



# City of Irving *City Manager's Report*

**October 21, 2009**

## **Strategic Goal No. 2: Vibrant Neighborhoods**

**Effective Code Strategies** – Code Enforcement has made significant progress this past year in improving the community. During Fiscal Year 2008-09, staff opened 14,751 new cases and resolved 14,632. Pole signs removed to date total 92 and 7,560 temporary signs have been pulled. Staff also has completed 21 of the 66 neighborhood code enforcement projects identified to improve residential areas. New sign ordinance guidelines have been enforced the past two months, with 371 businesses in compliance and 299 pending with issued violation notices.

**Back On Track Program** – The Housing and Human Services Department hosted an informational meeting Oct. 1 to inform the community about a new program to assist homeless Irving residents. Back On Track, funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, is a two-year program that will provide rental assistance and related services for up to one year to homeless or near homeless Irving residents. More than 30 apartment complexes, landlords, churches and other representatives attended and expressed support for this new program, which will be in full operation by early November. For more information, call (972) 721-4800.

**Keep Irving Beautiful Litter Assessment** – Keep Irving Beautiful (KIB) and the Nimitz Junior Historians teamed together to conduct a litter assessment of the city. Since 1992, KIB has worked with students to take photos of specific areas of the city that remain constant from year to year. The photos are graphed, analyzed and compared to previous years. This year's data is still being compiled. In 2008, results showed that littering had decreased 19 percent.

**Neighborhood Roundtable** – The quarterly Neighborhood Roundtable was hosted Oct. 13 by the Corporate Communications Department with more than 55 participants. Attendees were presented with the results of neighborhood grant projects this past year and were briefed on grant opportunities available to enhance their neighborhood association activities. Roundtables allow neighborhood officers to learn about city initiatives and what other associations are doing to enhance their neighborhoods.

## **Strategic Goal No. 3: Economic Development**

**Construction Valuation** – During Fiscal Year 2008-09, the Planning and Inspections Department issued 14,914 permits with a construction valuation of \$454 million. The level represents an active construction year due in part to the Irving Convention Center project. This total also includes permits for 407 new homes.

**Job Center Workshops** – The Irving Central Library's Job Center is providing a series of free workshops to help residents brush up on the skills they need to find a job in today's marketplace. Classes will take place daily at 2 p.m. Oct. 27-30 at 801 W. Irving Blvd. Topics include writing résumés, interviewing, online job searching and company research. No registration is needed. Call (972) 721-2606.

**Business Assistance by Chamber** – The Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce announced that Phoenix-based Universal Technology Institute (UTI) has selected Irving for its flagship model campus. UTI is a premier provider of technician training for students seeking careers in the automotive, diesel, collision repair, motorcycle and marine industries. The chamber assisted in the site selection process and coordinated incentives from the city to bring UTI to Irving. The campus, at 5151 Regent Blvd., will employ between 40 and 80 people and is expected to open by spring 2010.

**Main Street Initiatives** – The Preservation and Redevelopment Board is working to increase awareness in leasing vacant retail space on Main Street in downtown Irving. Film has been installed on windows of vacant buildings, which gave thousands of Irving Main Street Event attendees the opportunity to visualize businesses that could be successful along the street. The board also has produced a real estate brochure with information about the various buildings. To obtain a copy, contact the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce at (214) 507-5091 or visit the chamber's Information Center at 135 S. Jefferson St.

#### **Strategic Goal No. 4: Safe and Secure City**

**Fire Uniforms** – Firefighters have new, high-tech uniform jackets that are warmer and safer than those previously worn. The fabric provides a blood-borne pathogen barrier that protects firefighters when they are working with injured persons. The jackets also offer enhanced visibility through reflective cloth.

**Assistance Grant Programs** – The Police Department has received \$377,000 in grant funds from the Justice Assistance Grant Program under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act. These funds will be dedicated to the following projects:

- Remote lineup software
- Photo management system
- Jail surveillance system upgrade
- Crime analysis equipment
- Equipment and training

The city also has been awarded \$823,300 in federal grants to carry out homeland security projects that will significantly improve local and regional prevention, preparedness, and response and recovery capabilities.

**Police/YMCA Partnership** – The Police Department's Problem Solving Unit has teamed up with the YMCA in an effort to reach and become better acquainted with Irving's youth. Registration for a soccer program targeting children ages 5-12 is under way and practice will be held from 4 to 5:45 p.m. Oct. 26 at Cottonwood Creek Park, 4051 N. Story Road. Games will be held on Wednesday evenings and transportation assistance will be available through the YMCA if needed. The cost to participate is only \$5 and includes a uniform.

