



City of Irving *City Manager's Report*

October 31, 2007

Goal No. 1: Land Use

Comprehensive Plan Update – On Oct. 23, Planning and Inspections staff briefed the City Council Planning and Development Committee on the progress of the city's Comprehensive Plan. Sefko Planning Group is performing the work to update selected topics from the original 1997 plan. This includes land use, redevelopment, corridors/gateways, housing strategies and urban design/livability. The remaining components from the 1997 plan—such as transportation, public utilities, parks and recreation, and public safety—are addressed under separate headings of the Strategic Plan, but will be coordinated by the consultant with the respective work program. The project timeline calls for a draft report to be presented for staff review by mid-January, followed by a presentation to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council in early 2008. This planning effort serves as the precursor to updating the city's development ordinances (zoning, platting, landscaping, etc.), a work program tentatively slated to start next August.

Goal No. 2: Vibrant Neighborhoods

Code Enforcement Assistant – The city's code enforcement program will be enhanced with the addition of a part-time code enforcement assistant on Nov. 5. The primary duties for this position include removal of illegal temporary signs in public rights-of-way and medians, as well as reporting abandoned grocery carts. This position will allow code enforcement officers to focus on other code issues such as illegal outside storage and parking violations, which will help enhance the appearance of Irving.

Neighborhood Block Parties – Sherwood Forest, Hospital District South, Grauwlyer Heights and Northgate Heights neighborhood associations recently hosted neighborhood block parties and celebrated the spirit of community with food and a variety of activities. Several city officials and local firefighters were on hand to visit with residents. Block parties create a comfortable environment for residents to get acquainted, and renew the old-fashioned concept of what it means to be a good neighbor.

Neighborhood Leadership Seminar – More than 100 neighborhood officers and residents met Oct. 30 at City Hall for an informative evening on how to build durable neighborhoods. The evening's speakers shared advice on how to cultivate leadership, diversity and consensus within neighborhood associations. Attendees also had an opportunity to participate in a True Colors exercise, an interactive personality communications tool developed to help individuals recognize personality types and better execute successful communication. A \$250 Home Depot gift card was awarded to the newly formed Hospital District Central neighborhood association for having the most members in attendance. The seminar, organized by the Corporate Communications Department, was designed for neighborhood officers, board members and potential neighborhood leaders.

Goal No. 3: Economic Development

Baylor Medical Center to Remodel/Expand – Baylor Medical Center at Irving is undergoing an \$8 million expansion and renovation project. It includes expanding and renovating the surgical recovery rooms and the surgery and intensive-care unit waiting rooms. The project also will renovate the area where equipment and surgical instruments are sterilized for the operating room.

Coffee Break for South Irving Businesses – More than 30 South Irving businesses met Oct. 11 for coffee and discussed business growth opportunities in South Irving. City Manager Tommy Gonzalez briefed the business leaders on the city's 2007-08 Strategic Plan. The next "Coffee Break" will be held at 8:30 a.m. Nov. 8 at the Receptions on the Main, 109 S. Main St. The program is hosted by the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce.

Gast Named to Convention Industry Commission – ICVB Executive Director Maura Gast has been appointed to the Convention Industry Council Accepted Practices Exchange (APEX) Commission. APEX functions on the belief that setting standards will create efficiencies throughout the meetings, conventions and exhibitions industry. Its 10-member national commission represents different segments of the meetings industry. They are charged with ensuring that standards are implemented and adopted by the 10 different sectors. Gast is the national representative for convention and visitors bureaus.

Groups in Irving – The Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau welcomed the following groups to Irving: Assemblies of God (Oct. 19-21); Dallas Cowboys Football Club (Oct. 20-21); National Football League Owners (Oct. 21-24); Jack Henry & Associates (Oct. 22-26); Fulbright & Jarwoski (Oct. 24-28); International Association for Exhibition and Events (Oct. 24-25); Texas Economic Development Council Inc. (Oct. 26); U.S. Marine Corps Recruiting Command (Oct. 26-28); and SOLE – The International Society of Logistics (Oct. 28-Nov. 3).

