

CitySpectrum

WWW.CITYOFIRVING.ORG



Parks improve quality of life.



Residents give trash collection high marks.

Proposed Budget Maintains City Services with Tax Rate Adjustment

As proposed, the city's \$169.5 million general fund budget is balanced, and allows for the continued delivery of exceptional services to Irving residents, visitors and businesses.

Revenue Needed

Having withstood a \$20.2 million revenue decrease in the past two years due mainly to declining property tax valuation and reduced sales tax receipts, city leaders are recommending an adjustment to the tax rate that will offset the 5.15 percent decline in property values.

Plans call for two-thirds of the revenue decrease to be addressed by cutting operational expenditures. A proposed tax rate adjustment of 3.55 cents to a rate of 57.04 cents will make up the remaining one-third of the shortfall. Almost \$6 million will be generated by the tax adjustment to support priorities identified by the City Council based on community input. The last adjustment resulted in a reduction of 0.73 cents in 2007. The tax rate has not increased since 2004.

"Irving will continue to offer the second-lowest tax rate of comparable cities in our region," said Chief Financial Officer Max Duplant. "The monthly cost to the average homeowner of the proposed tax rate increase would be \$2.20, but depending on changes in property values, some residents may receive a decrease or see no changes at all."

Duplant's estimate is based on average home values in Irving, which decreased from \$129,434 to \$127,193 last year.

Services Maintained

With the proposed adjustment, the city will sustain resident services including maintenance of streets, sidewalks and parks, low-cost after-school care, public safety, solid waste services, and unchanged hours at libraries and recreation centers. Other recommendations include the deferral of non-

essential equipment replacement and non-vital capital improvement projects.

Expenses Reduced

For the past four years, the city has reduced layers of management, and combined similar functions to minimize duplication and waste. The city also has cut costs through attrition by eliminating 91 positions and holding 62 positions vacant—saving the city \$4 million in fiscal year 2010-11. To date, cost savings total upward of \$12 million. Irving also has negotiated an energy contract that will save \$18 million over five years.

"Residents need to know that the city has been good stewards of the taxpayers' money by delivering similar or increased services at the lowest cost possible," said Councilman Joe Philipp, chairman of the Council's Audit and Finance Committee. "Moreover, the city has maintained triple-A bond ratings and earned the Texas Comptroller's Gold award for financial transparency, and that says a lot."

Input Opportunities

To provide taxpayers accurate information regarding financial matters, the city offers residents direct access to the "Budget Guy." The Budget Guy will take questions from residents through Sept. 22 at knowthefacts@cityofirving.org. Responses will be posted to the Know the Facts webpage at www.cityofirving.org.

The new budget was developed based on resident input. Additional public hearings will be held at 7 p.m. Sept. 9 and 23 at City Hall, 825 W. Irving Blvd. The budget will be presented to City Council for adoption Sept. 23. The new budget year begins Oct. 1. ■

DISABILITY COMMITTEE POSTER CONTEST

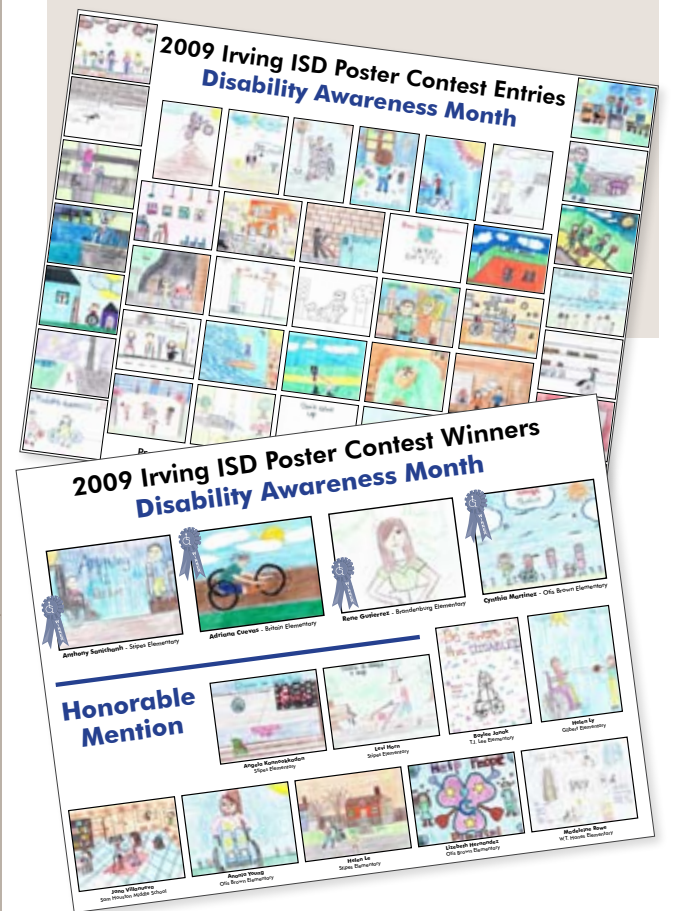
The Irving Advisory Committee on Disabilities is hosting its annual poster contest in recognition of National Disability Awareness Month in October.

The poster contest, for students in fifth and sixth grades, will provide participants with an opportunity to showcase artistic talents as they express how a person with disabilities can use his or her abilities to be part of the community.

Each entry will be judged on the originality of concept and the content of how it relates to persons with disabilities. Examples include a blind person crossing a street or children with a disability playing a sport with children who are not disabled. Irving students in public, private or home school are invited to participate.

"Through their artwork, young people will illustrate how those with disabilities contribute to our community," said Brian McGuire, chairman of the Irving Advisory Committee on Disabilities.

Entry deadline is 5 p.m. Sept. 17. Awards will be presented at the Oct. 21 City Council meeting. Posters will be on display for the public. For details on the contest rules, visit www.cityofirving.org or call (972) 721-2533. ■



Irving Main Street Event Set for Sept. 25

Enjoy a full day of festivities at the annual Main Street Event, set for 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sept. 25 in the Heritage District. The event will feature the Manifolds on Main St. Car Show. Read more on Page 4.

TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT

More than 600 attendees were hosted by the City of Irving on Aug. 10-13 for the 13th Annual Transportation and Infrastructure Summit. Municipal, county and transportation representatives from more than 20 states and 10 countries attended.

