



City of Irving *City Manager's Report*

December 10, 2008

Strategic Goal No. 1: Land Use

Zoning Ordinance Update – Clarion Associates will present its Phase 1 Draft Diagnosis and Assessment Report to the Zoning Advisory Committee on Dec. 17. The document summarizes the consultant's findings related to the city's current set of development ordinances, and includes an outline for the layout and structuring of the new ordinance. This work program is being undertaken to address Irving's current development regulations, which are outdated and no longer responsive to current development trends. New initiatives include mixed-use and transit-oriented development, transit villages and the need for "speed to market" on projects.

Strategic Goal No. 2: Vibrant Neighborhoods

Chapter 8 Workshop – More than 200 property management representatives attended a Chapter 8 Workshop hosted by the City of Irving on Dec. 2. Revised minimum building standards were presented, and team members fielded questions from attendees and provided informational handouts. The workshop was a collaborative effort of Code Enforcement, Police, Fire, Water Utilities, Parks and Recreation, Information Technology, City Attorney's Office, Planning and Inspections, and Corporate Communications.

Meet the New Neighbor Session – The Housing and Human Services Department hosted a Meet the New Neighbor session on Dec. 6 at the corner of Oakdale and Balleywood roads. The department shared the construction plans for the vacant corner lot and informed surrounding residents about the city's Home Restoration Program. The anticipated groundbreaking for the eight new homes is set for early January.

Neighborhood Grants – Neighborhood and homeowner associations are in the process of completing their applications for the city's Community Partnership Grants. Administered by the Corporate Communications Department, the grants provide between \$250 and \$1,500 for projects such as neighborhood beautification, street sign toppers, special events, newsletters and Web site development. Applications will be reviewed and grants awarded in January by a grant selection committee.

New Neighborhood Association – A new neighborhood association was formed on Dec. 2 with the assistance of the Corporate Communications Department. North Austin Heights Neighborhood Association includes approximately 200 homes, and is bounded by Grauwylar Road to Union Bower Road and French Street to Nursery Road. A total of 59 neighborhood and homeowners associations are registered with the city.

Strategic Goal No. 3: Economic Development

Irving Mall Enhancement – Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce and City of Irving representatives met with Simon Properties to discuss the future of Irving Mall. Barnes & Noble has executed a two-year lease renewal through 2010. The interior renovation is almost completed and represents a significant investment in the property.

New Bank of the West – Construction of the new Bank of the West facility at Irving Boulevard and Story Road is completed. Enhanced landscaping and facade improvements were accomplished through an incentive agreement with the city.

Irving Businesses Honored – Nine Irving businesses have been recognized by the SMU Caruth Institute for Entrepreneurship with its Dallas 100 Award, which identifies and honors the 100 fastest-growing privately held companies in the Metroplex. To qualify for the Dallas 100, a company must meet a number of criteria based on its legal status, location, sales history, credit report and character. The Irving-based companies making the list and their ranking are: (9) True.com, (19) Driver Pipeline, (42) Enkitech, (45) Paperless Transaction Corporation, (51) Optimal Solutions Integration, (62) AVIDwireless, (65) Buchanan Associates, (71) The Expo Group, and (85) Signal Metal Industries. The Dallas 100 was created to honor entrepreneurs who build their own businesses and create jobs.

Irving Hospitality Firms Recognized – Three Irving-based businesses have earned high ratings from AAA. The Omni Mandalay Hotel received the Four Diamond Award for the 22nd consecutive year. Also receiving Four Diamonds was Café on the Green, located inside the Four Seasons Resort and Club. The Four Seasons also retained its Five Diamond rating for a sixth consecutive year, and still remains the only Five Diamond resort in Texas.

Strategic Goal No. 4: Safe and Secure City

Traffic Grant for Police – The Police Department has been awarded a comprehensive grant for the monitoring and enforcement of seatbelt, speeding and DWI laws. This funding will provide for additional officers to be on the streets with the sole task of traffic enforcement, inclusive of the continued DWI “no refusal” initiatives that have been used in Irving during the past year. The grant, administered by the Texas Department of Transportation, has been approved for the next five years.

TABC Training – Police Department staff attended an informational session presented by the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) on pertinent laws that relate to the selling of beer and wine in Irving. TABC Agent Joe Garcia provided information to the attendees on possible pitfalls or mistakes that other cities in the area have experienced when beer and wine sales were approved in their cities.

Police Recruit Graduation – The Police Department had four recruits graduate from the North Central Texas Council of Governments Police Academy. The officers are Jeffrey Blumer, Robert Kuether III, Jared Sykes and Robert Turner.

Blue Christmas – The Irving Police and Irving Fire departments have started their Blue Christmas drive by accepting donations of nonperishable food items and toys to distribute to needy children by Dec. 23. Donations will be accepted at the Irving Police Station, 305 N. O'Connor Road; Police North Substation, 5992 Riverside Drive; Fire Administration, 845 W. Irving Blvd.; or at any Irving fire station. Call (972) 721-2746 for more information.

