

## **Improvements to Irving's Visual Appeal Under Way**

A new gateway and corridor program will enhance Irving's visual image and identity by creating regional entry gateways into the city along highways and major thoroughfares.

Seven beautification portals will include:

- Riverside and State Highway 161
- Belt Line and Rock Island roads
- MacArthur Boulevard at Weathered Street
- MacArthur Boulevard and Shady Grove Road
- O'Connor Road and Airport Freeway
- Belt Line Road and State Highway 161
- Senter and Shady Grove roads

Each gateway will be improved with the addition of sculptures and landscaping, and while each gateway will be different, the city plans to incorporate an overall unifying theme.

Gateways at MacArthur Boulevard and Shady Grove Road, and MacArthur Boulevard and Weathered Street will be completed next year. Schedules for the remaining corridor projects will depend on future budgets.

In addition to these entry gateway portals, the city is constructing a pocket park at MacArthur Boulevard and Grauwylers Road, which is expected to be completed this year. The area along the west side of MacArthur Boulevard, from State Highway 183 to Rochelle Road, will be landscaped to provide further enhancements.

"These corridor enhancements and gateway entry portals are being developed to create a unified image for Irving," said Casey Tate, assistant director of design, construction and building services. "The MacArthur corridor improvements are the first phase of the enhancements to upgrade and enhance one of the major transportation corridors through Irving. The MacArthur and Shady Grove entry portal is being developed in partnership with the new North Lake College South Campus."

These beautification projects continue to progress as the development of various project plans take shape. The Parks and Recreation Department has been working to identify additional opportunities for providing regional entry gateways, pocket parks and greenway corridors around the city.

Additional enhancements would consist of placing electric wires underground, and adding public art, landscaping, architectural elements, signage, street lighting, and sidewalks and greenbelts.

"The beautification of these corridors will make a great impact on the overall appearance of Irving and the quality of life for our residents," Tate said.

These improvements support the city's Strategic Plan to promote excellence in land use and the image of Irving's built and natural environment, and to enhance and sustain Irving's infrastructure network. Possible funding sources for these beautification projects include bond funds, gas lease revenue, and tariff revenues.

For more information, call the Parks and Recreation Department at (972) 721-2501.