



City of Irving *City Manager's Report*

March 7, 2007

Projects/Activities Updates

Digital Interactive Wall – The Digital Interactive Wall has been installed at the Irving/Las Colinas Marketing Center. The 18-foot “wall” features a user-activated, high-resolution LCD display that allows content to be dynamically and progressively revealed, incorporating text, images, video and other elements. The Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau spearheaded the project and created the design, backdrop, content and all 70 files for the wall’s composition, as well as scripting and filming all videos. Primarily targeted to economic development and corporate relocation uses, the wall is a key feature of the Irving/Las Colinas Marketing Center.

Neighborhood Enhancement Program – The Neighborhood Operations Team, in conjunction with facilitator Drew Diamond of the Police Executive Research Forum, conducted the South Austin Heights Community Workshop on March 3 at Austin Middle School. Participants included neighborhood residents, business owners, city staff and Austin Middle School officials. The meeting taught the group a problem-solving technique, and the exercises included identifying areas of improvement for the neighborhood. In addition, city staff made a presentation to the Irving ISD School Board about the new Neighborhood Enhancement Program on March 5. The next step is to work with the residents to form a neighborhood association.

Adjusted City Council Districts – The City of Irving has received clearance from the U.S. Department of Justice for the recently adjusted City Council districts for Places 1-5. This adjustment creates districts with more evenly distributed population based upon the 2000 U.S. Census figures, but takes into consideration the growth in the northern area of the city since that time. The change in those boundary lines will now be in place for the City Council residential districts that are part of the May 12 general election. New maps of the council districts are available from the City Secretary’s Office.

Animal Shelter Modifications – Several changes have been made to the Animal Shelter to make the building safer for the Certified Animal Shelter Volunteers. Volunteers now can access several rooms to perform tasks without being exposed to animals being held for rabies observation.

Animal Services Tracking Software – Animal Services completed a six-month, comprehensive review of available computer software that tracks all aspects of Animal Services tasks. The Information Technology Department has been notified of the recommended program. If the vendor meets all pertinent criteria, software procurement will occur in late March.

Park Board Considering Facility Name Change – The Park and Recreation Board will meet at 7 p.m. March 12 at City Hall. An action item on the agenda calls for consideration to rename West Park after Pastor Joseph R. Sheppard of the Ben Washington Baptist Church. Since the initial request, much interest has been generated and resident comments have been received regarding their preferences for the park name. Staff has asked those interested parties to consider naming recommendations that could satisfy all parties. The Parks and Recreation Board will ask that three or four speakers address the interests of all parties. The goal is to encourage a favorable recommendation that meets the needs of all those affected. If those conditions are met after the discussion, city staff will propose naming recommendations and forward to City Council for consideration.

Keeler Park Vandalism – This year's fiscal budget allocated \$150,000 to replace vandalized park facilities at Keeler Park. Staff had conducted community input meetings and was completing new designs for the park. Unfortunately, the park was vandalized again, including the burning of park furniture and a shelter. Parks staff has been instructed to conduct another community input meeting and to continue working with the Police Department to address vandalism issues. This effort may influence the final design and material selection.

Food Handler's Card Ordinance – Environmental Health staff hosted a public meeting for food establishment owners and operators on March 1. Of the 1,000 owners/managers invited, 82 persons attended the two-hour discussion about the proposed ordinance that would require a safe food handling class for all 10,000 food handlers working in Irving. Fifty-nine food service professionals submitted written comments.

Airing of Council Work Session Meetings – The installation in the City Council Conference Room to allow meeting coverage via ICTN is in the final stages. The live airings of the meetings are set to begin on March 21. All City Council Work Session and committee meetings will air live on ICTN, as well as on the Internet via the city's Web site.

Traffic Signal LED Project – Public Works/Traffic has completed the traffic signal LED installation at 101 intersections, which will significantly lower the demand for electricity.

Emergency Response to High Winds – The Public Works/Streets Division responded to 12 emergency calls on Feb. 24 to assist the Irving Police and Fire departments due to high winds up to 60 miles per hour. The calls ranged from trees being blown down, debris from buildings blowing into traffic, down power lines, and assisting the Fire Department with crews and heavy equipment during an apartment fire.

Reflective Stop Signs – A citywide upgrade of all stop signs (3,200-plus) with high intensity prismatic reflective sheeting has been completed. It was anticipated that the program would take eight years to complete, but the project was completed in 5 ½ years.

Left Turn Lane on Esters Road – Construction on a left-turn lane in the median of Esters Road at the Islamic Center is expected to begin in the next two weeks. First, the trees in the median will be transplanted by the Parks and Recreation Department, and TXU will remove the streetlights.

Emergency Water Connection to Serve DFW Airport – Public Works/Water Utilities staff met with Dallas Water Utilities and DFW Airport staff on Feb. 22 to discuss an inter-connect at the Hackberry Pump Station. The design is almost complete. The inter-connect should be functional in the next six to 12 weeks depending on pipe availability. Dallas will be drafting an interlocal agreement for Irving to provide the temporary water service to DFW Airport.

Military Call-Up – Another police officer has been called for active duty deployment to Iraq and another officer was placed on notice that he may be called within the next 30 days. The length of their deployment has not been determined, but both expect to be active for a minimum of one year. These two officers are in addition to one other police officer who currently is on active duty status.

Spanish Training for Employees – Human Resources offered a four-part, half-day Conversational Spanish workshop focusing on the basic concepts of the mechanics of the language as well as cultural awareness. The workshop, which was available to all employees, included staff from front line to the director level.

