



City of Irving *City Manager's Report*

September 5, 2007

Goal No. 1: Land Use

Corridor Enhancements – City staff has completed design plans on two corridor enhancement projects and a pocket park. Construction will begin this fall on the pocket park at Grauwlyer Road and MacArthur Boulevard, with expected completion by the end of the year. Construction will begin this winter on the MacArthur Boulevard and Weathered Street corridor enhancement project, with completion next spring. The MacArthur Boulevard and Shady Grove Road corridor enhancement project will be completed in 2008 in preparation for the opening of the North Lake College South Campus.

Goal No. 2: Vibrant Neighborhoods

New Neighborhood Association – The Corporate Communications Department assisted with the formation of a new neighborhood association on Aug. 20. More than 40 residents were in attendance at the general membership meeting. The new neighborhood association includes more than 300 homes and businesses within the boundaries: State Highway 183 to Grauwlyer Road, and Oak Meadow to MacArthur Boulevard. The name of the association will be discussed at the next general membership meeting.

Goal No. 3: Economic Development

Economic Development Partnership Initiatives – The Irving Economic Development Partnership has initiated 10 new recruitment and/or expansion projects since Aug. 1, demonstrating the strength of the Irving-Las Colinas marketplace. The projects ranged from a Fortune 500 company office to a new sushi restaurant. All sub-markets within the city saw activity during this period.

Irving Business Recognition – The *Dallas Business Journal* recognized 19 Irving-based businesses as being the largest Metroplex-based companies. They are ExxonMobil, Kimberly-Clark, Fluor Corporation, Commercial Metals, Flowserve, Zale Corporation, Pioneer Natural Resources, FelCor, CEC Entertainment, Darling International, Carbo Ceramics, Nexstar Broadcasting, EFJ Inc., DG Fastchannel, Thomas Group, Carrington Laboratories, RBC Life Science, Healthaxis, and Integrated Security Systems. Irving is home to more of DFW's largest corporate headquarters than any other city in the Metroplex, except Dallas.

Small Business Incentives – The Irving Economic Development Partnership has met with three businesses that will take advantage of the small business incentive policy adopted in July by the City Council.

Groups in Irving – The Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau welcomed the following groups to Irving: American Society of Civil Engineers (Aug. 18-20); Seattle Mariners Baseball Club (Aug. 22-26); U.S. Department of Homeland Security (Aug. 24-26); The United Methodist Church-General Council on Ministries (Aug. 25-30); Chicago White Sox Baseball Club (Aug. 27-30); Mindful ReThinking Education (Aug. 30-Sept. 3); Dallas Stars (Sept. 1-3); Kansas City Royals Baseball Club (Sept. 2-5); Dallas Securities Traders Association (Sept. 5-9); Heart Rhythm Society (Sept. 5-6); and Oakland Athletics Baseball Club (Sept. 5-9).

Element Hotel Announcement – Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc. announced an agreement with Irving-based venture investment company Sava Holdings LTD to develop an Element hotel near the intersection of Interstate 635 and Belt Line Road. Inspired by Westin Hotels & Resorts, Element Irving will have 123 guestrooms designed for extended stay, each featuring a full kitchen, contemporary bathroom with oversized spa shower, and the renowned Westin Heavenly Bed. The nature-inspired hotel will have modern touches such as WiFi and an international pantry stocked with everything from Korean kimchi soup to Greek delicacies. Other features include 1,600 square feet of meeting space and an integrated technology center and library. Element Irving breaks ground on Sept. 6, with an anticipated opening in October 2008.

ICVB Director Named Chair-Elect of International Board – Maura Gast, executive director of the Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau, has been elected chair-elect of the 2007-08 Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) board of directors. The selection of the new officers was ratified during DMAI's 93rd Annual Convention in Pittsburgh, Pa. Next year, Gast is slated to become only the third female board chair in the association's 93-year history.

Goal No. 4: Safe and Secure City

Microchipped Pet Found in Irving – Irving Animal Services picked up a Persian cat after it was reported sleeping on someone's porch for two days. Because the cat had a microchip, Animal Services was able to locate the owner in California. The owner informed them that the cat had been stolen more than a year ago, and it is unknown how the cat ended up in Irving. Susie Williamson, special activities coordinator for Animal Services, will use her frequent flyer miles to fly "Barney" to Sacramento on Sept. 6 to meet his owner. American Airlines has waived the \$80 fee normally charged for carrying a pet on the plane.