Regional Travel Writers Visit Irving – A group of regional travel writers were hosted Oct. 20-22 by the Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau. Attendees enjoyed a Cowboys game, visited the Mustangs of Las Colinas, experienced a gondola ride along the Mandalay Canal, enjoyed an ice cream soda at Big State Drug, dined at Cool River Café and Trevi's in the Omni Mandalay Hotel, and got a behind-the-scenes look at hotel operations at the Four Seasons Resort and Club.

Urban Land Institute's National Fall Conference – The City of Irving was featured during three programs at the Urban Land Institute's National Fall Conference, which was attended Oct. 24-26 by more than 6,500 members. Public Works Director Jim Cline served as panel moderator for a session that featured the Transportation Summit as a creative example of local transportation initiatives. The city's transportation consultant, David Dean, was a panelist. Managing Director David Leininger served as a panelist on a session discussing current trends in public/private partnerships. In addition, he moderated a panel on government and university landowners as development partners. Maura Gast, ICVB executive director, and Robert Galecke of the University of Dallas were panelists. Additionally, Leanne Weymouth and Alysia Piffero of the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce were in attendance as exhibitors.

Leininger Named to ULI National Program Committee – Managing Director David Leininger has been selected to a second year on the national program committee for the Urban Land Institute (ULI). He will serve as vice chairman of public sector programs supporting the fall and spring national meetings. Leininger also has been named chairman of a 10-member, multidisciplinary ULI Advisory Services Panel to be conducted during the week of Nov. 4-9 in Denver, Colo. The panel has been asked to evaluate development opportunities and strategies related to a one-square-block area next to the new Denver Convention Center and Hyatt conference center hotel, and the 16th Street Mall. The city and private interests have devoted more than two decades in reassembling land to permit the orderly redevelopment of a once-famous location in the downtown area.

Goal No. 4: Safe and Secure City

Apartment Disorder Operation – The Police Department conducted an apartment disorder operation on Oct. 20 at 10 complexes that have been identified as having high calls for service and disorder issues. As a result of the operation, there were 31 arrests and six citations issued. In addition, officers spoke with more than 100 individuals who were neither cited nor arrested.

Problem-Solving Team – The Police Department's Problem-Solving Team, which includes one sergeant and three police officers, will begin training for their new unit on Nov. 4. The group is expected to complete the training by the end of the year in order to begin assignments in January. Their focus will include in-depth reviews of specific issues in order to implement long-term solutions to reduce crime and improve the quality of life for residents.

Criminal Mischief Arrests – Four adult males were arrested on Oct. 24 after a report of several criminal mischief complaints were received where vehicle and home windows were broken with a BB gun. Further investigation revealed that approximately 10 offenses were committed by these men. All offenses occurred in residential areas in the southwest part of the city.

Digital Audio Recording System – Information Technology has replaced existing dispatch audio and radio recording systems for the Police and the Fire departments. The new system is able to record and archive all incoming 911 calls, and features recording capabilities for the administration phone lines, while adding automatic number identification and automatic location identification information to those calls. In addition, this system can record selected radio channels while adding radio system information to those recordings. Both departments now have the capability to search information for the recorded audio files in a more efficient manner. The Police Department has the ability to record up to 80 channels for phones and 48 for the radio, while the Fire Department can record up to 24 channels for phones and 48 for the radio.

Goal No. 5: Diversity

Leyendo Juntos – The East Branch Library, 440 S. Nursery Road, is hosting a Leyendo Juntos (Reading Together) program at 2 p.m. Nov. 3. Families are invited to bring their children to listen to Spanish-language stories read by Telemundo 39 news reporter Norma Garcia. A guardian must accompany children younger than 8. No registration is required.

Storytelling Around the World – The Northwest Branch Library, 2928 N. Belt Line Road, will present Storytelling Around the World at 2 p.m. Nov. 10. This free program features Native-American storytelling with Dorayne Breedlove, which is part of the library's series to bring tales from different cultures to Irving. The series is made possible by a grant from Texas Reads, a program administered by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission to promote reading and literacy within local communities. A guardian must accompany children younger than 8.

On-Site Language-Skills Testing – Human Resources facilitated an on-site language-skills testing session on Oct. 26. This testing allowed employees whose position requires them to periodically communicate in a language other than English to complete the language-skills assessment to potentially qualify for language-incentive pay.