The Transportation Summit is the largest and most comprehensive public policy transportation conference in the nation, dedicated to bringing together leaders from all levels of government and creating a forum to discuss and develop solutions for transportation issues.

Industry experts and government leaders addressed issues such as tolling, public-private partnerships, growing congestion, air quality, pollution, mobility, and safety and security challenges. ■



U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison speaks at Summit.

Young Leaders Learn About Law

On Tuesday evenings, students from across Irving and some surrounding communities gather at the Irving Criminal Justice Center to administer justice to their peers. They act as prosecutors, defense attorneys, jurors, bailiffs, court clerks, and master jurors in cases where the offender has pled guilty or no contest.

It's a program called Irving Teen Court, and it was launched in 1992 to alter the behavior of youthful offenders in a positive way and reduce recidivism. Teens learn a valuable lesson—that consequences come with making bad decisions.

Offending participants have been charged with Class C misdemeanors such as speeding, no driver's license, no insurance, theft, fighting, criminal mischief, trespassing, possession of drug paraphernalia, etc. In Teen Court, a jury of teen peers hears evidence, deliberates and renders a binding sentence. A sentence consists of community service hours and jury terms and could also include attendance at a life skills, anger management, or insurance class, a letter of apology to the victim or parent, or an essay on a topic relating to the offense. Those who successfully complete the program will have their tickets dismissed. Those who fail will have their cases returned to the Municipal Court where they must pay the fine. Teen Court is not a mock trial, but the real thing. Participants understand that they are actually affecting a person's life.

Volunteer Recruitment

The court is currently recruiting youth and adult volunteers to participate in the program. Teen volunteers must be between 14 and 17 (or still enrolled in high school) and undergo training before serving in the court. Teens serve as prosecuting and defense



Master jurors deliberate before sentencing a defendant.

lawyers, clerks, bailiffs, jurors and master jurors (must have a driver's license or permit). It's an opportunity for youth volunteers to learn great skills in advocating, in public speaking and in dealing with the judicial system. Adult volunteers supervise the juries, help defendants with a check-out process, and oversee jury assignments. Attorneys may sit on the bench as Teen Court judges.

Volunteer Training

Training for new teen volunteers will be held Sept. 25 at the Criminal Justice Center. More information and volunteer applications are available online at www.cityofirving.org/municipal-courts/teen-court.asp or by calling the Teen Court office at (972) 721-3601. Applications must be completed and received by Sept. 17. ■

City Launches New Interactive Website

Visitors to www.cityofirving.org have noticed a new look to the city website. Designed by the city's web team, information has been reorganized to offer an enhanced browsing experience based on feedback received from a survey conducted last fall.

In addition to the existing Video on Demand library, four Flash-based video players have been added as the main website element, and can be turned on and off according to the user's preference. Produced by Irving Community Television Network (ICTN), videos are organized into the categories of residents, visitors and businesses. This unique type of communication benchmarks Irving in web design.

According to Senior Web Technology Specialist Justin Boyette, "There is an increased demand for video content on the web as can be seen in examples such as YouTube, CNN and Yahoo. Site visitors have come to expect more and our job is to evolve with technology to meet their demands."

Users also can now send city news through e-mail to a list of recipients by submitting a simple web form at the bottom of each article. Social media fans can access the city's Facebook, Twitter and YouTube sites directly from the home page.

Other features include the addition of a citywide events calendar, a Quick Links menu at the top of the home page, RSS feeds and a permanent navigation menu at the bottom of each webpage. To further enhance communication initiatives, an interactive calendar is slated to launch this fall. ■

Stay in the Know

Twitter

Follow the City of Irving on Twitter to receive instant updates on city events. Visit www.twitter.com/thecityofirving to see the latest news, events, tips and updates.

Facebook

Fan the City of Irving on Facebook to receive frequent news, information updates, photos and videos from around the city. Visit www.facebook.com/thecityofirving and become a fan today.

All About Irving

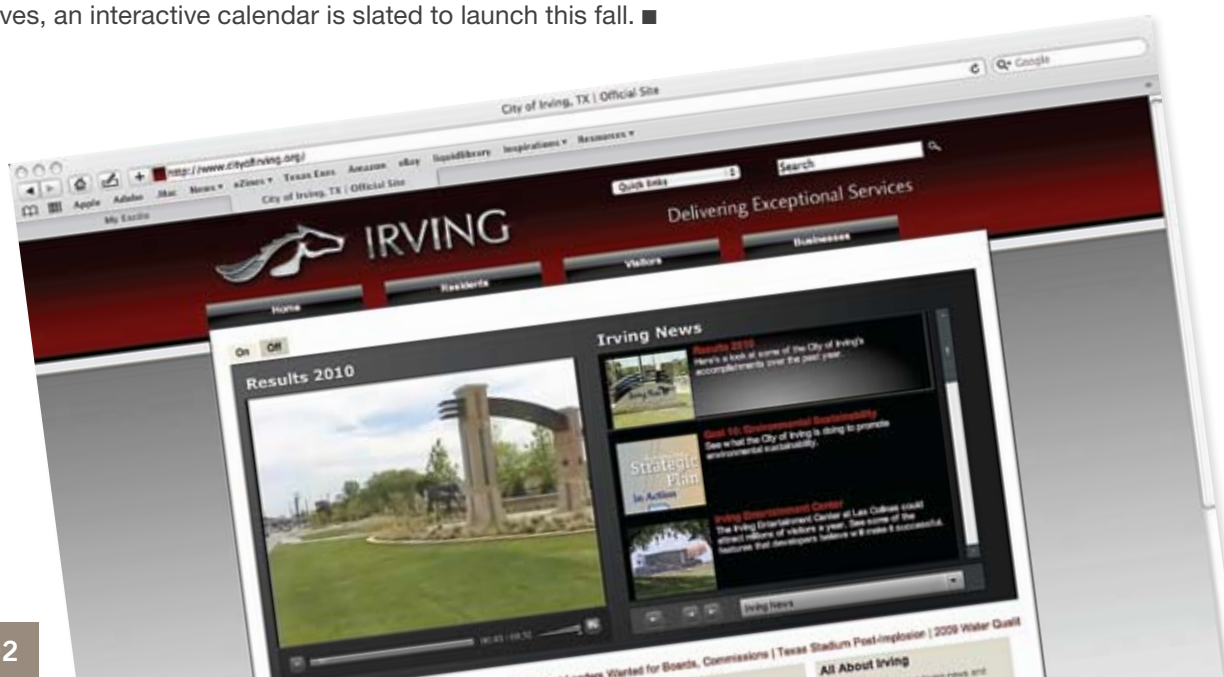
Information on city events is distributed via the All About Irving e-mail list. To subscribe to All About Irving, visit www.cityofirving.org and select "Sign up" on the home page.