Drunk Driving Arrest Initiative – The Irving Police Department joined thousands of other law enforcement and highway safety agencies across the nation in the "Drunk Driving – Over the Limit. Under Arrest" crackdown on impaired driving. This effort, which was organized by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, took place Aug. 17 through Labor Day.

Radio System Backup Drill – The Irving Police Department, in collaboration with the Information Technology Department, Tarrant County 9-1-1 District and Grand Prairie Police Department, successfully conducted a full-scale test and drill on Aug. 19 of the communications backup facility and equipment. Such tests are critical to ensure smooth continuation of emergency operations in the event of service interruption at the main communications facility.

Crime Free Multi-Housing Program – Eight new apartment complexes began Phase I training in the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program on Aug. 22. There are currently 29 active properties in the certification process.

Grant Award – Kris Pollard, school resource officer at Bowie Middle School, was recognized by the Texas Excellence in Education Grant Committee of Bowie Middle School for his efforts in providing a safe and secure environment for the students. Officer Pollard received an award of \$500.

Counterfeit Credit Card Operation – As the result of an investigation into a credit card abuse offense at Irving Mall, several other offenses and suspects were identified as being involved in a counterfeit credit card operation with an estimated loss exceeding \$200,000. The Secret Service, several area law enforcement agencies and private sector groups were brought together in an effort to shut down the operation. The investigation has led to two additional arrests and the seizure of credit card skimming devices, credit card numbers, stolen identifications and the identification of the operation's ring leader. Federal charges of credit card abuse and engaging in organized criminal activity will be filed. The investigation is ongoing.

Irving Teen Court Grant – For the fourth consecutive year, Irving Teen Court has received a \$15,000 grant from the Allstate Insurance Company. The grant money is used by Teen Court to fund anger management and life-skills classes for teen defendants, as well as volunteer recognition events. In 2004, Teen Court received an initial grant in the amount of \$12,000. In 2005, the grant was increased to \$14,000, and for 2006 and 2007 the grant awarded was \$15,000.

National Incident Management Seminar – Fire department members John Bitto and Jason Darrow traveled to Phoenix, Ariz., to attend the National Incident Management Seminar offered by the Phoenix Fire Department. The training provided to these two officers will be used in preparing Irving fire staff to better respond to local emergencies, as well as during multi-jurisdictional disasters.

Citizen's Fire Academy – The 12th class of the Citizen's Fire Academy started on Sept. 4 with a full attendance of 17 people. This program provides in-depth training on fire department functions and is available to persons who live and work in Irving.

Aerial Ladder-Platform Truck – A new 100-foot aerial ladder-platform truck has been delivered to the Fire Department. This unit provides new capability for the department in terms of firefighting and rescue. It will be placed in service at Fire Station No. 9.

Back-to-School Health Fair – More than 250 children received immunizations, along with free backpacks and school supplies, at a special Back-to-School Health Fair on Aug. 25 at Irving Mall. The event was coordinated by the Corporate Communications Department, in collaboration with the Irving Independent School District, Irving Mall, North Lake College, Amerigroup, The Care Van (Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas), and the Dallas County Health Department. Total event attendance was close to 600 people, including parents and children. Backpacks were donated by Amerigroup.

Administrative Investigation Management Software – Information Technology assisted the Police Department with implementation of new administrative investigation management software. This software will provide police officials with a dynamic tool to collect, manage, track, analyze and report on a wide range of data including internal affairs, use of force, pursuits, accidents, awards, time/attendance, and other data related to employee professionalism, performance and productivity.

Goal No. 5: Diversity

International Fair – Heritage Senior Center is hosting an International Fair from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sept. 8. The event will offer a variety of dance, music, food and displays from many of the diverse cultures represented in Irving. There is no charge to attend, and all ages are welcome.

Bilingual Storytime – The Irving Central Library will hold a special bilingual storytime with Irving Fire Chief Mario Molina at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 13. Children under age 8 must be accompanied by an adult caregiver. No registration is required.

Hispanic Heritage Month – In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, the Irving Arts Center will host two exhibitions - "Arte de America Hispana" and "Serie Print Project: 1993-2006." Arte de America Hispana features culturally rich art from the 2007 Hispanic Yellow Pages contest. The competition challenged local artists to create original works, showcasing the rich and diverse Hispanic heritages found in the Metroplex. The exhibition will be on view in the Focus Gallery from Sept. 6-Oct. 28. The Serie Print Project: 1993-2006 features 31 fine art serigraph prints by Latino/Latina artists from the Coronado Studio in Austin produced from 1993-2006. It will be on view in the Dupree Theater Lobby from Sept. 15-Oct. 28. The exhibit is sponsored by the City of Austin through the Department of Economic Growth and Redevelopment, the Texas Commission on the Arts, the Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation and the Puffin Foundation.

