “lifts” (approx. seven (7’) feet per lift) for a total pedestal height of approximately one hundred feet (100’). Internal improvements (piping, access, electrical raceways, etc.) to the pedestal are underway. Steel fabrication of the tank plating is underway at the contractor’s (Landmark) facility. We are expecting site steel fabrication by mid-June.

Southeast Corner Henry Hynds Expressway and VA Pkwy

The city has a desired outcome of seeing a right-hand turn lane installed on the southeast corner of Henry Hynds Expressway frontage road and Van Alstyne Parkway with the express goal of relieving traffic congestion on the northbound frontage road.

The city has approached the property owner with an offer to purchase after having secured an appraisal for acquiring 749sf of property needed to facilitate the turn lane installation.

Development Services met with the property owner May 8, 2024 to review and discuss the proposal and subsequent offer to purchase. The owner was receptive to the proposal and a formal offer is being generated by our city attorney.

Once the transaction is complete, the City will work with TxDOT to have the turn lane included in the Hwy75 project that is scheduled to commence in August of 2024.

Hynds Park Project

The project has been heavily impacted by weather delays. Anticipate substantial completion early August 2024.

Installing rip rap on perimeter of pond

Playground and shade covers are installed. Fall material has yet to be installed and playground has a temporary fence to limit access to the equipment until such time as it has been inspected and approved for use upon completion of the total project.

Fishing piers and pavilion piers are to be installed or constructed this week, weather permitting.

Wet utilities are now complete.

Van Alstyne Recreation Center Update

April 9, 2024 City Council meeting, Council approved the use of Community Development Fees to renovate the former Columbia College Gymnasium for use as a recreation center that will offer community recreation activities to include pickleball, basketball, volleyball, cornhole. Additionally, the space will offer a residential kitchen and provide a temporary home for the senior center during the time street work is underway on So. Main and allowing the space to be used as a community center for larger indoor functions.

At present, the work activities are underway:

Asbestos abatement is complete

All contractor agreements are signed

Plumber has trenched and laid PVC pipe for line designated to serve new kitchen

Electricians have started converting all fixtures to LED

Gym floors to be removed this week

Demo of walls and in the classroom/kitchen will start on Wednesday, May 15.

Securing cameras have been installed on the building interior and exterior

AirView AC has identified placement location for new units.

Signal Warrant Analysis

City leadership had recently contracted The Goodman Corporation to conduct a Traffic Signal Warrant Analysis, examining the possible need for a traffic light. The objective of the study was to evaluate if signalization is warranted for the intersection of W. Van Alstyne Parkway (FM121) and Collin McKinney Parkway. The analysis was conducted based on traffic impact analysis completed for Van Alstyne High School's new location currently under construction to the south of the subject intersection, set to open in Fall 2024. The City believed this intersection to be of high risk of accidents given the opening of the Van Alstyne High School and hopes that by funding an independent study, TxDOT will be encouraged to provide signalization should the Signal Warrant Analysis validate safety concerns via a formal and independent study.

Signal warrants analysis was conducted for Phase 1 school opening year (2024) and full build-out year (2030). The analysis was based on Texas Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices October 2014, revision 2.

The outcome provided the following summary: The results show that signalization is warranted for both horizon years. Both 2024 and 2030 horizon years meet both 4-hour (Warrant 2) and peak hour (Warrant 3) signal warrants. In addition, the roadway network signal warrant (Warrant 8) is met in Year 2030. It is the recommendation of the study that a traffic signal be installed, and turned-on once traffic volumes increase after the opening of the new Van Alstyne High School in 2024.

The full Signal Warrant Analysis has been provided to TxDOT and the city is encouraging TxDOT to fund and install the warranted signalization.