Video on Demand

Website visitors can view recordings of City Council meetings and enjoy special programming 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Viewers can select a specific agenda item of interest without having to watch or fast-forward through the entire video. New videos are added on a weekly basis.

YouTube

The city is on YouTube. Watch short and informative videos produced by Irving Community Television Network at www.youtube.com/thecityofirving. New videos are uploaded every week and are available for viewing 24/7. ■





Problem Solving Team: Chad Schroeder, Bryan Jones, Charles Taylor and David Gorski

Public Safety Enhanced by Police Problem Solving Team

By introducing and implementing a number of new strategic policing initiatives in recent years, the Irving Police Department (IPD) is literally making history by decreasing crime for six-plus years—a record for the city.

In Irving, traditional policing measures such as beat patrols are augmented by the IPD's Problem Solving Team. Comprised of one sergeant and four patrolmen, the Problem Solving Team tackles crime by identifying and responding to criminal trends in the area. Trends are identified by analysis of crime statistics and anecdotal evidence.

"Typically, crimes addressed by the Problem Solving Team are those that haven't responded well to traditional policing methods," said Sgt. Jason Mullins. "The purpose is to address the root causes of crime and make the city safer for all."

Examples of the success achieved by the Problem Solving Team can be found in two Irving neighborhoods that were previously known for high-crime such as the Tudor Lane and Walnut Hill areas. In the Tudor Lane area, the Problem Solving Team is credited for having achieved a 72 percent reduction in offenses in just the past three years. In the Walnut Hill area, there has been a 36 percent reduction in calls for police service and a 24 percent reduction in criminal activity in the area. Even with the successes achieved in the Walnut Hill and Tudor Lane areas, police continue to pay special attention to these locations to maintain and sustain the new level of safety.

The success of the Problem Solving Team is the result of intra-departmental, interdepartmental and community partnerships. The Problem Solving Team works closely with various divisions within the Police Department including the Patrol Division, Special Investigation Unit (Narcotics and Vice), Tactical Units and Crime Analysts.

Corporate Communications, Code Enforcement, Housing and Human Services, Real Estate and Development, and Intergovernmental Services and Public Works have all worked closely with the Problem Solving Team as well as external partners including YMCA, Calvary Church and Irving Independent School District.

"Reducing crime and increasing public safety must be a community effort," said Mullins. "The success we have had in recent years really points to the great partnerships we have with the various police units, different departments in the city and the community at-large."

The Problem Solving team will continue to identify areas of need and use their skills to help keep the crime rate down. Visit the Irving Police Department online at www.irvingpd.com. ■

Constable Role Defined

Over the years, the city has received numerous questions from residents about the increased presence of Dallas County Constables enforcing traffic in Irving. The biggest question has been, "who do they work for and are they part of the Irving Police Department?" The answer is that the constables are part of Dallas County government and they are not affiliated with the Irving Police Department.

County constables have a unique history with Texas—the office of constable is a creation of county government, specifically authorized by a Texas Local Government Code. Supervision, oversight and budgeting are controlled by the county through the commissioner's court and county judge.

The general duties of constables and deputy constables involve service and return of civil and criminal papers and warrants, and eviction notices. A constable may execute any civil or criminal process throughout the county in which his/her precinct is located. The Texas Code of Criminal Procedure establishes that constables, deputy constables and reserve deputy constables who hold permanent peace officer licenses are "peace officers."

As peace officers, constables also can enforce traffic laws, such as the speed limit. Several years ago, Dallas County, along with numerous other counties in Texas, saw significant growth in county constable traffic enforcement activity. This traffic enforcement generally takes place inside cities and there is little or no effort to coordinate this added traffic enforcement with existing police departments.

The majority of constable traffic enforcement occurring in Irving comes from Precinct 4 under Constable R.L. Skinner. Constable Skinner's Irving office is located at 841 W. Irving Blvd. For more information or to contact the Irving constable, call (214) 589-7014. ■



SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY: IT'S THE LAW

Motorists are prohibited from talking, dialing or listening with hand-held mobile telephones, and entering or reading text messages in active school zones.

This includes:

- ◆ Hand-held cell phones
- ◆ Personal digital assistants (PDAs)
- ◆ Pagers
- ◆ Other electronic communication devices



Visit www.cityofirving.org for more information. This is a Class C violation; motorists could receive a fine of up to \$500. ■

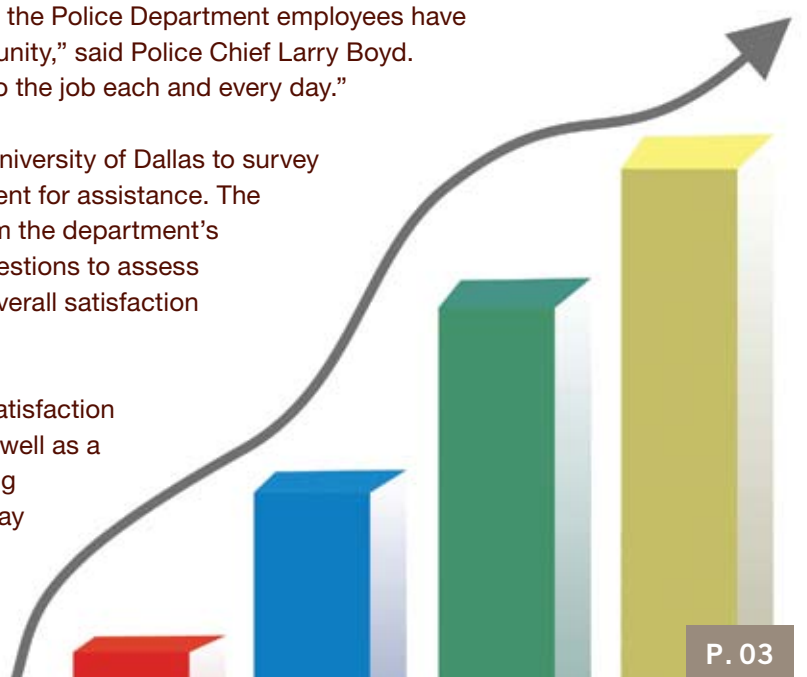
Customer Survey Shows Increased Satisfaction with Irving Police Department Over Past Year

Results of an annual Police Department customer survey show a 94 percent level of satisfaction with police services, an increase of two percent over last year's response.

