



## Mayor's Monthly Newsletter

Written by Mayor Justin Ray

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### February 2017 – Economic Development in Jersey Village

Hello Neighbors, Residents and Friends,

This month's newsletter will discuss a vision of economic development in Jersey Village and City Government's role in promoting that vision. As citizens of Jersey Village we are keenly aware of the economic development that has taken place to the east and west of our community. As a young law school student, I lived in the Washington Corridor of Houston. I witnessed firsthand the transformation of the area from dilapidated industrial buildings and sketchy alleys to high end real estate and retail. I witnessed similar transitions in Houston's Oak Forest and the Heights for the few years I was an inner loop. Comparable economic transitions have taken place in other historically distressed areas such as the University of Houston's third ward and Houston's east end or EaDO as the hip kids call it.

For Jersey Village, I share the economic vision outlined in both the Comprehensive Plan and The Jersey Crossing Zone along Jones Road. The Jersey Crossing is a set of form based zoning codes that dictate the type and character of development along Jones Road south of Highway 290. The goal of the Jersey Crossing Zone is to encourage high end residential and retail development. City leaders and I were aware that this is the last area in which Jersey Village could be developed and development must be harmonious with the upward trajectory and bright economic future of the community.

Similarly, the Comprehensive Plan places great emphasis on economic development that enhances the quality of life for Jersey Village residents. Economic development in the Comprehensive Plan embraces the "concept of improving the standard of living in a community, including enhanced quality of life assets that are valued by the community and improved public services". The Plan's economic priorities are (1) Expanded Restaurant/Services/Entertainment Options, (2) Sales Tax Growth, (3) Improved Building Appearance, (4) Property Tax Base Growth, and (5) Office Development. It is worth noting under Improved Building Appearance, the plan states "a key concern is enhancing the visual appearance of existing retail and commercial buildings in the City, especially along the US 290 corridor. The City's image as a great place to live should be bolstered by improvements to visual appeal of the commercial areas".

Over the last several months, City Staff and I have met with developers that have shown interest in developing in Jersey Village. Much of the development has focused on the Jones Road / Jersey Crossing area. There have been constructive conversations and opportunities to mutually discuss our visions for the zone and the City as a whole. Going forward, there will be advocacy and pressure to diminish the lofty goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan or Jersey Crossing Zone for quick and cheap expansion. I contend there has been enough quick and cheap development surrounding Jersey Village. I am committed to firmly adhering to the goals and spirit of those plans and not undermining the economic growth potential of the community.

The role of City government is to champion economic development, promote a business friendly environment and work constructively with parties to create developments that benefit and enhance our community. I firmly believe the vision detailed in both the Comprehensive Plan and Jersey Crossing Zone accomplishes those goals. I encourage citizens to familiarize themselves with the aforementioned documents on the City's website. I am committed to staying true to those visions, encouraging economic development and furthering Jersey Village's upward trend.

All the Best,

Justin Ray

Mayor, Jersey Village, Texas

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