

EL DORADO

K A N S A S

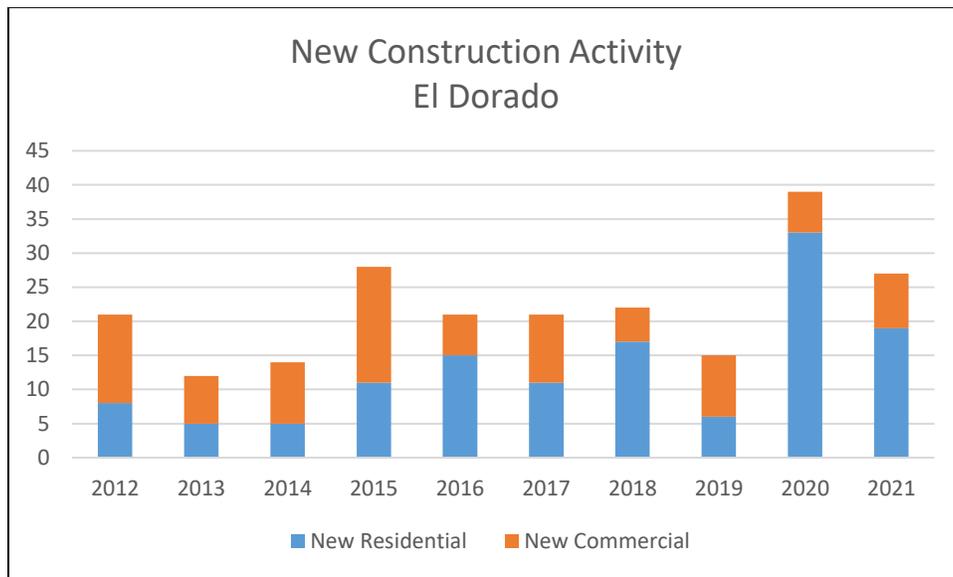
TO: City Commission
FROM: David Dillner, City Manager
SUBJ: Weekly Report
DATE: February 18, 2022

Items of Note:

- New regulations regarding first-time commercial driver licenses (CDLs) from the federal government recently went into effect. Employees in positions requiring a CDL will have to complete hours attending a multi-week long training that will cost over \$5,000 per person. The City can also facilitate an in-house training course, and we are exploring this option because the outside training will be quite cumbersome and costly. These new regulations only apply to drivers who have never had a CDL before. The departments most affected by these regulations include Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Public Utilities. The Fire Department is exempt because firefighters do not require a CDL to operate a fire engine/apparatus.
- The City's representative from the Tulsa District contacted me this week to discuss our draft request letter regarding outstanding lake debt obligations. He offered some suggestions and will be coordinating a meeting early next week to continue to discuss the City's request so we can get to a place where the Corps of Engineers may be willing to support it.
- Public Works responded to this week's snowstorm with enthusiasm. I was able to ride along during the storm to see first-hand how the department treats streets during snow events. The department would be better prepared to combat snowstorms if we had one or two of these beasts (see below).



- Butler County Appraiser’s Office released its 2022 Real Estate Appraised Value Report. The report stated that 98% of residential structures throughout the county increased in valuation. The median increase for residential parcels was 11.6%, and 64% of parcels had a valuation increase of 10% or more. The Appraiser’s Office reported that 90% of industrial and commercial properties throughout the county increased in valuation, with a median increase of 5.2%. The median increase for all property (including agricultural and new construction) in the county came to 10.6%.
- Butler County Appraiser’s Office reported 224 new single-family homes in Butler County in 2021, compared to 219 in 2020. The median sell price for single-family houses in Butler County was \$202,142, compared to \$185,150 in 2020. New commercial construction activity numbered 33 in 2021, compared to 35 in 2020.



- The El Dorado Fire Department located a demo unit in New York to replace its aging Hazardous Materials Unit (HRU-1). The demo unit costs \$230,000, although there will be some additional expenses to outfit it. Butler County agreed to pay 75% of the cost of the unit per an interlocal agreement up to \$187,500 if it would be used exclusively for hazard materials response. Therefore, the City anticipates outlaying around \$57,500 to acquire the vehicle pending approvals.
- I asked Kevin Wishart to solicit feedback from the Park Advisory Board concerning the prioritization of capital projects for the park system. The board will forward its recommendations to the City Commission for review as part of the capital improvement planning process. The Park Advisory Board has not been asked to provide input on capital projects for a few years, and I thought it would be a good process to implement to provide the City Commission with feedback to inform its decision making process.
- Events Coordinator Javen Gonzalez has been working to bring Bird Scooters to El Dorado. The company provides small communities like El Dorado with eScooters for use by residents and visitors. Other similar-sized communities with scooters include McPherson, Great Bend, Emporia, Fort Scott, and Hays. Internally, there is a debate

about whether to allow scooters because their use downtown would place them on state highways. State law presently does not allow scooters on highways, and the Police Department would more often than not be the agency of jurisdiction to enforce the provision. Some communities, such as McPherson and Great Bend, have opted not to enforce this provision of state law to allow use of the scooters on highways that transect their downtowns. The company desires an answer from the City to determine if it needs to move forward with a plan this spring/summer. The City Commission will discuss the subject at the March 2 work session since this is a policy matter that requires input from the governing body before proceeding.