"The survey results represent the commitment the Police Department employees have for providing exceptional service to our community," said Police Chief Larry Boyd. "I appreciate the compassion that they bring to the job each and every day."

Each year, the department partners with the University of Dallas to survey residents who have called the Police Department for assistance. The telephone survey, based on calls retrieved from the department's computer-aided dispatch system, included questions to assess courteousness, helpfulness, knowledge and overall satisfaction with service.

Other survey highlights include a 97 percent satisfaction rate with the courteousness of dispatchers as well as a 91 percent satisfaction rate with the responding officer's professional knowledge. Residents may view the complete survey results at www.irvingpd.com. ■



Family Fun Meets Main Street

Residents are invited to attend the Irving Main Street Event—Music and Magic on Main.

The Irving Main Street Event is from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sept. 25 at 217 Main St. The event will feature the Manifolds on Main Street car show, free children's activities, artisans, crafts, music, magic shows and food. The following is a list of shows that will be featured.

Show Descriptions

Industrial Movement

Enjoy a performance by the acclaimed percussion group Industrial Movement in the likeness of STOMP. The performers make a unique blend of music as they use non-standard instruments to include broomsticks, pots and pans, garbage cans, and even household appliances to create exciting, percussion-based music.

Dallas Black Dance Theatre II

Dallas Black Dance Theatre II generates rave reviews. The contemporary modern dance company will feature an array of vibrant and energetic dance performances that celebrate culture and diversity. "The performers are feisty, fearless and well-trained. The troupe is in good shape—capable of the unexpected." - *The New York Times*

The World of Magic

Get mesmerized by David Thomas and his World of Magic. The Genesis Magic Show will feature a mixture of music, magic, illusions and audience participation. Showtimes are noon, 1:30 and 3 p.m.

Youth Art Pavilion

Featuring mime shows, juggling, clowns, music, arts and crafts, dance performances, drum demonstrations and youth art exhibit.



Industrial Movement will perform at Irving's Main Street Event.

Multiple Music Stages

Enjoy a variety of music ranging from jazz, pop, rock and the blues. Three music stages will offer continuous musical enjoyment. For a list of artists and performance times, go to www.cityofirving.org.

Manifolds on Main Street Car Show

Enjoy a large showcase of 1972 and older vintage cars and race cars in the Pavilion of Speed. Gates open at 9 a.m. Judging starts at 1 p.m., with awards presented at 5:30 p.m. To register, visit www.manifoldsmain.com.

Video Game Theater

The video game theater features the latest video games for the Nintendo Wii, Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3. Gamers enjoy 50-inch flat screen televisions in a climate-controlled environment.

For more information, call (972) 721-2501. ■

TRASH BASH

Individuals and groups are invited to sign up for the 19th Annual Trinity Trash Bash sponsored by Keep Irving Beautiful and the City of Irving on Sept. 25. This year, the Trash Bash is joining forces with the Main Street Event and volunteers are needed for the following.

- ◆ **Citywide Cleanups** – Spend the morning beautifying an assigned or selected area from 8 to 11 a.m. then join the fun on Main Street! To volunteer, visit www.keepirvingbeautiful.org and locate the "Trinity Trash Bash/Main Street Festival Registration" link.
- ◆ **Main Street Event** – Sign up to monitor recycling stations and keep the grounds litter free at the Main Street Event. Register for a shift at www.rockthegreen.org.

For more information, call (972) 721-2175 or e-mail info@rockthegreen.org. ■



Volunteers clean up the city.

BE GREEN EVENTS

Garden Art Workshop

Garden art is a popular way to decorate gardens and patios with visual appeal. Sherrie Dolph, instructor and artist, finds it easy to see the beauty or fun in other people's discards. Learn how to create and craft unique garden art pieces during this free two-hour class. Students must bring their own special finds and materials to make garden art. Registration is required at www.cityofirving.org/begreen.

Saturday, Oct. 9

9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Senter East Building
228 Chamberlain St.

Build Green Showcase

At the Build Green Showcase, visit with eco-vendors specializing in green home building and renovation. This event is free and open to the public.

Saturday, Oct. 16

2 to 5 p.m.
Irving Central Public Library - Auditorium
801 W. Irving Blvd.

For more information about these and other green events, visit www.cityofirving.org/begreen or call (972) 742-2296. ■

Irving Promotes Bicycle Awareness

The City of Irving is committed to an environmentally sound community. Bike Irving has been developed to coordinate increased use of safe bicycling and to encourage continued ways to reduce carbon emissions. The Bike Irving initiative will:

- ◆ Facilitate bicycling as a viable transportation choice
- ◆ Afford residents the opportunity to experience the city's unique scenic and natural amenities
- ◆ Provide access to healthful recreational activities
- ◆ Link major parks and open spaces with Irving neighborhoods

What residents will see around the city:

Shared Lane Pavement Marking

Shared lane pavement markings (sharrows) are bicycle symbols carefully placed to guide bicyclists to the best place to ride on the road, avoid car doors and remind drivers to share the road with cyclists. Unlike bicycle lanes, sharrows do not designate a particular part of the street for the exclusive use of bicyclists. They are simply a marking to guide bicyclists to the best place to ride and help motorists expect to see and share the lane with bicyclists.

Where are sharrows in Irving?

Sharrow markings can be found on Sixth Street between MacArthur Boulevard and Hastings Street.