New Fire Engine – Fire Station No. 11, 6200 Love Drive, has received a new engine. Firefighters are being trained on the engine's equipment prior to it being placed into service.

Physical Assessments – Half of the Irving Fire Department staff is obtaining physical assessments. The in-depth assessment includes stress, blood cholesterol, hearing and other function tests designed to detect potential medical problems. This program, in conjunction with the Electron Beam Tomography tests, is part of the Fire Department's two-year program to assure that Irving maintains healthy firefighters.

Strategic Goal No. 5: Diversity

African-American Authors Book Circle – The African-American Authors Book Circle will meet at 10:30 a.m. Dec. 13 at the Northwest Branch Library, 2928 N. Belt Line Road, to discuss Mary Monroe's *The Upper Room* and *God Don't Like Ugly*. For more information, call (972) 721-2691.

Strategic Goal No. 6: Effective Communications

ICTN Programming – Irving Community Television Network (ICTN) has worked with several city departments to produce new programming for residents and training for employees. A "Leave Your Purse, Lose Your Purse" video was produced in conjunction with the Police Department to help decrease motor vehicle burglaries, especially at local gyms. ICTN also created a PSA for Water Utilities to educate residents about the proper disposal of motor oil to help prevent damage to the environment. A new training video was produced in conjunction with Solid Waste Services to help increase safety for sanitation workers while picking up garbage in city cul-de-sacs. Other new initiatives include the expansion of the City Manager's Report to video, and a new format for the employee "City Talk."

Internship Program – The city and Irving ISD have expanded their cooperative partnership by adding additional departments to the current internship program. There are now 15 interns working in five departments: Information Technology, Irving Arts Center, Corporate Communications, Police, and Housing and Human Services. Interns, their city supervisors and school representatives met with City Manager Tommy Gonzalez in November to learn about the city's leadership model and the role the city manager has in municipal government.

City Hall Visit – A fifth-grade class of 14 students from Holy Family School visited City Hall on Nov. 19. While visiting the Council Chambers, City Secretary's Office staff talked to the students about City Council meetings and responsibilities of different city departments. The students met Mayor Herbert Gears and were able to observe the first part of that day's Work Session. Following the meeting, Senior Planner Jack Rainwater provided the students with an overview of the Planning and Inspections Department.

City Participation with Irving ISD – Staff from Public Works/Engineering were invited to meet with Irving ISD representatives to discuss the introduction of civil engineering course work to the school career and technical education curriculum. Wayne Lee, engineering manager, and Robert Mardis, senior civil engineer, attended the meeting on behalf the city. The Irving ISD's advisory council relies on industry representatives to provide guidance, advice and technical assistance regarding program improvement, current and future trends, and labor market needs.

Water Utilities at Lively Elementary – Water Utilities staff provided a special water presentation to third-grade students at Lively Elementary. Students learned about water as a limited natural resource and the importance of conserving and caring for water. Additionally, participants were fascinated by an exhibit, which demonstrated how easily water sources are contaminated and saw firsthand what happens to pipes that become clogged with fats, oils and grease.

Strategic Goal No. 7: Cultural, Recreational and Educational Environments

Arts Center Gift Card – Give the gift of entertainment this holiday season with the Irving Arts Center gift card. The Arts Center launched the new program in November with a series of e-mail, direct mail and in-house advertising targeted at current patrons. Gift cards have the look and feel of a credit card, they can be purchased in any increment with a minimum of \$5, and they hold value for three years. Patrons can redeem gift cards for anything sold through the Arts Center's Box Office, including season and single tickets, Art Connection memberships and KidsArts registration. Arts Center gift cards are available for purchase online at www.irvingartscenter.com, by phone at (972) 252-2787 or in person at the Box Office.

Recreation Center Camps – All recreation centers will offer winter camps to assist parents with day-care needs during the holiday school vacation. Camps will run from Dec. 22-24 and Dec. 29-Jan. 2. There will be no camp sessions Christmas Day, the day after Christmas and New Year's Day. The cost may vary depending on the field trips, and number of days a child will participate. Contact the nearest recreation center or the Parks and Recreation Department at (972) 721-2501 for details.

Campión Senior Programs – Several new programs designed for seniors are planned for the first of the year and into spring, such as Senior Campión Art and Nature. Seniors will have the opportunity to express their creative side by painting or photographing the scenic side of Campión Trails. Examples of other programs will include Geocaching, Walk the Talk and Bird Watchers Club.

Holiday in the Valley – The Irving Public Library, Irving Parks and Recreation Department and the Valley Ranch Homeowners' Association will host the annual Holiday in the Valley celebration at 7 p.m. Dec. 12 at the Valley Ranch Library, 401 Cimarron Trail. The program will feature a special performance by the Tom Landry Elementary Drum Team, photos with Santa, holiday movies, crafts, refreshments and door prizes.

