



City of Irving *City Manager's Report*

May 2, 2007

Goal No. 2: Vibrant Neighborhoods

Neighborhood Enhancement Program – City staff will meet with residents of the South Austin Heights neighborhood at 7 p.m. May 7 at the Summerville Retirement Center. The group will discuss proposed bylaws to create a neighborhood association, and will be updated on the work plan for their area. The meeting follows an April 14 on-site neighborhood assessment of all properties within the pilot neighborhood. The Neighborhood Operations Team and South Austin Heights residents used digital documentation equipment to enter data about each property. The information will be used in formulating long-term solutions to the issues and deficiencies noted during the assessment.

Goal No. 4: Safe and Secure City

Drug Conference – The abuse of “cheese” heroin, currently a Dallas-area phenomenon, has resulted in an alarming number of untimely deaths among adolescents. School Resource Officer Sgt. Steve Hillery and Narcotics Investigator Steve Junker attended a conference on April 25 sponsored by the North Texas HIDTA that addressed this critical issue. This conference provided a current and informative overview of “cheese” and its growing impact on the community, and attendees discussed strategies to best deal with the problem from a law enforcement perspective.

Radio Rebanding – The city’s public safety and general government radio systems are being moved to new frequencies due to a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) order. This process is very labor intensive, involving returning radios, work on transmitters, and changes throughout the system. Staff is working to protect the integrity of the system and to keep residents safe during the transition. The FCC has created a complex process regarding reimbursement of the city’s costs due to the rebanding. The initial finding by the Transition Administrator would not reimburse all of Irving’s incurred costs; the amount is more than \$110,000 short. The City Attorney’s Office is working on an appeal to that ruling. Only 10 working days are given for an appeal, which means it is due to the FCC by May 10.

Crime Free Multi-Housing Program – The Police Department conducted a Phase I/Train-the-Trainer course for the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program on April 18. Representatives from 10 Irving apartment complexes and seven Texas police agencies attended this training. Apartment personnel were taught how to recognize criminal and drug activity, as well as basic crime prevention and crime prevention through environmental design techniques. The law enforcement personnel were certified to implement the program in their jurisdictions.

Public Safety Digital Audio Recording System – The Information Technology Department, along with the Police and Fire departments, are reviewing vendors to purchase identical digital audio recording systems. This new system will have the capability to interface with the current public safety radio system, as well as record and archive all related radio communication. By purchasing identical systems for both departments, the two departments can share information and streamline training and maintenance.

New Fire Pump – A new fire pump at City Hall has been installed and tested. The test involved running the pump under a simulated load. The results were successful and the pump has been commissioned and placed into service.

Fire Alarm Installation – The Equipment and Building Services Department has started the installation of fire alarms in several city buildings that previously operated without fire alarms because of their size. Following a review of an employee Bright Idea suggestion, it was determined to be in the best interest to install fire alarms in several city-owned buildings. The buildings include the Animal Shelter, Garden and Arts Center, Irving Community Television Network, Northwest Branch Library, Police and Fire Training Facility, Senter Park East, Southwest Branch Library, HVAC Building, Fritz Park, Valley View Maintenance Building, North Service Center, and Jaycee Center for the Arts.

Fire Alarm Testing – The Equipment and Building Services Department is conducting an annual inspection and testing of the fire alarm systems in all equipped city facilities. The inspection and test, which are required by the state, will take place during and after normal working hours for the next several weeks.

Swiftwater Rescue Team Activities – The Fire Department's Swiftwater Rescue Team was busy in April assisting during special events. The four-member team was on Lake Carolyn to provide safety coverage for triathlon swimmers and for the Dragon Boat Races during the Dragon Boat, Kite and Lantern Festival. Other spring activities for the Fire Department include school visits and "show and tell" at area elementary schools to promote fire safety.

Fire Plug Inspections – The fire engine and truck companies have completed an inspection and service of every fire plug in the city to make sure that they all work properly.