Goal No. 6: Effective Communications

Sign Me Up – The Irving Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd., will present a program to help children, teens and adults learn sign language at 2 p.m. Nov. 3. Activities include learning different signs, signing along with simple songs, and signs that go along with picture books. A guardian must accompany children younger than 8.

Interactive Internet Web Mapping – Information Technology has completed the transition of the city's Internet Web map hosting services from city servers to the North Central Texas Council of Government iCommunities program. Web site users have access to high-quality, easy-to-use, regional, interactive maps. This new mapping system allows users to search by address or by an intersection, as well as the ability to view zoning, parks, aeriels and other vital map layers. Log on to <http://maps.cityofirving.org> to access the system. The iCommunities program hosts interactive Web maps for more than 20 local governments.

InVision Irving Business Show – Irving Community Television Network (ICTN) has created a new half-hour business show—InVision Irving ... Your Business Connection—to showcase unique businesses that operate in the city. The quarterly magazine show, which is produced on location along the Mandalay Canal, premiered on Oct. 25. Special segments featured City Manager Tommy Gonzalez and Chris Wallace, president of the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce. The show airs on ICTN 1 (Time Warner Channel 16 and Verizon Channel 30) and on www.ictn.tv. It is supported by the Greater-Irving Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce.

Goal No. 7: Cultural, Recreational and Educational Environments

Corporate Spelling Bee – Teams from various businesses and city departments competed in a Corporate Spelling Bee during the lunch hour on Oct. 30. The Parks and Recreation Department coordinated the innovative program at the Irving Central Library to support the Irving Public Library Literacy Program. More than \$1,500 was raised to benefit the program through team sponsorships, A-B-C alphabet sponsors, and lunch tickets.

ADA Accessible Playground and Miracle League Field – The Parks and Recreation Department is beginning the design plan on a fully accessible playground and baseball field at Cottonwood Creek Park. A community input meeting will be held at 6 p.m. Nov. 6 in the City Council Conference Room at City Hall, 825 W. Irving Blvd. Residents are invited to provide comments on features for the playground and Miracle League Field. Construction on the \$1.2 million project is expected to begin summer 2008.

Tim Markwood Park Development – Planning is under way on Tim Markwood Park, a neighborhood park located on MacArthur Boulevard, north of Shady Grove Road. Neighborhood park features could include a playground, trail, picnic facilities, security lighting and seating plazas. A public input meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Nov. 8 in the City Council Conference Room at City Hall, 825 W. Irving Blvd. Residents are invited to provide input on the proposed park plan. The \$800,000 project is expected to begin summer 2008.

Goal No. 8: Sound Governance

2010 U.S. Census Update – With the 2010 Census quickly approaching, preparations are under way by the U.S. Census Bureau to ensure that an accurate count is made. The bureau encourages city participation in the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program, a voluntary program whereby cities are allowed to review Census Bureau address lists and city boundary lines for accuracy and completeness. City staff attended training to prepare for the LUCA program. The respective data lists/maps should arrive soon. All address information is confidential and protected by federal law. Staff review also will include identifying new residential addresses that are anticipated as of Census Day (April 1, 2010). Upon completion of city review, the material is returned to the Census Bureau for final verification and address canvassing. The entire LUCA process is anticipated to run through January 2010.

Flu Shots – Human Resources has contracted with Baylor Medical Center at Irving to provide flu shots for city employees. The first event will take place from 9 a.m. to noon Nov. 7 in the Council Conference Room at City Hall, 825 W. Irving Blvd., with a second event to be held from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. Nov. 14 at the Valley View Municipal Complex, 333 Valley View Lane. In addition, Human Resources is partnering with Fire Department paramedics to administer flu shots to fire personnel, as well as to employees at the Criminal Justice Center and North Police Station.

Risk Mitigation Model Training – Human Resources began conducting risk mitigation model training for city departments on Oct. 22. Training consists of the introduction of the risk model dashboards, background information and focus groups that will seek feedback on reporting forms, incident investigations and safety review committee changes.