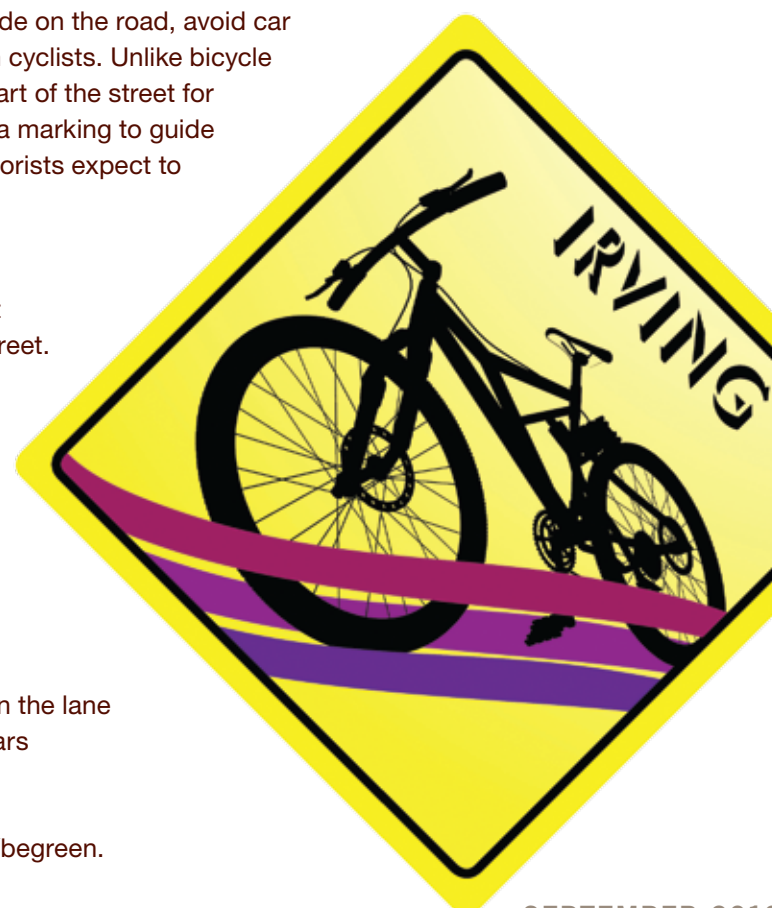
What do sharrows mean for motorists?

- ◆ Expect to see bicyclists on the street
- ◆ Remember to give bicyclists three feet of space when passing
- ◆ Follow the rules of the road as if there were no sharrows

What do sharrows mean for bicyclists?

- ◆ Use the sharrow to guide where to ride within the lane
- ◆ Remember not to ride too close to parked cars
- ◆ Always follow the rules of the road

For more information visit www.cityofirving.org/begreen.



Smithsonian Museum Day, Genghis Khan Kick-Off Event

The Irving Arts Center will begin ticket sales for *Genghis Khan: The Exhibition*, celebrate its Smithsonian Affiliation and help the Irving Public Library kick off the Big Read during Smithsonian Museum Day from 2 to 5 p.m. Sept. 25. The event, which is free and open to the public, will be held at the Irving Arts Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd.

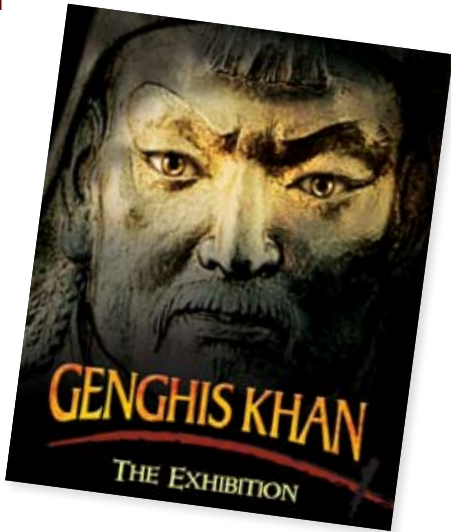
Family friendly activities include screenings of Mongolian-themed documentaries and art projects focusing on Mongolia and the 2010 Big Read book, *The Call of the Wild*.

The international tour of *Genghis Khan: The Exhibition* stops in Irving from June 1 to Sept. 30, bringing the largest collection of Mongolian artifacts ever assembled in a single showing. Join the Arts Center during Smithsonian Museum Day to learn more about this exciting exhibition and what it means for Irving.

Volunteer Information Session

The Arts Center also will host a volunteer information session from 1 to 2 p.m. Sept. 25 in the meeting rooms. The session will focus on volunteer opportunities available as part of

Genghis Khan: The Exhibition. The Arts Center is seeking hundreds of volunteers to act as docents and ticket takers, to staff the gift shop and assist with hands-on activities. Light refreshments will be served. ■



Unusual Sculptures Combine Sound, Style at Arts Center

Los Angeles-based artist Mineko Grimmer is known for her unique installations that combine stunning visuals with auditory effects. Her work will be on display at the Irving Arts Center during the exhibition *Gongs.Wires.Bamboo*. from Sept. 11 to Oct. 31. The opening reception will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. Sept. 11 at the Arts Center. Admission is free.

Grimmer's installation will feature five structures towering six feet, aligned along the center of the facility's spacious Main Gallery. The exterior structures will reach a height of 19 inches, gradually increasing to 38 inches in the middle. Each structure contains a shallow pool of water along with elements of bronze, tension wires or bamboo lattice work. Inverted ice pyramids containing pebbles will be suspended above the structures and, as the ice

melts, the pebbles fall through the elements creating a medley of sounds.

The Irving Arts Center is located at 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd. Gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Wednesday and Friday; 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. For more information, visit www.irvingartscenter.com or call (972) 252-7558. ■

ICTN Named Best TV Programming in State; Fleet Services Among Best 100

Best Government TV Programming in State

Irving Community Television Network (ICTN) has been recognized for having the best overall government programming in the state by the Texas Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors. For the second consecutive year, ICTN received the first-place award in the most coveted category—Overall Excellence in Government Programming.

In all, ICTN received six first-place honors and three second-place honors including:

- ◆ First place in the Community Event Coverage category for *The Last Tailgate Party: A Final Farewell to an Irving Icon*
- ◆ First place in the Documentary – Social Issues/ Profiles category for *The Texas Stadium Story*
- ◆ First place in the Interview/Talk Show category for *Open Line*
- ◆ First place in the Profile of City/County or City/ County Department category for *The Municipal Court*
- ◆ First place in the Special Audience category for *Parado de Trafico*
- ◆ Second place in the Community Event Coverage category for *Game of the Week: High School Football*
- ◆ Second place in the Magazine Format Series category for *City Source*
- ◆ Second place in the Profile of City/County or City/ County Department category for *Irving Living*

"ICTN is a very valuable asset to Irving residents and the staff really does an outstanding job," said Mayor

Pro Tem Rose Cannaday, chairwoman of the council's Communications Committee. "When you consider that ICTN's competition included stations from cities that are more than double the size of Irving, being recognized for the best government programming in the state is a tremendous accomplishment."