Goal No. 5: Diversity

Spanish Classes – The Irving Arts Center provides free Spanish classes for its employees on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 to 5 p.m. The five-month program will conclude in May. Approximately 14 employees meet twice a week with local Spanish teacher Debbie Martinez to learn introductory Spanish.

Valley Ranch Storytime – The Valley Ranch Library will present a special bilingual storytime program at 7 p.m. May 3. Families will be able to hear stories read in both Hindi and English.

Middle Eastern Month – Multicultural programs continue at the Irving Central Library in May with a look at the traditions of the Middle East. The kick-off event takes place at 2 p.m. May 6 with a discussion of Muslim cultures and languages presented by the Texas Muslim Women's Foundation. Entertainment will be provided by the Rimonim Music and Dance Company with traditional Israeli folk dances. Tea & Talk, a multicultural book discussion group, will meet at the Central Library at 7:30 p.m. May 10 and at the Irving Mall Barnes & Noble at 11 a.m. May 12. The featured title is *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini.

Cinco de Mayo Celebration – Residents are invited to participate in the annual Senter Park Neighborhood Cinco de Mayo Celebration and Health Fair from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. May 5 at Senter Park Recreation Center, 901 S. Senter St. The free event includes health screenings (blood pressure, sugar, cholesterol, vision, prostate cancer and many others), and will emphasize wellness for the entire family. Participants will enjoy music, food, arts and crafts, children's games, and ethnic dancing.

Goal No. 6: Effective Communications

IT Technology Showcase – The Information Technology Department (IT) will host an Information Technology Showcase from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. May 11 at the Central Library Auditorium. This event will give city employees an opportunity to view and learn about the new and current IT projects.

Live Election Returns – Irving Community Television Network (ICTN) will provide live election returns from City Hall beginning at 7 p.m. May 12. Coverage will include early voting results from both the City Council and Irving School Board races, as well as updates and interviews throughout the evening until the final results are posted. Watch this special television coverage on ICTN 1 (Channel 16, Time Warner; Channel 30, Verizon) or via the Internet at www.ictn.tv.

Interactive Web Mapping – The Information Technology/GIS team will be transitioning the city's Internet Web map hosting services from city servers to the North Central Texas Council of Government (NCTCOG) iCommunities program this summer. The iCommunities program currently hosts interactive Web maps for more than 20 local governments. By using this service, the city will be able to provide high quality, easy-to-use, regional interactive maps to residents, while allowing current resources to be redirected to other projects.

Wonder of Water Celebration – The Water Utilities Division is celebrating National Water Week with a festival from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. May 12 at the Valley View Municipal Complex, 333 Valley View Lane. Educate the entire family on how to be "water smart." Enjoy music, educational exhibits, fishing and other fun activities. The event is open to the public and free of charge.

Goal No. 7: Cultural, Recreational and Educational Environments

Park Dedications – Two Irving parks will be dedicated this month: North Lake Ranch Park at 11 a.m. May 17, followed by Lively Pointe Skate Park at 4 p.m. May 24. The 12-acre North Lake Ranch Park is located at Ranch Trail and Ranchview Drive in the southwest section of Valley Ranch. Additions to the park include a 22-car parking lot, a group pavilion for 24 people, and two playground areas for children ages 2-5 and 5-12. The park also includes a short concrete trail loop, half-court basketball, security lighting, turf irrigation, landscaping, and various park amenities such as benches and drinking fountains. The skate park will feature approximately 20,000 square feet of street skating elements such as stairs, railings, pyramids, radial edges, grind edges, manual pads, quarter pipes and hubba ledges. It is constructed out of concrete with steel coping railing to accommodate BMX bikes. The free-use facility, located at 909 N. O'Connor Road, will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

IMLS Summit – Jan Hart, archives coordinator, has been selected by the Texas State Library and Archives to attend the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) summit in Washington, D.C. on June 27-28. The selection is competitive with only two libraries and two museums from Texas garnering representation. The conference, called "Connecting to Collections: The National Conservation Summit," features a keynote speech by U.S. Archivist Allen Weinstein, and offers a series of educational panels filled with the country's leading archive experts.