Legislative Activity – Councilman Sam Smith, City Manager Tommy Gonzalez, Arts Center Executive Director Richard Huff and Senior Assistant City Attorney Cathy Cunningham traveled to Austin to address an issue on funding for the Irving Arts Center.

Bilingual Pay Evaluation Committee – Human Resources hosted kick-off meetings of a Bilingual Pay Evaluation Committee in February. The group is charged with an examination of the city's current approach to rewarding employees for using skills in two or more languages for work-related projects or events. The group will be evaluating practices used by other cities, and preparing a list of related questions and issues to review with senior management.

Workers' Compensation Case Management Program – Risk Management has been meeting with city vendors to develop a plan to improve early treatment intervention on injuries involving workers' compensation. This program will assist injured employees with treatment needs and facilitate use of the city's modified duty program, as well as provide additional information for city departments.

Wellness/Exercise Questionnaire – In order to promote health and wellness, the city is considering options to provide additional exercise opportunities for employees. A questionnaire is being distributed to seek employee input on possible programs. The questionnaire is to be completed by March 16, and the information will be used when developing new wellness programs.

Internet Bandwidth Increased – The City of Irving Internet bandwidth has been expanded from 1.5 to 15 mbps to better serve Irving residents' requests via E-commerce applications, such as online water bill and traffic ticket payments, and watching live City Council meetings. It also will provide faster Internet service to city employees for researching information and conducting business online.

Remote Access to City Computer Network – Information Technology has completed a Web remote access project that will allow city employees clientless access (without configuration) to the city's internal network from a remote computer. Remote access (or work from anywhere concept) will be available pending training and policy approval.

Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Assessment – As a key element in the city's Emergency Operations Plan, the Office of Emergency Management has completed a comprehensive review and update of the Irving Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Assessment. This document identifies threats and hazards that are most likely to affect the city and residents. The report is available on the city Web site and is being incorporated into the Emergency Operations Plan.

HVAC/Maintenance Building – Construction is planned for an addition to the current HVAC/Maintenance Building and formal bids will be received. This addition will improve the Briery Road Municipal Complex and provide a place for the custodial group to be housed. This project also will allow the city to eliminate the portable buildings that have been used for product storage.

New Teen Court Volunteers – The Teen Court program has added two new volunteers to teach insurance classes to juvenile defendants who have received citations for moving violations, including no insurance violations. The new volunteers are Vickie Lundquist and Javier Moreno. Frank Correa will continue to teach the class. All three volunteers are employees of Allstate Insurance Company.

Recognitions/Awards

Officer of the Month – Irving Police Investigator Rocky Bailey has been recognized as Officer of the Month by the Irving Elks Lodge for his work in obtaining a search warrant in Grand Prairie. More than 20 stolen vehicles, with a value of more than \$400,000, were recovered.

BOAT Award of Merit – The Building Officials Association of Texas recognized the Inspections Department with an Award of Merit at its 2007 BOAT Mid-Year Meeting.

Public Works/Streets Breakfast – An employee recognition breakfast for about 80 Public Works/ Streets employees was held on Feb. 23 to thank the staff for their hard work during the two ice storms earlier this year. Human Resources assisted with the planning of the event.

Urban Land Institute (ULI) Advisory Panel – Chief Financial Officer David Leininger has been invited to serve as chairman of an Urban Land Institute Advisory Panel evaluating redevelopment options for the one million square foot super-regional Eastland Mall in Charlotte, North Carolina. The three-day panel is sponsored by the City of Charlotte and the owner, Glimcher Properties. The mall is experiencing a decline in patronage and the exodus of its major anchors. Charlotte and the mall owner are interested in evaluating adaptive reuse alternatives. Over the course of review, the panel will interview more than 100 members of the business community and prepare an assessment for presentation on the third day. The experience should provide valuable insights about similar redevelopment challenges that may be confronting several of Irving's retail centers. This is the seventh advisory panel in which David Leininger has served, and the second as panel chair.

Upcoming Events/Activities

Warrant Roundup – During the first week of March, as part of the statewide warrant roundup, Irving city marshals will be serving warrants on persons with outstanding Class C misdemeanors that have been filed in the Irving Municipal Court. More than 150 law enforcement agencies from 52 counties across the state are taking part in the roundup.

Bollywood Films – As part of its Celebrate the Cultures of Irving series, the Irving Central Library will host a "Bollywood Film Festival" at 2 p.m. March 10 as part of its programming for South Asian Month. Mumbai (formerly Bombay) is known as India's movie-making capital and leads among world cities for number of films produced and tickets sold. Many of these films influence pop culture in India and throughout much of South Asia.

Spring Break at the Library – Local families can join the Irving Central Library for "Spring Break Fun Week." Kids can watch movies, make crafts, listen to stories and nibble on popcorn. Festivities begin daily at 2 p.m. in the children's program room from March 12-16.

Irving Arts Center Program – *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie & Other Story Books* will be presented at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. March 12 at Carpenter Performance Hall. The Irving Arts Center presents two performances of TheatreworksUSA's sparkling revue based on popular children's books including *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, *Amazing Grace*, *Owen*, *Martha Speaks*, *Borreguita and the Coyote*, *Math Curse* and *Imogene's Antlers*.

Town Hall Meetings – Two Town Hall meetings will be held to update residents on city projects and initiatives. They are set for 7-8:30 p.m. on the following dates:

- March 20 – Northwest Park Recreation Center, 2800 Cheyenne St.
- March 28 – Heritage Senior Center, 200 S. Jefferson St.

Topics will include redevelopment and new development projects, water update, public safety initiatives, neighborhood enhancements and transportation projects.