

January, 2015

A MONTHLY MESSAGE
FROM



**MAYOR
TODD GOTTEL**



City of Rowlett
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*The whole community came
together in December for the
Main Street Fest & Holiday
Parade!*

The Rowlett Library is Here to Stay!

Happy New Year! As we embrace 2015 and all the exciting development poised to begin, in our hometown, I once again want to say that Rowlett is definitely *On the Move!* I'm sure you've noticed all the wonderful updates to downtown that have been made in the past year – green spaces, beautiful lighting and landscaping, additional parking, not to mention the extension of Martin Drive right into the heart of downtown, which provides access from the DART Light Rail station and SH66. These enhancements are just the beginning, for you will soon see the Village of Rowlett downtown development begin!

As with any new development, it will not occur without change to the existing structures. We are an extremely open and transparent organization, so in an effort to ensure everyone in Rowlett understands what is coming our way, and why the City Council makes the decisions we do, this month, I would like to provide some information about the Library transition and Chamber of Commerce relocation plans.

I am extremely passionate about our quality of life here in Rowlett and a library is an integral component to the quality of life in a vibrant community. Your City Council and City staff have made a commitment to OUR community to ensure the Rowlett library continues to thrive

in a temporary location while the downtown development occurs. The Library will remain a key component of downtown and, when the project is completed, will be located on the ground floor of the most prominent building along Main Street. We are also very grateful to the Rowlett business community, served by the Chamber of Commerce, for their continued community support and the way they have enthusiastically embraced the new form based development code. A similar commitment was extended to the Chamber of Commerce, whose current building will be permanently relocated.

There has been a lot of misinformation offered on social media and blogs regarding these transition plans. I hope the information in this newsletter serves to clear up some of that confusion and provides you, the Rowlett citizen, a level of clarification and transparency that allows you to share in our enthusiasm about all the fantastic new development and tax base diversification coming to our hometown!!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Gottel".

Mayor Todd Gottel



Village of Rowlett



\$30 million transit-oriented development project.

Located downtown on approximately 12 acres.

Range of building types and uses within a unique village environment.

Modern housing concepts, local retail and commercial destinations, high quality pedestrian amenities, memorable open spaces.

Part of the planning effort has included a strategy to move the Chamber of Commerce and temporarily relocate the Library during the construction process.

The Library will remain a key component of Downtown and, when the project is completed, will be located on the ground floor of the most prominent building along Main Street.

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS THIS SPRING!

Library Transition Plan

As part of this development and redevelopment, the existing structure that houses the Library will need to be removed. I can't emphasize enough: the Rowlett Library is here to stay! City staff has briefed the City Council over the past several months on the transition plan timeline and has held discussions with us

How was this decision made?

Key strategic location objectives were identified:

- Minimize customer service disruption
- Minimum 10,000 square foot facility
- Budget and cost considerations
- Well Lighted, Climate Controlled & Secure Facility
- Parking, Accessibility & Visibility
- Operational Fit & Efficiency

THE LIBRARY IS NOT GOING AWAY – ONLY THE BUILDING THAT CURRENTLY HOUSES IT WILL BE REMOVED!

in Executive Session regarding various interim locations for the Library. As a result of those discussions and negotiations, property located at 5702 Rowlett Road will be **PURCHASED** by the City to temporarily house the Library, and will be repurposed for alternative City use in the future, once the Library moves back downtown.

Based upon these objectives, five potential locations within Rowlett were initially identified. Two in industrial areas, two in commercial areas and the other location was a conversion of space at an existing City facility. The City engaged Freese & Nichols, Inc. to provide architectural assistance in evaluating several of the potential locations, including space planning, concept layouts and cost considerations in making improvements to the interior of those potential locations.



5702 Rowlett Road
(front)

5702 Rowlett Road was identified as the location that met or exceeded the majority of the objectives.

An analysis by City staff compared the short term costs (24 month lease payments and improvements) estimated at \$600,000 versus acquiring the building for \$800,000 and making the improvements necessary to house and operate the library. By acquiring the facility outright, the tax notes can be sold as tax-exempt, yielding a lower interest rate. It became very apparent that it would be much more cost-effective and financially prudent for the City to purchase the building, make the needed improvements, and then have a location and an asset that could be repurposed for future City uses or sold at a future date.

POSSIBLE FUTURE OPERATIONAL USES FOR 5702 ROWLETT ROAD WERE IDENTIFIED, ONCE THE LIBRARY RELOCATES BACK TO THE DOWNTOWN AREA AS PART OF THE VILLAGE OF ROWLETT INCLUDING:

RELOCATE FIRE ADMINISTRATION FROM 4701 ROWLETT ROAD

RELOCATE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FROM 3901 MAIN STREET

THESE EXISTING FACILITIES COULD THEN BE SOLD FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES.

Anticipated Library Transition Plan Schedule

Identify temporary space
August – December 2014

Improvements to temporary space
January – April 2015

Vacate existing building & conduct move
April - May 2015

Demolition of existing building
June – August 2015

Village of Rowlett construction of Library space
August 2015 – August 2016

Move to Village of Rowlett space
September – October 2016



5702 Rowlett Road
(back)

5702 Rowlett Road

10,140 square foot single-story office/medical building

1.9 acres

Located north of SH66 near the
Old Rowlett Road intersection

90 parking spaces

0.3 miles from current downtown Library location

Chamber of Commerce Building Relocation

I have also heard from many citizens curious about what is happening to the Chamber of Commerce building, currently located at 3910 Main Street, between City Hall and the Library. Options ranged from relocating it to multiple locations within the City to demolition of the building. After the City Council and I vetted the options through discussions with staff, social media, email communications, speaking at meetings, and just plain one-on-one conversations with folks out in the community, we ultimately understood that our community valued this building and so directed staff to proceed with the relocation. The cost was originally estimated at \$340,000, so we asked staff to come back to us if estimates were over this amount. From the January 13 report given by City staff to the City

Council, the estimate is just below \$375,000. Because this was within our budgeted amount, we are going to move forward with the relocation of this important building.

Proposals were submitted last week and City Council will consider the proposal from the recommended firm on January 20. Once the contracts are finalized, the building will be moved from its current location to 4500 Main Street, where the vacant “Old Fire Station One” currently sits. Demolition of this vacant structure will occur in the next month or so, with the relocation complete by the end of April.



Vacant “Old Fire Station One” will be demolished