



These are exciting times for the City of Cave Springs. City finances have been stabilized over the past two years and after 16 years of phenomenal growth; the city will soon become a City of the First Class. Status change, growth and new leadership combine to create new challenges that demand our attention. Some of these challenges are insufficient transparency measures, outdated and deficient ordinances, inadequate economic development plans, infrastructure strains from growth, and repeated drainage and flooding problems.

With all of the anticipation and promise that accompanies the start of a new day; we will now embark on a new direction, for a city where preparation is a key priority. Through preparation, challenges become opportunities. In this time of exciting opportunities, the word that best describes the state of the City of Cave Springs is transitional.

Preparation for transition to City of the First Class status has already begun. Approved job titles and descriptions are being implemented, so employees can be successful while providing services more efficiently. Further preparations will include training and phased implementation of City of the First Class policies and processes, so this transition can happen more smoothly.

Preparation for transition to transparent practices is also underway. With Transparency as a priority, I am implementing previously approved policies at City Hall. I recognize people's right to know when they are being recorded, so signage is being prepared to notify city hall patrons of surveillance practices, as is required by law. We are also notifying private businesses of their requirement to do so. Group message lists are being created, so everyone requesting meeting notification will receive it. We will now exceed minimum legal requirements for notifications of special called meetings.

While working for the people of Cave Springs; what we do is public information. In the interest of transparency and with efficiency as an added benefit; public documents, Ordinances and Resolutions will be posted on an updated city website, eliminating the need for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. People will be able to access and print these documents without the delay of going to City Hall, filling out a FOIA request, waiting up to 3 days for document production and returning to City Hall to pay for and pick up the documents. When fully implemented, employees will not be taken from their duties to fulfill these requests and the public will have greater access at their fingertips.

Preparation for transition through growth requires an extensive review and update of city Ordinances and Resolutions. Outdated or deficient Ordinances can lead to costly lawsuits and stalled development. With a Master Street Plan, which hasn't been updated since I was Planning Commission Chairman, and an outdated Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which Planning Ordinances are meant to enforce; this update process will begin with Planning Ordinances. I call on the City Council to approve entering into a contract with a Planning Consultant to provide the Planning Commission with guidance and assistance in the development of updated Planning Ordinances.

Preparation for transition to quality Economic Development in Cave Springs must include provisions for Architectural Design and Historical Preservation Overlay Districts in the updated Planning Ordinances.



The districts should be implemented in the downtown area bordered to the South and North by Highway 264 East and West respectively, Allen Street to the West and the top of the Hill behind City Hall on Midway to the East, with the Community Building restored and on the National Registry as a focal point. Even if our downtown area is bypassed by future highway development, these Districts will create a quality standard and an atmosphere that serves as an attraction to people and businesses alike.

Preparation for transition in infrastructure expansion and improvement requires the accumulation of financial reserves. To ensure the growth of reserves and protect against their misuse; we must establish by Ordinance, Capital Improvement Funds for the Street, Water, Sewer and Fire Departments. The Ordinances must limit the use of these funds to infrastructure expansion and repair of catastrophic damage or failure. Capital Improvement Funds will enable the expansion of services, without the need for additional bonds and the higher service rates that result.

In addition to Capital Improvement Funds, preparation must include the establishment of a Bond Retirement Fund, to ensure the accumulation of financial reserves and protect these reserves for early water bond retirement. Early bond retirement will enable an early review and reduction of water rates.

Preparation for transition includes the review and prioritization of projects. Maintenance and improvement of streets, sidewalks, the water system and sewer system will become an ongoing review and prioritization process. Drainage areas that routinely flood will be reviewed to determine if there is a feasible solution so that we can stop reliving the same disasters year after year. We can only move forward by solving the problems that hold us back.

Preparation for a smooth transition to a growing City of the First Class must include working professionally together. Employees and other elected officials will be treated with respect and dignity, for the good of the city. Cave Springs can no longer afford selfish indulgences in petty differences and personality conflicts between elected officials or employees. These are obstacles that endanger the city's potential for a brighter future.

Professionalism creates civility and a spirit of community that people desire. Through professionalism, we can promote Cave Springs, creating a positive image of quality, where people and businesses that are looking to relocate will want to invest in our city. I have already started positive promotion of the city's special qualities through media interviews. When people want to be a part of the city and see qualities that are worthy of their investment; improved standards can be maintained and true economic development can be achieved.

Cave Springs is a city in transition. Preparation ensures that the transition will occur as smoothly as possible with improved quality as the result. With a pending City of the First Class status, growth and new leadership; the city is poised with the anticipation and excitement to make Cave Springs a "Bright Day Dawning".

In recognition of this bright new day for Cave Springs, a local artist volunteered her talents to create a new logo and slogan, with a positive depiction of Cave Springs. I call on the City Council to approve this new logo and slogan that promotes Cave Springs, and its unique quality, in a positive light.