Goal No. 6: Effective Communications

New ICTN Programming – Irving Community Television Network (ICTN) has launched a new city magazine show, called “City Source,” to showcase the variety of programs and initiatives being completed by the City of Irving. Courtney Mason serves as producer/director of the program. A new half-hour show airs every two weeks. “City Source” airs on ICTN 1 (Time Warner – Channel 16 and Verizon – Channel 30, or at www.ictn.tv).

Big Brothers Big Sisters School-Based Mentoring – Seventeen city staff members have volunteered to participate in the Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of North Texas School-Based Mentoring program. A cooperative effort between the City of Irving, BBBS and the Irving Independent School District, employees will be placed with students at either Austin Middle School or Gilbert Elementary in the South Austin Heights area. Participants will work with students for 30-60 minutes each week, two to four times a month, starting later this month. Additional city employees have expressed an interest in participating in the program.

ICTN Airtime Expanded – Irving Community Television Network (ICTN) has expanded its hours on the air with a block of programming that begins at 9 a.m. on ICTN 1 (Time Warner – Channel 16 and Verizon – Channel 30, or at www.ictn.tv). The new hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. ICTN also is planning expansion of programming on all three channels through the use of automated equipment.

Goal No. 7: Cultural, Recreational and Educational Environments

One Book, One Irving – The Irving Public Library will kick off its annual communitywide reading series with Sandra Cisneros at 7 p.m. Sept. 17 at the Irving Arts Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd. Cisneros is author of the classic book, “The House on Mango Street,” this year’s choice for the series. One Book, One Irving encourages everyone to read the same book at the same time to generate dialogue and community-building through a shared experience. Cisneros will be available to meet the public and sign autographs. Her appearance is sponsored by the Friends of the Irving Public Library and made possible through the library’s partnership with the Irving Arts Center.

New Library – The Irving Public Library will soon open a stand-alone 26,000-square-foot Valley Ranch Library at 401 Cimarron Trail. The current leased facility will close Sept. 21 for the transition to the new location. A grand opening celebration is set for 10 a.m. Oct. 6 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony followed by a celebration with refreshments, magic shows, storytimes and other entertainment.

Recreation Center Fall Program Session – The recreation center’s fall classes began Sept. 3. A variety of classes are offered for all age groups, from toddler to senior citizens. Registration will continue to be available throughout the session. After-school programs are currently being offered at all six recreation centers. Registration is ongoing throughout the school year. The program provides supervised after-school care for children and includes snacks, homework assistance, and recreational games and activities.

YAC Fest – Youth Services will host its annual YAC Fest from 2 to 7 p.m. Sept. 22 at Trinity View Park Adult Softball Complex. The event, for ages 12-18, will offer games, prizes and food, highlighted by the top up-and-coming teenage bands playing in the battle of the bands competition. Admission is free.

25th Annual Ms. Mature Irving Pageant – The 25th Annual Ms. Mature Irving Pageant will be held at 7 p.m. Sept. 28 at Carpenter Performance Hall. The pageant is a gala event and contestants compete in various categories, including talent and formal wear, to determine who will be crowned Ms. Mature Irving for 2007-08. The winner will represent Irving in the Ms. Mature Texas Pageant. The night will include entertainment and food. Mayor Herbert Gears and his wife, Christina, will officially crown the winner. Tickets are available at the Irving Arts Center box office and also the night of the event.

Goal No. 8: Sound Governance

9th Annual Texas Municipal League Conference – John Mayer, IT assistant director of operations, will speak at the Texas Municipal League Annual Conference in Dallas this November. The topic will feature “Optimizing the Citizens’ Technology Experience with Your City: E-Government Programs Beyond the Basics.”

Workers’ Compensation Focus Group – The Human Resources risk division conducted a focus group with various departments to review and obtain feedback on workers’ compensation injury reporting forms, procedures and practices with the assistance of the Human Resources training group. Information gathered will be used by risk management to improve communication and revise reporting methods.

Executive Leadership Forum – Human Resources has scheduled the organization’s initial Executive Leadership Forum for Sept. 28. These forums will be designed to offer senior and executive managers training and development for mastering leadership strategies.