Write On! – A free writing workshop for grades 6-12 will be held at 2 p.m. May 5 at the Irving Central Library. Instruction will be led by Vanessa Vega, author of *Comes the Darkness, Comes the Light*.

Mosquito Control Program – The targeted implementation date for this year's mosquito trapping and testing program is May 14. Staff will work to enhance public education regarding the "4 Ds" to minimize resident exposure to mosquitoes. They are: (1) Dusk/Dawn – the times of day to stay indoors; (2) Dress – wear long sleeves and long pants when outdoors during these times; (3) Deet – an ingredient to look for when purchasing and using insect repellent; and (4) Drain – minimize outside standing water so it doesn't become a mosquito breeding site.

Goal No. 8: Sound Governance

Lawsuit Victory – Senior Assistant City Attorney Nancy Williams successfully defended the City of Irving in a lawsuit involving \$750,000 in liability claims brought against the city and its police officers by Leyda Rodriguez. The city attorney was able to obtain a judgment on a motion in a trial in the 192nd District Court in Dallas before Judge Craig Smith, and the plaintiffs did not receive anything.

Resident Inquiries Addressed – For the month of April, the Corporate Communications Department addressed 49 inquiries through the inquiry system, and responded to an additional 88 inquiries that were immediately addressed. The primary concerns consisted of waste service (trash collection), water utilities, building inspections, construction projects, street and sidewalk repair, traffic control timing, streetlights, drainage, police issues, emergency management, parks, animal services, and code enforcement (high grass/weeds, outside storage). Residents who initiate concerns are provided regular updates about how and when the issue is being addressed.

Early Voting for May 12 Election – Early voting for this year's City Council election began April 30 and will run through May 8. Voting hours and days are as follows:

- April 30–May 5, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- May 6, 1 to 6 p.m.
- May 7 and 8, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Early voting locations are City Hall, 825 W. Irving Blvd.; Irving Arts Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd.; and Barbara Bush Middle School, 505 Cowboys Parkway. Election Day is May 12, and the polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. For locations, visit www.ci.irving.tx.us or call the City Secretary's Office at (972) 721-2493.

Automated Meter Reading (AMR) System – Customer Service office personnel have completed their ride outs with field personnel to learn more about the AMR program being implemented throughout the city. This learning opportunity makes them better able to address customer questions as they now have hands-on knowledge of this technology and the process involved in obtaining results.

Goal No. 9: Infrastructure Network

50th Anniversary Resolution Recognizes Irving – The Customer Advisory Committee of Trinity River Authority of Texas' Central Regional Wastewater System honored the City of Irving as being one of the four original contracting customers for the vision exhibited 50 years ago. This vision led to the establishment and ultimate expansion of the first regional wastewater system in Texas.

Red Light Enforcement Warning Period – Red light enforcement cameras have been installed at two intersections in Irving, and a 30-day warning period began May 1. Offenders will receive a warning of violation in the mail. The cameras have been added at the intersections of O'Connor Road at Lane Street and Belt Line Road at Pioneer Drive to help decrease the severity of traffic accidents caused by red-light offenders. After the 30-day warning period, offenders will receive a notice of violation with the fine. The notices will include color photos of the driver's car and his/her license plate. The first two violations will cost \$75 each. A third violation within a 12-month period will cost \$150. The offense is considered civil, not criminal. Additional red light cameras will be installed pending TxDOT permitting.

Milling and Overlay Program – The FY 2006-07 milling and overlay program began earlier this month on Shady Grove Road. The Public Works/Streets Division expects to complete the program by the end of June. Concrete repairs will continue to be scheduled ahead of milling operations.

Goal No. 10: Environmentally Sustainable Community

Materials Exchange Program – Solid Waste Services and Information Technology are evaluating a program to assist residents who have items they no longer need, but could be used by others. The intent of the program will be to match residents who have good household items to dispose of with local individuals or nonprofit organizations that can use them. Items will not be for sale, but will be listed for exchange on the city Web site. Solid Waste and Information Technology expect to have this program in place by the end of the fiscal year.