- Butler County anticipates moving forward with a sales tax question this November for its proposed events center at El Dorado Lake (former honor camp site). The County believes that a one-cent sales tax will provide sufficient revenue to pay off the project in three to four years.
- The City will need to decide how to allocate its share of the American Rescue Plan Act funds awarded last year. To aid in this effort, I recommend designating all funds as “lost revenue” per the U.S. Department of Treasury’s Final Rule. The rule allows cities to designate up to \$10 million of its share of ARPA funds as “lost revenue,” which then allows the community to use the funds on any general governmental expense and not be limited to the parameters of the five eligible uses. The City will receive a total of \$1.9 million in ARPA funds, so we can designate all of our funds as “lost revenue.”
- In addition to designating the funds as “lost revenue,” I also recommend the City allocate \$137,500 to purchase radios for the Police and Fire Departments. The departments need to replace their existing radios. The City plans to pay a portion of the Fire Department’s radios from proceeds from the most recent bond issue. Butler County also provided the City with several radios as well. Following this purchase, the Police and Fire Departments will begin a phased replacement of radios in seven years to avoid a large upfront expense in the future. I plan to bring a plan to the City Commission regarding the remaining ARPA funds in the coming weeks.

Things to Think About:

- **STUDY FINDS WESTERN MEGADROUGHT IS THE WORST IN 1,200 YEARS**
Shrunk reservoirs. Depleted aquifers. Low rivers. Raging wildfires. It’s no secret that the Western U.S. is in a severe drought. New research published Monday shows just how extreme the situation has become. The Western U.S. and Northern Mexico are experiencing their driest period in at least 1,200 years, according to the new study published in the journal Nature Climate Change. The last comparable – though not as severe – multi-decade megadrought occurred in the 1500s, when the West was still largely inhabited by American Indian tribes. Today, the region is home to tens of millions of people, massive agricultural centers and some of the fastest-growing cities in the U.S. — all in an area where there’s less water available than there was in the past, partially due to human-caused climate change. – Source NPR

- **SEWAGE SAMPLING ALREADY TRACKS COVID. WHAT ELSE CAN IT FIND?** *For more than 18 months, wastewater sampling has been a crucial tool for monitoring the Covid pandemic in parts of the US; just 10 days ago, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention debuted a nationwide data dashboard that reports SARS-CoV-2 isolations from sewage. But researchers working in what is still a pretty small field say we should expand wastewater monitoring beyond the search for the virus that causes Covid—not only to detect known health problems emerging in new areas, but also to ring the alarm over novel pathogens that could spark the next pandemic. Sewage sampling is overwhelmingly a local decision, under the purview of city councils, city managers, or wastewater authorities, which allows it to elide the politicization of the national Covid response. – Source: Wired*

Personnel Update:

- *Vacant and currently advertised positions:* Public Works Maintenance Worker (4), Public Works Equipment Operator (3), Firefighter, Water Treatment Operator, Sanitation Lead, and Pool Manager.
- John Haven and Terry Jordan transferred to the Sanitation Division of Public Works. There are now seven vacancies in Public Works Department’s Street and Stormwater Divisions.
- Dawson Long will begin his career as an El Dorado firefighter on Monday.
- The City has one outstanding conditional offer for a firefighter and two conditional offers for police officer. These candidates will fill all current vacancies in both departments once post-offer screening is completed. Both police officer candidates are certified officers and will not need to attend the academy.

Commission Calendar:

- *Upcoming City Commission Items (subject to change):*
 - **February 21 Regular Meeting** –800 W. 6th Avenue Rezoning (R-3 to C-1); 4Q, 2021 Financial Report
 - **March 2 Work Session** – eScooter Proposal; Executive Limitations Policies; Outcomes Policies Development
 - **March 7 Regular Meeting** – Myers East Addition Replat
 - **March 16 Work Session** –
- *Pending Items (Items to be scheduled for upcoming meeting once completed):* Augusta Wholesale Water Agreement; Street Cut Ordinance; Food Vendor Ordinance; Transient Vendor Ordinance; Business Park Re-platting and Rezoning

Other Events of Interest:

- **March 1** – Annual Chamber Dinner, 5:30 pm (Civic Center)
- **March 25** – Chief Ziemann’s Retirement Party, 2:30 to 4:30 pm (City Hall)