ICTN, a division of the City of Irving's Corporate Communications Department, was created in 1981 to provide community television programming to Irving residents. The network has won more than 100 awards since its inception and has been instrumental in connecting the Irving population with local news, events and information.

Irving residents can view ICTN programming on Time Warner (Channels 16, 95 and 96) and Verizon (Channels 30, 31 and 32). The ICTN schedule and on-demand programming is available 24/7 at www.ictn.tv and www.cityofirving.org.

Best Fleet in North America Designation

Fleet Services has been chosen as one of *Government Fleet* magazine's 100 Best Fleets in North America among 38,000 public fleets eligible for the honor.

Fleet Services' winning formula focused on areas including staff development that enforces accountability and promotes a high-trust culture; technology enhancements through improvements in diagnostic programs and use of a quality-driven software management system; innovative collaboration with service partners; excellent vehicle



ICTN staff



City fleet

turnaround reflected in the city's 95 percent fleet availability rate; environmental stewardship and clean fuel promotion; and acknowledgement of employee accomplishments and major milestones. ■

BIG READ KICK-OFF WEEKEND ACTIVITIES

The monthlong celebration of reading and community, Irving's Big Read, will kick off from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 1 with The Big Bleed: Books or Blood donation drive.

Big Bleed: Books or Blood

Bring a book to donate to the Friends of the Irving Public Library or donate blood to the Carter Blood Center at the Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd. Donors will receive a free lunch and will learn about Irving's Big Read initiative. Local fiddlers and musicians will entertain the crowd.

Big Furr and Purr

The kick off weekend continues Oct. 2 with the Big Furr and Purr event at Irving's Animal Care Campus, 4140 Valley View Lane, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sponsored by Irving Public Library and Animal Services, the pet adoption event will feature dog agility demonstrations, pet first-aid presentations, pet-friendly vendors, crafts and more for the whole family.

Big Gold Rush

The weekend celebrations conclude Oct. 3 with the Big Gold Rush: Search and Find at the Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd., and Valley Ranch Library, 401 Cimarron Trail. Children are invited to experience the Gold Rush days at either library between 2 and 4 p.m. Activities will include hunting for gold, crafts, games and balloon animals. Find a gold nugget and win a prize. For more information, call (972) 721-2606. ■

Citywide Big Read Celebration to Begin Oct. 1 at Irving Libraries

Irving residents are invited to 'hear the call' with the city's fifth annual community reading event. Irving's Big Read, which begins Oct. 1, is designed to encourage reading for pleasure and will provide residents with the opportunity to read and discuss one of America's great classic works within their communities.

This year, Irving will read *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London. Considered by many historians as the first best-selling novelist in American history, London created characters with enduring appeal.

His writing has many layers, often including a story beneath the surface story, and a timelessness that has kept his work popular with a variety of age groups across the world for more than 100 years.

Younger readers are encouraged to participate through reading *Unloveable* by Dan Yaccarino, *Balto the Bravest Dog Ever* by Natalie Standiford, *Balto the Great Race* by Elizabeth Kimmel, or *Togo* by Robert J. Blake. These companion titles explore themes and characters that are similar to those in *The Call of the Wild*. Multiple copies of novels by London are available at all libraries, or may be downloaded at <http://irvinglibrary.lib.overdrive.com>. Companion titles also are available at all library locations.

"We chose to feature *The Call of the Wild* as Irving's Big Read novel because it is a great novel that can be appreciated by readers of all ages," said Jan Bodnar, library services supervisor. "It is a book about survival, loyalty, companionship, unconditional love and bravery—themes that are universal to all of us."



The tales of survival, harsh winters and the Gold Rush days, as well as the interesting twist of using a dog as the story's hero, has created many opportunities for the library to host fun, innovative programs. Partnering with the new Irving Animal Care Campus, Irving ISD, North Lake Community College, National Scouting Museum, Irving recreation centers and other organizations, the library will offer a variety of activities throughout October.

The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Arts Midwest. For details, visit www.neabigread.org. For a full listing of activities and discussions during Irving's Big Read, visit www.cityofirving.org/library or call (972) 721-2606. ■

Library Briefs

- ◆ **Wild Card: Big Read Art Contest** – Through Oct. 16. Youth, grades 6–12, are invited to participate in a design-a-card contest. Creations should be inspired by *The Call of the Wild*. Book covers, scenes from the book, or the Alaskan setting should be submitted in greeting card size and format. Rules and entry forms are available at all library locations or at www.cityofirving.org/library.
- ◆ **Puppet Show** – 2:30 p.m. Sept. 11, Northwest Branch, 2928 N. Belt Line Road. Children of all ages can enjoy the Children of the World Puppet Show featuring songs and stories from around the world, presented by MerryMakers Too. The puppet show is part of the Many Voices series, sponsored by the Friends of the Library. For more information, call (972) 721-2691.



Children enjoy puppet show.

- ◆ **Irving Chautauqua** – 2 p.m. Sept. 11, Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd. Celebrate the end of summer with the sizzling sounds of the Caribbean. Island Boogie Steel Drum Band performs Caribbean calypso, reggae, salsa and soca music. Presented as part of the Irving Chautauqua program series offered on the second Saturday of each month. For information, call (972) 721-2606.
- ◆ **New Nonfiction Book Club** – 7 p.m. Sept. 14, Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd. Irving Public Library introduces a new nonfiction discussion group, Based on Reality, to its roster of book clubs. The club will meet the second Tuesday of every month, with the first meeting discussing *Garlic and Sapphires*, by Ruth Reichl. Light refreshments will be served. For more information on this book club or other book clubs offered by the Irving Public Library, call (972) 721-2606.
- ◆ **Fiesta!** – 2:30 p.m. Sept. 18, Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd. Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month with an entertaining, educational program on traditional Hispanic dance, featuring a performance by Mexico 2000 Folklorico and crafts. Refreshments will be served. Presented as part of the Many Voices program series, sponsored by the Friends of the Irving Public Library. Call (972) 721-2458 for more information.