Irving Chautauqua – The Irving Public Library offers the Irving Chautauqua series at 2 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month. The program, which brings the community together to enjoy cultural performances, will continue Dec. 13 with a holiday performance by Caste of Bronze, a Dallas handbell ensemble directed by Christopher T. Nabors, at the Irving Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd. Call (972) 721-2608.

Yoga for Kids – Irving Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd., will host a yoga program designed for children at 2 p.m. Dec. 31. J'Ann Alvarado, children's librarian and yoga instructor, will lead the children through various yoga positions while telling stories, singing songs, stretching and teaching the benefits of yoga. Parents are urged to participate and comfortable clothing is encouraged. Children age 8 and under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Call (972) 721-2458.

Strategic Goal No. 8: Sound Governance

Eyes on Irving – The city's internal Eyes on Irving program has been successful in its first year of operation, with 482 inquiries reported by employees to enhance the visual appeal of the city. Employees call in to the tip line to report non-emergency issues while driving around the city during normal work hours or when off duty. The most frequently reported issues are abandoned grocery carts, graffiti and street maintenance. This program allows city staff throughout the organization to be more proactive in identifying and correcting issues, while building employee pride in the city. The goal is for employees to call in issues so they can be addressed before noticed by residents.

City Hall Training Room Redesign – The employee training room at City Hall has been upgraded, thanks to a cooperative effort of the Construction and Building Services, Strategic Resources and Budget, Information Technology, and Corporate Communications departments. New paint, artwork, a white board and state-of-the-art audio/video equipment were installed just prior to the launch of a new employee training program. On-site classes help avoid staff time and costs associated with traveling to remote facilities or the higher cost of training at vendor locations.

On-the-Spot Awards – The following city employees received recognition by City Manager Tommy Gonzalez for excellent customer service and outstanding work: Teresa Adrian (Code Enforcement), Gayle Averitt (Parks and Recreation), Larry Boyd (Police), Bobby Eggins (Irving Arts Center), Lynda Johnson (Strategic Resources and Budget), Crispin Lawson (Strategic Resources and Budget), Johanna Stahl Mandel (Strategic Resources and Budget), John Mayer (Information Technology), Brenda McDonald (Real Estate and Development), Gary Miller (Planning and Inspections), Alice Schrade (Irving Arts Center) and Donna Starling (Water Utilities).

Mailbox Limitation – To save on storage cost and the time needed to maintain an exceedingly large volume of e-mail, the Information Technology Department implemented a new citywide e-mail policy that imposes a limit on employee e-mail storage capacity based on the type of user. A warning is sent to the mailbox owner when an e-mailbox has reached 90 percent of its quota, and the employee cannot send or receive e-mail when the e-mailbox is full. To date, more than 120 GB of disk space is now available for usage by other applications. In addition, the time it takes to maintain e-mail servers has been reduced 58 percent, from 24 to 10 hours a day. It is also estimated that access speed is now 10 percent faster.

Employee Recognition Dinner – Long-tenured city employees were honored Nov. 19 with a recognition dinner at Texas Stadium Club. The event acknowledged employees who have provided 20, 25, 30 and 35 years of service to the City of Irving. Strategic Resources and Budget staff planned the event.

Strategic Goal No. 9: Infrastructure

MacArthur Pump Station Project – Plans are progressing to replace and build a new pump station, following City Council approval of the construction contract. The MacArthur Pump Station, located at the southeast corner of MacArthur Boulevard and State Highway 183, was originally constructed in the 1950s. The contract includes the building of a new pumping facility with a firm capacity of 33 million gallons per day. The existing pump station and the concrete ground storage tank will be demolished. State-of-the-art equipment, such as variable frequency drive pumps, will be included in the project. Construction is expected to begin in January.

Restroom Renovations – Construction and Building Services has completed restroom renovations on the third floor of City Hall and at the Briery Road Fleet Service Center. The restrooms on the third floor of City Hall have been updated with new wallpaper and partitions. The fleet restrooms underwent a total renovation, including new walls, ceilings, flooring, fixtures, paint and partitions. Insulation also was upgraded to increase energy efficiency.

Strategic Goal No. 10: Environmentally Sustainable Community

Electronic Document Management Program – To further the city's goal toward electronic document management, the Information Technology Department completed the replacement of the aging scanners and scanning workstations that are strategically placed throughout the city. This initiative assists departments in meeting the need for retaining and storing documents electronically. Staff estimates that the city has saved about \$86,000 in paper costs (assuming 2.8 million copies at 3 cents per copy) so far this year. In addition, approximately \$17,500 a year in labor costs is saved (based on an average of 10 hours per week for the city to manually handle these paper copies) for a minimum savings of more than \$100,000 during the initial period.