



# Duane Michael "Mike" Smith

Groveland City Council Member, District 4

In addition to the city's core values of Service, Excellence and Integrity, I apply the following guiding principles to my actions:

- Make Groveland a Model of City Government
- Improve Public Services
- Position Groveland for Smart Growth
- Instill Fiscal Responsibility
- Provide Transparency to City Activities.



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As can be seen in this newsletter, the city is continuing to move forward at a strong pace. In case you missed it, my previous newsletter focused on actions being taken by the city in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

My next newsletter will focus on the efforts of the city to craft a new set of master plans that will help guide its growth and development over the coming decade. Included in this special edition will be information on the city's efforts to fully revise its future land use policy and the laws that implement that policy.

## Parks and Recreation

**Lake David Park** – The city is presently doing a major renovation of Lake David Park to make it a park that will serve as a regional destination for the citizens and visitors to South Lake County. Work is well underway and it is expected that the North section of the park will be open by May. This section will include a Band Shell, new pathways, benches and tables, and a boardwalk over Lake David. Additionally, work is be-



ing done on Lake Street to repave the area and add stations for food trucks and vendor booths. The South end of the parks is also undergoing renovations and will have restrooms, a splashpad and additional parking. For more info, please go: <http://groveland-fl.gov/167/Parks-Recreation>

### **Cherry Lake Park**

The city is creating a new park on Wilson Lake Parkway. This park will eventually encompass 40 acres and is being designed to be a destination park for the Central Florida region. Work is nearly completed for the first phase of the park. This work included installing all the needed infrastructure for the park, to include electric, water and sewer, turning lanes off of Wilson Lake Parkway, temporary parking, and restrooms. The city also installed a basketball court and small picnic pavilion. The city is currently assessing the best uses of the remainder of the park, recognizing that Lake County is building a 140 acre regional park within Groveland off of Max Hooks Rd.

### **City Gets Grant for New Firefighters**

The city recently received a SAFER grant from the federal government that pays the salaries and equipment for 9 firefighters over the next three years. This grant allows the city to grow its public services in a responsible manner to meet future demand for fire services. Through the grant, the city is not forced to incur excess expenses to hire in advance of increases in housing and population or alternatively to find itself with insufficient public safety capacity in the future.

### **City Acquires Palisades Golf Course**

Groveland recently concluded the purchase of the Palisades Golf Course. In purchasing the course, the city acquired the water rights to the well that had been used to irrigate the course. Working with the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) the city has agreed to retire and cap the irrigation well for the course. In return, SJRWMD has given the city credits for the mitigation that will be realized by the closure of the well and has found that the level of mitigation is such that the city will not be required to build the mitigation pipeline/system required by the city's current consumptive use permit.

The cost to the city to purchase the course was approximately \$2.3 million. The savings realized by the city of not having to build the mitigation pipeline/system is estimated to be \$4.3 million. Further, in order to purchase the course, the city had to agree to offer the property to the Palisades Homeowners Association for \$500,000. This sale will bring the amount the city has had to expend down to \$1.8 million. The result of all these actions is that the city has additional green space as the course will remain undeveloped and the city will have saved nearly \$2 million dollars on required water mitigation efforts. Another way to look at this is that the city invested \$1.8 million dollars and realized a return of \$4.3 million dollars on that investment.

### **Water Plant Operations**

Effective October 1, 2019, the City Council hired Woodard & Curran to provide operations and maintenance of the city's water and wastewater systems. The addition of this operating company is proving to bring many benefits and efficiencies to the city's water and wastewater operations. Drawing on this partnership, we have been able to identify a number of grants the city was eligible to compete for. Through the efforts of Woodard & Curran and the city, the Florida De-

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partment of Environmental Protection (DEP) formally approved and added the Groveland Water and Wastewater Capital Improvement project to the funded list with a loan/grant commitment of approximately 50/50 for planning and 30/70 for design and construction. This means approximately \$35 million of the city's 5-year capital improvement project plan for water and wastewater could be grant funded.

### Future Land Use

The City of Groveland recently submitted its revised Future Land Use Component of its Comprehensive Plan, to the Department of Economic Opportunity Under the State of Florida for review. This plan lays out the vision of the future of Groveland, which embraces its agriculture history and desires to be a unique and charming destination. The plan calls for nearly 60% of the total land mass to remain as open space or agriculture, celebrating its natural beauty and fostering an environmentally sensitive approach to development.

You can get more information on this project by going to the [Community Code Update](#) site on the City of Groveland's website or following the Community Development Department's Wednesday Workshops on the city's [Facebook Page](#). The first workshop post was on April 8<sup>th</sup>.

### Recycling

As I drive around communities within the city, I have noted a variety of items in the recycle bins that should not be there. When there are inappropriate items in the recycling bins, it leads to that load of recyclables having to be disposed of as normal garbage and not as recyclable material. Below is information on what can be recycled and what cannot. We need to begin to be aware of what we are putting into our garbage and recycling bins.

#### **What is Recyclable**

**PAPER** - Approved types of paper that can be recycled consist of non-glossy or coated products, such as office paper, newsprint, magazines, envelopes, phone books, unwanted mail and paper bags. Paper should be free of hard bound or hard covered books, metal or plastic bindings and placed loose inside of the recycling bin.

**CARDBOARD** - Cardboard consists of corrugated (moving boxes) and boxboard (cake or cereal boxes). Cardboard should be free of anything other than corrugated and boxboard materials, and should not contain packing or packaging materials, strapping, shrink wrap or wax coatings.

**COMINGLED CONTAINERS (Mixed Containers)** - Comingled containers consist of rinsed glass beverage containers (any color), aluminum beverage containers, steel and tin cans, and food grade household plastic containers with the recycle symbol containing numbers 1, 2 and 5. Lids are fine. Plastic soap containers (dish, laundry, carwash, etc.) are considered food grade and are acceptable. Place items loose in the recycling bin.

#### **WHAT IS NOT RECYCLABLE**

Non-food grade items such as glass windows, siding, Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC), Pyrex, Tupper-

Containers used for holding hazardous materials; such as, cleaners, oil, fuel, herbicides and pesticides, should be recycled through the Lake County Solid Waste Division's Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) program, and not through the recycling program.

**Do Not** throw garbage, plastic bags, needles/syringes, food waste, STYROFOAM, Aerosol Cans, batteries, light bulbs, etc. in the recycle cart.

Pizza Boxes and any other item with food residue left inside. Any container that may otherwise be recyclable must have all food residue removed from the container. This means rinsing out things like milk and juice bottles or cans and jars that had food in them. Any residue or food left inside of recyclables will have a negative effect in the recycling process, so be sure to rinse or remove these contaminants.

Here is a link to a very informative news story on what you can and cannot recycle and the impact of improper recycling by the community. <https://www.wesh.com/article/chronicle-recycling-in-florida/31251838#>

As the saying goes, **"If in doubt – Leave it out"**

### **Rt 50 Realignment**

A major step was taken as the Lake-Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) approved the programming of \$7.6 million in funding for the State Road 50 (SR 50) Realignment Project in downtown Groveland. The funds will be utilized by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to purchase a portion of the needed right of way, to move SR 50 north three blocks onto a new alignment.

### **COVID-19 RESOURCES & INFORMATION**

United Way of Lake and Sumter Counties has established a fund to support Lake and Sumter residents whose financial stability is being impacted by the economic consequences of COVID-19/Coronavirus. The focus of the fund is to support the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) population experiencing hardship due to decreased hours or unpaid leave. Over 40% of Lake and Sumter residents are ALICE, living paycheck to paycheck, so they need your help. They currently have over 250 requests for assistance and have raised \$58,000 to help this effort. If you are able to help, please donate now.

**211 Information & Referral Crisis Line is Available** - For information or connection to community resources, you can always dial 211 or text your zip code to 898211. Call Specialists are standing by 24/7 to navigate available community resources with you.

### **Police Department Accreditation**

The Groveland Police Department continues to move forward towards obtaining State Accreditation status. State Accreditation, governed by Florida Police Accreditation Commission consists of over 256 standards and best practices recognized by law enforcement administrators as the official seal of approval. The Groveland Police Department has made this one of their top priorities. The police department recently completed its first of two mock assessments prior to scheduling a meeting with state certified assessors later this year to confirm that the department has met the requirements identified to receive the anticipated approval. Under the strong leadership of Chief Shawn Ramsey, our police department strives to be recognized as a professional organization with a strong emphasis on community-oriented policing.

## Public Safety Complex

On July 3, 2019, the city held a ground breaking ceremony for the new Public Safety Complex. The complex is comprised of a two-story building that will have 33,490-square-feet of space that will house both the police and fire departments. It will also contain an Emergency Operations Center for the city as well as the police dispatch call center.

Currently, the Fire Department is housed in an old Public Works barn and the Police Department is next door. Both of these buildings were built in the 1960s. In addition to the main building,



the new site also provides for future expansion of the complex and plans have been developed for the establishment of a regional training center for police and fire personnel throughout Central Florida.

The building is currently projected to be completed in late October of 2020.

## Sharing Ideas

In my three years serving on the city council, I have come to realize the wealth of knowledge that resides in this city's residents. Recently, the city created a way for its residents, businesses and others with an interest in the city to make suggestions that they believe will benefit the city and move it forward. Become a part of the solution to the issues that face the city, especially as we seek to move forward safely with the continuing threat of COVID-19. If you have an idea or suggestion, please take the time to send it to us. We have created an email address that will allow you to share your insights. The address is: [ideas@groveland-fl.gov](mailto:ideas@groveland-fl.gov).

## National Safe Boating Week

May 16<sup>th</sup> thru the 22<sup>nd</sup> is National Safe Boating week. U.S. Coast Guard statistics show that drowning was the reported cause of death in four out of every five recreational boating fatalities in 2018, and that 84 percent of those who drowned were not wearing life jackets.

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New life jackets are much more comfortable, lightweight and stylish than the bulky orange style most boaters know. There are innovative options, such as inflatable life jackets, allowing mobility and flexibility for activities like boating, fishing, paddling or hunting, and are much cooler in the warmer weather

To learn more about how you can be safer on the water, please see the National Safe Boating Council's Boating Safety Tips online at: <https://safeboatingcampaign.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2020-nsbc-fact-sheet-boating-safety-tips.pdf>.

### Subscribe to Newsletter

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Thank you for your interest in the city.

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