- ◆ **Snake Talk** – 2:30 p.m. Sept. 25, Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd. John Hunter presents snakes from various countries, along with legends, folktales and beliefs of various cultures about snakes. Presented as part of the Many Voices program series, sponsored by the Friends of Irving Public Library. Call (972) 721-2458 for more information.
- ◆ **Wild Card: Design-a-Card** – 4:30 p.m. Oct. 1, Valley Ranch Library, 401 Cimarron Trail. Youth, grades 6–12, have the opportunity to create submissions for the Wild Card Contest during Valley Ranch Library's Design-a-Card program. Submissions are accepted through Oct. 16. For more information, call (972) 721-4669.



John Hunter presents Snake Talk.

PET ADOPTIONS

Irving Animal Services provides adoption services to the general public. Animals are available for view and interaction from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday at the Irving Animal Care Campus, 4140 Valley View Lane. The state-of-the-art campus is home to dogs, cats and other animals in search of a loving home.

Adoption of an animal means responsibility for the care of the animal and meeting of the conditions set forth by city ordinance and public health laws. To adopt an animal, potential caregivers must present government issued identification, pay the appropriate adoption fee and register the animal. The adoption fee covers dewormer, flea treatment, microchipping, pet insurance for 30 days (with a valid e-mail address), pet registration, spay or neutering services and vaccinations.

For more information concerning the adoption of animals, contact Irving Animal Services at (972) 721-2256. ■

Irving Animal Services Offers Microchips for Pets

As a service to residents, pet microchips are available at the Irving Animal Care Campus for the low cost of \$10. A microchip provides pets with permanent identification and can help safeguard them from unnecessary, lengthy stays in shelters.

In many cases, a microchip also helps secure pets a free phone call and ride home should they ever become lost. All animals adopted from the Irving Animal Care Campus receive a microchip—and for good reason. One in three pets go missing in their lifetime and without proper identification, 90 percent of them never return home. Animals that are found by an animal services officer, or are taken to the Irving Animal Care Campus and local veterinary clinics, are scanned for microchips.

If a microchip is found, and if the microchip registry has accurate information, the animal's owner can be contacted quickly. As a courtesy to residents, Irving Animal Services officers routinely take lost pets directly home at no charge.

A microchip is a very tiny computer chip about the size of a grain of rice that is implanted under the animal's skin with a needle. No surgery or anesthesia is required, and the process only takes a few minutes. Microchips can never be removed and there is no maintenance required for microchips themselves. Pet owners, however, must keep contact information up-to-date in microchip registration databases.

Microchip services are available from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday at the Irving Animal Care Campus, 4140 Valley View Lane. For more information, call (972) 721-2256. ■



Veterinarian prepares cat for microchip.



Free skate park for teens.



Free library cards available.

City Provides Free, Low-Cost Activities, Programs for Families

In these tough economic times, residents are reminded that the City of Irving offers programs, events and activities that are either free or low-cost.

Libraries

The Irving Public Library provides books, CDs, digital downloads and DVD movies for check out to anyone who signs up for a free library card. There also are various free book clubs, movie nights, story times, programs and special events offered year-round as well as free Internet access.

Recreation Centers

The city's Parks and Recreation Department has free and low-cost programs and activities at its nine recreation centers. Activities are geared for all ages, toddlers to seniors. Some of the most popular classes offered include karate, Zumba fitness classes and scrapbooking.

Youth Activities

Teens can head to the Lively Pointe Youth Center to enjoy video games, basketball, movie nights and dances. Dancing also is popular at the Heritage

Senior Center where residents also can enjoy card games and crafts.

Parks

There also are more than 2,000 acres of parkland throughout the city, offering playgrounds, jogging trails and other amenities. Activities available include picnicking, hiking/biking trails, sports of all kinds, fishing, swimming, recreation centers, canoeing and boating. The new Irving Dog Park has been a big hit for both canines and their companions. "This place is great," said resident Mike Kwiatkowski. "We've waited a long time for Irving to have a dog park."

In addition, the Accessible Playground and Miracle League Field is getting rave reviews and offers fun for all children regardless of physical abilities.

More information about these programs or locations, visit the city website at www.cityofirving.org. ■

New Homes Planned for Tudor Lane Area

Nearly \$5 million in grant funding is being invested in a residential redevelopment strategy that will bring 25 new, energy-efficient homes to Tudor Lane between Crandall and Claude streets. This will renew a neighborhood that previously was known for high crime and substandard housing.

Construction of 14 single-family attached and 11 single-family detached homes is set to begin in early 2011. Both dwelling styles will feature three bedrooms, two bathrooms and two-car rear-entry garages. Cost of the homes is expected to range from \$110,000 to \$120,000.