Continuing Education and Program Development – Irving Arts Center staff has been traveling for the purpose of continued education and program development. Executive Director Richard Huff recently returned from Washington, D.C., where he met with officials at the Smithsonian Institution and the Mongolian Embassy (a Sister Cities country) to discuss future partnerships for Irving Arts Center programming. Marcie Inman, director of exhibitions and educational programs, participated in the Sculpture in Public Symposium in Seattle, sponsored by the International Sculpture Center. Kass Prince, assistant executive director of operations and internal programs, will attend an arts marketing conference in November. She has been selected as a presenter for the “Best Practices in Arts Marketing” session, with leading marketers from arts organizations across the country.

Online Open Enrollment for Employees – The Information Technology and Human Resources departments are once again offering employees the option of online enrollment for their health benefits. Employees can elect, change or delete health benefits from any computer with Internet access. This gives employees and their families the opportunity to discuss and update their benefits in the privacy of their home at their convenience.

e-Records Conference 2007 – The Information Technology Department and City Secretary's Office sent representatives to the 2007 e-Records Conference in Austin on Oct. 30. This year's conference focused on effectively managing electronic records, including e-mail, document conversion, maintenance, destruction, migration, confidentiality, accessibility and physical protection using standards and best practices.

Goal No. 9: Infrastructure Network

Dedication of Northgate Pump Station – The City of Irving will celebrate the opening of the Northgate Pump Station, located at 1100 E. Northgate Drive, at 9 a.m. Nov. 12. Elected officials, city staff and representatives from Archer Western Contractors Ltd. and Alan Plummer Associates Inc., will be on hand to dedicate the \$8.3 million facility. The Northgate Pump Station, financed through water system revenue bond funds, will provide water to east and south Irving customers.

T-Mobile Cellular Tower Construction – T-Mobile began construction of its cell tower at the Briery Road facility, which should be completed in three weeks. The city received \$40,000 from T-Mobile, which represents the first annual payment and the initial fee. The agreement is for 10 years, with renewal options of up to 30 years and a total payout of almost \$1 million.

New Homes on Surplus City Property – Two new homes have been completed on surplus city property created by the Grauwlyer Road Underpass Project. The property became available after the construction of the underpass was completed. The homes were constructed through the Housing and Human Services Department in conjunction with the Irving Housing Finance Corporation.

Liebert Units – Building Services completed the installation of two 5-ton Liebert units in the Information Technology server room at City Hall. The new units will enable the server room to maintain acceptable temperatures at all times. As part of this project, the existing Liebert unit and the two new units were added to the emergency generators. This will allow the server room to remain cool in the event of a power failure.

Goal No. 10: Environmentally Sustainable Community

Litter Index – Keep Irving Beautiful (KIB) volunteers from the Nimitz High School Junior Historians Club have completed their annual Litter Index of visible litter in Irving. The field survey indicated that litter has been reduced by 5.9 percent compared to the baseline study, despite increases in population and business activity. The Junior Historians have helped KIB and the City of Irving conduct this survey, which is required by Keep America Beautiful, every year since 2001.

Energy Efficiency – The City of Irving received a Certificate of Recognition for its efforts in energy efficiency and improving air quality in Texas from the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, the State Energy Conservation Office, and the Texas Energy Partnership. A survey was completed comparing Irving's current usage to last year, and noted that the decrease was due to installation of energy-efficient LED lighting for traffic signals and street lighting, placing equipment in power-save modes when not in use, and raising awareness of energy efficiency in all departments.

Cans for Cash Contest – The City of Irving entered a national competition to recycle the most aluminum cans. The contest, Cans for Cash: The City Recycling Challenge is sponsored by the United States Conference of Mayors and Novelis Corporation, in partnership with Keep America Beautiful. The contest, which ran through the end of October, encouraged residents and businesses to drop off their aluminum cans at any of Irving's recycling centers or at any Irving ISD school.

Shredding Opportunity – Irving residents brought in more than 4,500 pounds of documents during the city's shredding event on Sept. 21. The next shredding opportunity will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 7 at the O'Connor Plaza Recycling Drop-Off Center (north west corner of State Highway 183 and O'Connor Road). This opportunity provides for the safe destruction of personal documents. All shredded materials will be recycled.