



City of Elgin Office of the City Manager

City Hall • 310 North Main Street • P.O. Box 591
Elgin, Texas 78621

November 23, 2021

Re: City of Elgin 2021 Holiday Events and Parade Policy

There are many great Family Holiday Events happening this year in Historic Downtown Elgin that can be enjoyed by our citizens, young and old:

Holiday Luna Market (December 3)

Pictures with Santa

Hot Cocoa Stroll & Wassail on Main (December 4)

Letters to Santa

Blue Santa (EPD)

For more information on these and other 2021 Holiday Events in Elgin, visit www.elgintx.com

For reasons that remain unclear, however, the Elgin Volunteer Fire Department (EVFD) has decided to move its annual Lighted Christmas Parade outside of the city this year.

Parades in Elgin are a long-established city tradition, and the City works to accommodate and support these events. Under current policy, parades are authorized through a routine process to assure public safety for all residents and visitors. Any individual or group can have a parade at essentially any time, so long as they comply with basic requirements (1) Connect with city staff to discuss their parade plans and (2) provide all relevant parade details; specifically, the desired parade route & the event date/time

Once this information is provided, city staff assesses the impacts and costs associated with the parade as planned (All parades require at least traffic control and maintenance support from the Elgin Police Department and Public Works).

Staff ultimately determines the safety control measures and other operations required to appropriately support the parade; and an estimate of costs to city taxpayers for same (which the organizers are required to pay). Parade organizers have the option of paying the associated fees or requesting a fee waiver from the City Council.

This is the same process followed for every parade in the City, including traditional annual parades organized by the Elgin Chamber of Commerce (Western Days), the Elgin ISD (Homecoming or other events), the EVFD (Christmas Parade) and the Juneteenth Festival Committee (Juneteenth Parade).

In the past, each of these groups have complied with this process and have requested a waiver of associated fees by the City Council. **In every case (including past EVFD Lighted Christmas Parades) the City Council has granted the request.** In addition:

- a) The EVFD has not submitted a proposal for a Lighted Christmas Parade nor any other parade.
- b) The City of Elgin **has never denied** the EVFD a permit or permission to have a parade.
- c) The City Council **has granted every past request for waiver of parade fees** by the EVFD.
- d) Parade organizers have never met with – nor requested a meeting with - the City Manager, the Chief of Police, and/or the City Council to discuss any concerns or plans for the 2021 Elgin Volunteer Fire Department Lighted Christmas Parade.

We hope this decision by the EVFD to move this traditional event outside the City achieves their goals, but look forward to the day when this event returns home to Elgin.