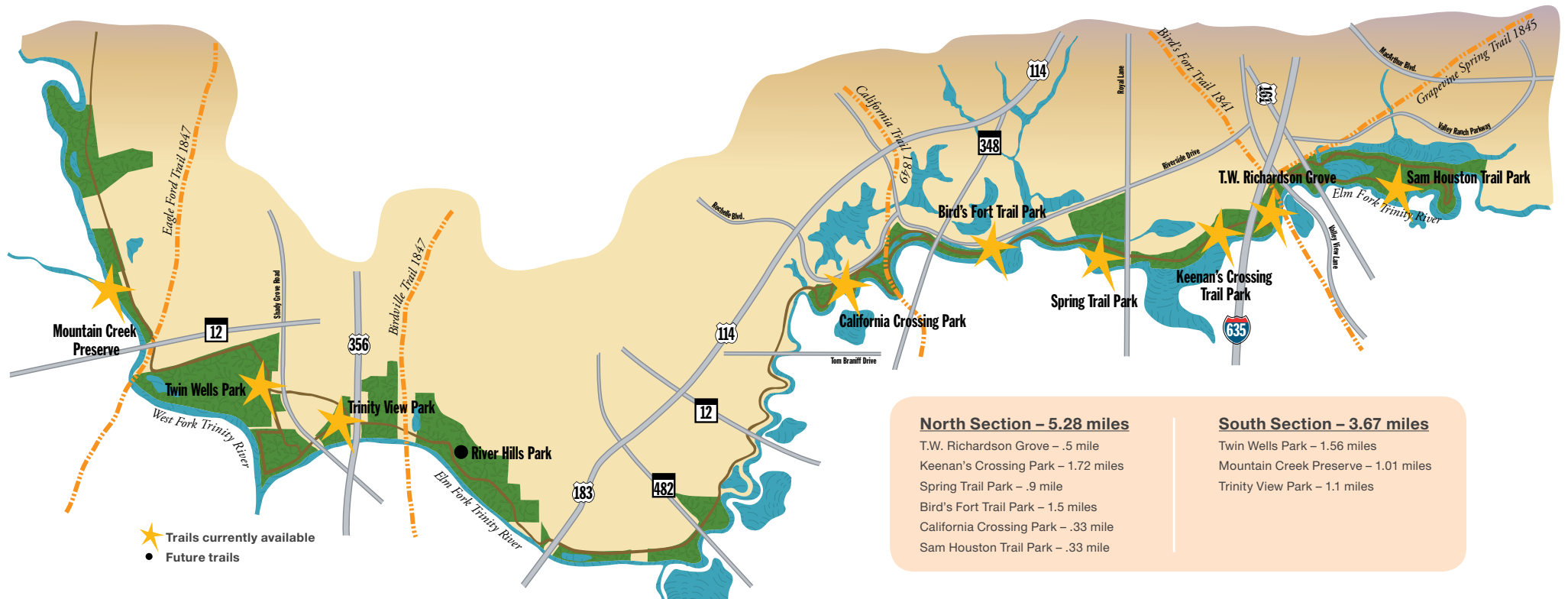
The largest chunks of funding will come from the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program and private investors, with the remnant of costs being subsidized by the Community Development Block Grant and the HOME Investment Partnerships Program.

"The redevelopment of Irving's Tudor Lane area presents a great opportunity for families looking for a safe place to live," said Housing and Human Services Director Chris Hooper. "The redevelopment of Tudor Lane also is a great example of how a public-private partnership can enhance neighborhoods."

Steps leading up to the redevelopment project included the city's acquisition and demolition of several substandard and unsafe housing structures that previously saturated the Tudor Lane area. Since city departments addressed crime and dilapidated housing in the area, there has been a 78 percent reduction in police calls and a 72 percent reduction in crime in the area.

To sustain improved quality of life for the Tudor Lane neighborhood, the city will offer new homeowners classes on home maintenance and budgeting. The project is slated for completion by December 2011. Inquiries may be directed to the Irving Housing and Human Services Department at (972) 721-4800. ■

Grant Funds Campi3n Trails Development, Extension



Through a partnership with Dallas County, the city has successfully secured more than \$3 million in grant funding to further develop Campi3n Trails. These open space grant funds are being used to construct five additional trail miles and city leaders expect to procure even more grant funding for the trails in the future.

As a core component of a greenbelt system that involves 16 counties in North Texas, Irving's Campi3n Trails offers walkers, runners, cyclists and equestrian riders more than seven miles of 12-foot-wide concrete trail for enjoyment and exploration.

Campi3n Trails is a master planned greenbelt trail system, which will eventually extend from Valley Ranch, along the Elm Fork of the Trinity River, along the eastern boundaries of the city, westward along the West Fork to Running Bear Park in Irving's southwest section. Trail amenities include water fountains, ample running and biking space, picnic pavilions and play areas for families. The next addition will provide a second levee trail crossing to connect the trails to Valley Ranch.

"Usage numbers of Irving's Campi3n Trails continue to grow as we add more trail length," said Capital Improvement Program Director Casey Tate. "Ultimately, Campi3n Trails will provide residents and visitors with 22 miles of recreation trails, and thanks

to the trail grants, we expect nearly two-thirds of the trail system will be finished by summer 2011."

Originally planned as a quality-of-life amenity for Irving residents, Campi3n Trails has quickly become a regional attraction. In 2009, the trails were the site for eight major walking and fun run events. The trails also serve as a site for a variety of city-sponsored events such as Cool Nights at Campi3n, where interpretive naturalists guide small groups on a free evening hike to experience nature in its purest form.

Lake Carolyn Connection

Campi3n Trails will link into the pedestrian-friendly promenade that now circles Lake Carolyn in Las Colinas via a concrete sidewalk at California Crossing Road. Work on the first phase of the Lake Carolyn Promenade, which began last year, has been completed.

The Lake Carolyn Promenade includes four new boat landings along the lake for use by future water taxis.

Bench seating and trash receptacles line the public path, and the promenade is well lit to provide a safe environment for visitors.

"The promenade concept is fairly new to the North Texas region, and completion of the first phase of the Lake Carolyn Promenade says a lot about Irving's commitment to modernization and originality," said Tate.

For residents, visitors and businesses, the Lake Carolyn Promenade also will offer easy access to the DART Orange Line that will ultimately connect downtown Dallas to DFW International Airport.

"It provides an attractive area that's easily accessible to customers," said Senior Landscape Architect Gene Moulden. "That's an important feature businesses look for when choosing a location."

The first phase of the Lake Carolyn Promenade was completed under budget for a total of \$2.2 million. ■

Interns Discover Useful Talents, Skills in Various City Positions

The city is committed to providing learning opportunities for youth that promote career development, leadership, safety and environmental awareness. That commitment is exemplified by the offering of internships to some of the city's youngest residents.

Since fall 2009, the city has been a mentor to nearly 40 high school interns, and the number is expected to increase by 20 percent in the next year. Summertime can be an unproductive time for many youth. However, this summer, the city was home to many high school interns.

"The partnership between the city and young people in the community is a great opportunity for those who are involved," said Diana Soto, teen court coordinator. "It's definitely a growth opportunity for the interns because many times young people aren't aware of their talents, and the internship program allows participants to discover their strengths and skills."

City interns can earn certifications, or partial certifications, in water quality, 911 dispatch operations, correctional officer and basic paramedic training. These certifications allow young people to be immediately employable in any community and can help pave the path to full certification. ■



City Spectrum is published monthly by the City of Irving Corporate Communications Department to keep residents informed of activities and news that may be of interest to them.

Laurie M. Kunke / Corporate Communications Director
 Heather Taylor / Graphics Specialist
 Derrick J. Thompson / Publications Specialist

Interact with us online:

