



# Mayor's Monthly Newsletter

Written by Mayor Justin Ray

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Mayors Newsletter February 2018

Supporting Our Local Businesses

Hello Neighbors, Residents and Friends

This past weekend of February 3<sup>rd</sup>, I attended and spoke at the Cy-Fair Educational Foundation's "Salute to Our Hero's" gala. This event honors the men and women that serve our country. Funds raised at the event go to an endowment that enables Cypress-Fairbanks ISD students to attend college. Every year I present the 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Jeremy E. Ray Community Service Award to a member of the Cy-Fair community who gives back through community involvement and charitable activities. This award often goes to local business leaders who donate their time and resources to better our schools and neighborhoods.

Our City is comprised of both residential and business neighbors. It's important to recognize that local businesses are contributing members to our community. These local businesses provide tax revenue, employment and in many cases give back to the community through charitable contributions. The City of Jersey Village has and must maintain a positive and supportive growth oriented atmosphere for local business. We must have policies that encourage business growth while balancing the safety and health needs of the residents.

There are a number of things cities can do to support local business activities and growth. One way is to continuously review city ordinances. Ordinances become ineffective when they are not reviewed and updated to reflect changing consumer trends or the current commercial climate. Several years ago, Jersey Village City Council undertook a project to review and update building codes for likely future home renovation and teardown activity. It was important the City have modernized codes to encourage and support real estate investors in our community. Open and fair collaboration between commerce and local government is also critical in supporting local business. There have been instances over the last several years where a business has worked closely with the City to develop sound expansion and development plans that work for the business owner and the community. These collaborative activities involved the businesses, City Staff, citizen led committees and residents all working together for an equitable outcome. Jersey Village city government must continue these kinds open lines of communication with local businesses.

I have mentioned before that Cities can also encourage and support businesses through tax policy. That is evident in Jersey Village with the creation of Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ) and tax rebate agreements. The TIRZ helps finance costs of redevelopment and encourages development in areas that would otherwise not attract sufficient market development in a timely manner. Taxes attributable to new improvements (tax increments) are set-aside in a fund to finance public improvements within the boundaries of the zone. Jersey Village has also provided and encourages Chapter 380 Agreements which provide sales tax rebates to companies to encourage higher end development.

Jersey Village must maintain an atmosphere and policies that support business while protecting the safety, health and quality of life for the residents. The support and cooperative efforts of the City will foster growth in our local businesses and they in turn will continue to be active and contributing members of our community.

All the Best,

Justin Ray

Mayor

Jersey Village, Texas