



City of Irving *City Manager's Report*

October 3, 2007

Goal No. 2: Vibrant Neighborhoods

Help for the Home Buying – The Northwest Branch Library, 2928 N. Belt Line Road, is offering an educational program about the home buying process at 2 p.m. Oct. 6. The program is part of the library's One Book, One Irving series and will be presented by the Housing and Human Services Department.

Animal Services Neighborhood Meeting – Animal Services Manager Fred Sanderson discussed the programs and services provided by Animal Services, including plans for the new animal shelter, at a neighborhood meeting on Sept. 22. More than 30 residents were in attendance and indicated their support for the programs and goals.

Goal No. 3: Economic Development

Natural Gas Exploration – The next step in the development of Irving's natural gas industry began last week with GIS mapping of several city-owned and privately owned sites. City-owned areas include the Hunter Ferrell Landfill, Valley View Municipal Complex, and several parks. The next step in the process, prior to the actual drilling of gas wells, will be seismic testing. This is expected to begin later this year.

Business Kudos – The Dallas Cowboys, whose corporate offices and practice facility is in Valley Ranch, was ranked No. 1 in *Forbes* magazine's listing of the most valuable sports franchises in the world. *Forbes* reported that the franchise is valued at \$1.5 billion, a 28 percent increase from 2006 estimates. Irving-based RBC Life Sciences was named a finalist by the Greater Dallas Chamber in its annual International Achievement Awards for small to mid-sized businesses. Irving residents Grace and Thom Davis' company, Omega Environmental Technologies, also was a small to mid-sized business finalist. Commercial Metals, one of Irving's Fortune 500 companies, was named the large company winner. Two Irving-based companies had their general counsels named finalists in the *Dallas Business Journal's* Best Corporate Counsel Awards: Ted Eades with ACE Cash Express Inc. and Alec Scheiner with the Dallas Cowboys Football Club. Avelo Mortgage was named a finalist for the Greater Dallas Chamber's 2007 Momentum Awards. The Irving Economic Development Partnership submitted Avelo Mortgage as a nominee for its recent relocation and expansion within Las Colinas, specifically recognizing them for the growth in employment base. The Irving Community Development Corporation was recognized by ExxonMobil Foundation as its Agency of the Year in its Community Services Program, which provides paid internships for college students at nonprofit agencies.

Health Management Systems to Consolidate in Irving – Health Management Systems (HMS) will be relocating its North Texas operations into Corporate Point at 5615 High Point Drive. HMS leased three floors for a total 59,426 square feet of space. The company expects to move into the new facility on Nov. 1. Initially, 150 employees will occupy the space, with plans to add 250 more employees in the coming years. HMS plans to consolidate other offices outside the region to the Irving location.

Four Seasons Maintains Five Diamond Status – The Four Seasons Resort and Club has been recognized by AAA for the fourth consecutive year with its prestigious Five Diamond status. The Four Seasons is the only resort in Texas to achieve this designation. The Four Seasons also was ranked as the number two business hotel in America by readers of American Airlines' *Celebrated Living* magazine.

Goal No. 4: Safe and Secure City

North Texas Police Chiefs Association – The Irving Police Department hosted the monthly meeting of the North Texas Police Chiefs Association on Sept. 25 at Zale Corp. The meetings are attended by area police chiefs to discuss regional law enforcement issues.

Digital In-Car Video System – The Police Department has completed the purchasing process and awarded a contract to L-3 Mobile Vision to transition police vehicles to a digital video system. This system will provide more effective recording of incidents from patrol vehicles, and is a more reliable system that can be expanded in future years.

Texas Citizens Fire Academy Alumni Association Meeting – The Texas Citizens Fire Academy Alumni Association, with assistance from the Irving Fire Department, hosted a meeting last month in Irving. Fire Chief Mario Molina and Fire Equipment Operator/Chaplain J.R. Duncan welcomed the visitors, with Captain Billy “Shakey” Holder and the crew from Station No. 1, Shift B, giving a presentation on the Swift Water Rescue Team.