Employee Training – Human Resources will be offering the following employee training events:

- Sept. 7 – The Great Irving Forum (TGIF) – What Do You Mean I Have a Negative Attitude? – Dr. Ann Wildemann will offer attendees constructive ways to deal with people who procrastinate, are hostile, defensive, refuse to accept accountability, blame others and criticize or complain.
- Sept. 11 – The Martial Arts of Assertive Communication – Holding back and lashing out at others does no good. Learn to moderate your own behavior and become a role model to those with whom or for whom you work. The correct choice of assertive communication expands personal growth, increases productivity, and fosters a positive team attitude.

Leadership Development Program – Human Resources will host the graduation event for members of the 2007 Leadership Development Program from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sept. 18 at the Garden and Arts Center.

Resident Survey – A capstone team from the University of Dallas Graduate School of Management will assist the city with revising the Irving Resident Survey questionnaire to align it with the city’s strategic goals. The survey will be mailed to residents in January. Survey results will enhance the city’s ability to gauge the success of the Strategic Plan, and will be used to set budget priorities and improve the delivery of city services.

Strategic Plan Year-end Update – Residents can visit the city Web site and view the progress that has been made this past year in meeting the city’s 10 strategic goals. A video and year-end update report provides residents with an overview of the accomplishments made in each goal. Log on to www.cityofirving.org, and click on the Strategic Plan link on the left sidebar.

Consolidation of IT Services – The database/GIS division of the Information Technology Department (IT) has been relocated from the Valley View Municipal Complex to the basement of City Hall to promote operational efficiency and assist in overall IT customer service. Other key IT staff will remain in major remote locations such as the Fire and Police departments.

Open Records Requests – The City Secretary’s Office has worked with the City Attorney’s Office to develop updated, centralized procedures for processing open records requests. Included in the procedures are the recent legislative updates for the Public Information Act. The City Secretary’s Office also worked with the Information Technology Department to update the city Web site with information and forms. The City Secretary’s Office and City Attorney’s Office will conduct employee training for this new process. In addition, a procedural binder will be provided for each department. This policy is a result of the City Council’s action in appointing the city secretary as the public information coordinator.

Destruction of Records – The City Secretary's Office has shredded 88 boxes of paper for Municipal Court, Information Technology, Public Works/Traffic, ICVB, Records Management, Solid Waste Services, Animal Services and Financial Services. Also, approximately 120 pounds of microfilm, tapes and CDs have been destroyed. Records management also has worked with purchasing and the internal auditors in the destruction of expired city credit cards. Also during the month of August, 94 boxes of records were received for storage from Human Resources, Equipment and Building Services, and Water Utilities/ Customer Service.

Goal No. 9: Infrastructure Network

Grauwylar and Nursery Roads Construction – With the start of a new school year, Public Works/ Engineering staff contacted the Irving Independent School District about the ongoing construction on East Grauwylar Road between Rose Street and Irving Heights Drive, and on Nursery Road between East Union Bower Road and Holly Street. Two-way traffic will be provided on Nursery Road during construction, but the intersection of Pioneer and Nursery roads will be completely closed until the end of September. Also, East Grauwylar Road will have one-way traffic in the eastbound direction for the duration of the school year.

Gas Well Leasing – The City of Irving received the \$2 million bonus payment related to the mineral lease of 477 acres of city-owned property along Campión Trails in the Las Colinas area and in the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport vicinity.

Goal No. 10: Environmentally Sustainable Community

Collaborative Green Building Roundtable – On Aug. 29, Nella McCain and Jerry Sparks attended the second Collaborative Green Building Roundtable hosted by the City of Plano. The purpose of the roundtable is to provide presentations and discussions to assist regional cities in establishing green building programs. The North Central Texas Council of Governments announced its future "sustainable-green" programs and activities, and the City of Frisco discussed the establishment of its green building program. The presentations provide insight for the City of Irving's formation of a formal green building program.

Blue Bin Recycling Pilot Program – Solid Waste Services has completed the pilot program allowing residents in the Grauwylar Heights neighborhood to use either an 18-gallon recycling bin and/or the blue recycling bags. The program was a huge success, as the number of homes participating in the curbside recycling program increased from about 15 percent to about 50 percent. Solid Waste Services will evaluate all data from the pilot program, community input, and operational concerns and comments. Based on the findings, city staff will consider possible expansion of the program or other curbside recycling options.