Human Case of West Nile Virus – The City of Irving has been notified of its first human case of West Nile virus this season. The resident lives in the 2000 block of Jimmy Dee Drive, south of Rock Island and Story roads. The residential areas near that location are being sprayed in the early morning hours to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus to people. City staff maintains an active mosquito control program, and residents are encouraged to take sensible precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

Paws for a Cause – Animal Services participated in the Paws for a Cause event at Cimarron Recreation Center on Sept. 22, promoting Irving’s upcoming rabies and microchip clinic at Running Bear Park on Nov. 3. The event will ensure that Irving pets are healthy and up-to-date on all vaccinations. Staff will provide permanent animal identification microchips for the first 500 pets in attendance.

Animal Shelter Volunteer Class – Six Irving residents completed the Certified Animal Shelter Volunteer class on Sept. 22. The class teaches the proper handling of animals and the volunteer duties available at the Irving Animal Shelter. In all, 20 people are certified to volunteer at the shelter.

Communication Amplifiers – To improve public safety and employee mobile wireless communication, Information Technology contracted with Sprint/Nextel and Verizon wireless companies to install communication amplifiers or bi-directional amplifiers in seven city buildings to increase signal coverage. Installations included the Valley View Municipal Center, Central Library, City Hall, Criminal Justice Center, and Briery Service Center.

Goal No. 5: Diversity

Mango Festival – The Central Library will hold a program that evokes the vibe of an urban street festival at 2 p.m. Oct. 13. The event, which is inspired by “The House on Mango Street” by Sandra Cisneros, will feature singers, dancers, cooking demonstrations, free refreshments and other activities for the entire family. The program is part of the library’s One Book, One Irving series. Women’s shoe donations will be collected to benefit Brighter Tomorrows.

Feria Pan Americana – The City of Irving is co-sponsoring Feria Pan Americana, a unique event celebrating Hispanic heritage in Irving. The family-friendly activity is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 13 at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 2505 W. Northgate Drive. It will feature ethnic foods, and art and music from various Latin American and Caribbean countries. This event is a partnership among grassroots, community-based groups; health and educational agencies; businesses; and a variety of city leaders. More than 3,000 residents are expected to attend. The event is free and open to the public.

Goal No. 6: Effective Communications

Mikhail Gorbachev Visit – Irving Community Television Network (ICTN) has been working with the University of Dallas in preparation for the visit of Mikhail Gorbachev, the former president of the Soviet Union and Nobel Prize-winning statesman. Gorbachev will hold a press conference and address students on the Irving campus on Oct. 8, followed by another presentation at the Belo Mansion in Dallas later that evening. ICTN will be taping the events for future airing on the city-owned network.

Citizen Inquiries Answered – For the months of July, August and September, the Corporate Communications Department responded to 631 inquiries. There were 240 inquiries addressed through the inquiry system, 232 Web-based inquiries answered directly without departmental assistance, and 159 inquiries were immediately addressed. The primary concerns consisted of outside storage, high grass/weeds, street and sidewalk repair, animal services and solid waste services (trash, brush and bulky waste pick up). Residents who initiate concerns are provided regular updates about how and when the issue is being addressed.

“Local Address, Global Access” Video Recognition – The city video “Local Address, Global Access” was accepted into the Women in Film “Chick Flicks Film Festival.” It will be shown at the Angelika Theater (Mockingbird Station) in Dallas on Oct. 4. The high-definition video was a joint project of the City of Irving and Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce. It was produced by Irving Community Television Network.

GIS Training Classes – The Information Technology Department is providing training classes for employees on various Geographical Information System applications. The first training class was held Sept. 21 on the latest software version - ArcView 9.2. These classes are geared for both basic and advanced users. More classes will be held later this month.

Goal No. 7: Cultural, Recreational and Educational Environments

Asleep at the Wheel Concert and Dance – The Irving Arts Center will present a concert and dance by nine-time Grammy winning artists Asleep at the Wheel at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 6 at Carpenter Performance Hall. The concert kicks off the exhibit, “Texas Singer-Songwriters: An Americana Portrait,” featuring 50 color photographs of living Texas country legends. A free reception for the exhibit will take place before the concert from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Featured photographer Gary Goldberg will attend. For tickets, log on to www.irvingartscenter.com or call (972) 252-ARTS.

New Public Library – The Valley Ranch Library will open at 10 a.m. Oct. 6 with a dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony, followed by special activities throughout the day. The new library is located at 401 Cimarron Trail, just east of MacArthur Boulevard.

Homeschool Fair – A Homeschool Fair will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 6 at Lee Park Recreation Center. The event will consist of food, entertainment, and recreational demonstrations. Competitions will be held and awards given for a variety of hobbies, talents, skills and interests, including an essay contest. The cost is \$5 per family. The Parks and Recreation Department provides a number of classes and programs in support of homeschooled children and families.

Goal No. 8: Sound Governance

Digital Six Sigma Project – Assistant Police Chief David Paris and Strategic Planning Director Lynda Johnson attended green belt training for the Digital Six Sigma Project in Illinois from Sept. 24-28. This training will prepare the staff to lead a project team in regard to improving the recruiting and hiring process, and the field training officer program, for the Irving Police Department. This will be one of a series of projects undertaken by city staff to improve processes and customer service delivery.

Leadership Development Program – The Leadership Development Program recognized its fourth class of graduates on Sept. 18. Participants gave informative presentations about the value of this program in relation to their jobs. In addition to improving their skill set, participants reported that this program raised their awareness about managing generational differences in the workplace and the benefits toward creating a more positive work environment.

Employee Assistance Program – Human Resources has contracted with a new Employee Assistance Program vendor, effective Oct. 1. With the new vendor, employees and dependents can receive six counseling sessions per issue per year, which is double the number of free sessions previously offered. The city's cost also will decrease from \$1.69 per employee per month to \$1.27, which will save approximately \$11,000 the first year of the contract.

Executive Leadership Forum – An Executive Leadership Forum was held by Human Resources on Sept. 28. This program provided an interactive leadership training session for department directors and senior management. During this forum, best practices as related to the Strategic Plan were discussed and presented with tools that impact organizational performance.

Student Intern Training Experience Program – The Information Technology Department has partnered with the Irving Independent School District in their Student Intern Training Experience (SITE) program. It allows high school seniors who have met academic and employability skills a chance to work with Irving companies. Two students will be mentored by the Service Desk and GIS divisions during this academic school year.

Annual Employee Health Fair – As part of its employee wellness initiative, Human Resources hosted its annual Employee Health Fair on Sept. 21. This year's fair drew a 31 percent increase in employee attendance over the previous year and had the participation of more than 20 vendors.

Goal No. 9: Infrastructure Network

Emergency Repair of Storm Sewer – Public Works entered into an emergency award to replace the existing storm sewer on Conflans Road, west of Belt Line Road. The issue was creating a hazardous and unsightly situation as ground water continuously ran across the street.

Real Estate Services – The Real Estate Services section of Public Works/Engineering completed negotiations for the following land purchases and revenue-producing agreements:

- Closed on the 12.305-acre Animal Shelter site on Sept. 12. The sale included the conveyance of the mineral rights to the city, which are currently leased to Chesapeake.
- Negotiated an oil and gas lease on approximately 439 acres, which will result in a lease bonus payment of \$1.5 million to the city. Revenue generated by all gas leases totals \$11.65 million, with approximately 2,034 acres under lease.
- Completed the purchase for future demolition of a building at the Shady Grove/Senter Road intersection to provide for future beautification of this area. The building is adjacent to the park property on the northeast corner of the intersection.

Goal No. 10: Environmentally Sustainable Community

Energy Awareness – The Energy Awareness Committee promoted energy efficiency at the Employee Health Fair. Various handouts were available to provide ways for employees to reduce energy consumption. In two hours, 150 compact fluorescent bulbs were distributed. In order to receive a bulb, employees had to sign a pledge to make an effort to save energy and change their bulbs at home. Information also was distributed on how to properly dispose of compact fluorescent bulbs.