**Kittico Cat Rescue** – The third Kittico Cat Rescue event, hosted by Irving Animal Services on Oct. 8, has been the most successful yet with 70 cats spayed and neutered. The event is held the second Thursday of the month to provide residents with an affordable way to vaccinate and spay/neuter their cats. Animal Services also partnered with the Irving Hospital District Neighborhood Association to successfully microchip 24 animals in the neighborhood, which helps the shelter return lost animals to their owners in a safe and timely manner.

#### **Strategic Goal No. 5: Diversity**

**Big Read Bilingual Puppet Show** – The Irving Public Library's Big Read will host Sandra McClean and Beau the Crow at 1 p.m. Oct. 27 at the East Branch Library, 440 S. Nursery Road. The bilingual puppet show will feature Edgar Allan Poe and the children's literary classic, *The Runaway Tortilla*. Call (972) 721-3722 for more information.

**Disability Expo 2009** – The Irving Advisory Committee on Disabilities hosted an expo at the Heritage Senior Center where 37 exhibitors provided information to more than 50 attendees on services from local, county, state and federal agencies that serve area residents with disabilities.

### **Strategic Goal No. 6: Effective Communications**

**ICTN Recognition** – Irving Community Television Network (ICTN) has received national recognition for its play-by-play sports coverage on “Irving: Game of the Week.” The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) awarded ICTN first place for Live Event Coverage. NATOA is a national organization that promotes community interests in communications.

**2010 Census Outreach** – The Irving Counts Committee began assembling a combined calendar of outreach events and member volunteers to serve as a speakers bureau for the 2010 Census communications effort. The Census Bureau has assigned Houston DeBerry to assist with Irving's Complete Count. DeBerry will help spearhead a census poster and awareness campaign for Irving's youth. In addition, Sharon Barbosa-Crain and David Gutierrez were interviewed on Irving Community Television Network's “La Vida” program about the census process. The team also distributed information at the Irving Main Street Event to raise awareness about the upcoming census count this spring.

### **Strategic Goal No. 7: Cultural, Recreational and Educational Environments**

**Irving Main Street Event** – This year's Irving Main Street Event attracted an estimated 7,500 visitors, an increase of 2,500 participants from last year. The event featured The World of Magic production with cutting-edge illusions and lavish costumes. Entertainment included circus acts for children, rides, clown shows and live music. The Manifolds on Main Street car show had approximately 200 cars on exhibit. In addition, more than 80 arts, crafts, jewelry and food vendors were present.

**Safety City/Public Safety Museum** – Larsen Dye Associates Architects has been retained by the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce to prepare a schematic design and cost estimates for a proposed Children's Safety City/Public Safety Museum. When completed, the proposal will be presented at a City Council Community Services Committee meeting.

**Reception and Author Visit** – Dr. Scott Peeples, noted Poe expert and winner of the Patrick F. Quinn Award for *The Afterlife of Edgar Allan Poe*, will deliver a lecture on Poe's life and the significance of his works at 7 p.m. Oct 27 at the National Scouting Museum, 1329 W. Walnut Hill Lane. For more information, call (972) 721-2606.

**Poe's House of Usher: Haunted House** – Trick-or-treat in the stacks when the Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd., is transformed into a haunted house for a “spooktacular” Big Read Halloween event from 6 to 8 p.m. Oct. 31. Stay for the falling House of Usher finale. For more information, call (972) 721-2606.

**To Kill A Mockingbird** – More than 500 middle and high school students participated in the Irving Arts Center's performance of *To Kill a Mockingbird* on Oct. 13. The students represented public and private schools from Irving, Coppell and Carrollton, as well as several home school groups. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is part of the Irving Arts Center's season partnership with the Irving Black Arts Council. The evening performance brought in 300 patrons from 52 ZIP codes across the Metroplex.

**Arts Center Fall Youth Programs** – The Irving Arts Center's fall youth programs kicked off in October with the start of the Afterschool Art Lab and Saturday School. The Afterschool Art Lab provides the time, space and materials for middle and high school students to work on class projects. It is open to Irving students and registration is free. Saturday School features four, six-week sessions of arts-based curriculum for children ages 6-12. This year's topics include mosaics, the art of the Harlem Renaissance, beginning clay and creative writing.

## **Strategic Goal No. 8: Sound Governance**

**Excellent Finance Reporting** – The city has received the Government Finance Officer Association's (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the Fiscal Year 2007-08 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the 26<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. GFOA established the achievement program in 1945 to encourage, assist and recognize state and local governments that go beyond the minimum requirements of accepted accounting principles to prepare comprehensive annual financial reports that exemplifies the spirit of transparency and full disclosure.

**City-Owned Mineral Acres** – Drilling has been completed on two horizontal gas wells on University of Dallas property north of State Highway 114 on Tom Braniff Drive. The wells include approximately 37.12 acres of city-owned minerals. Once the wells begin producing gas, the city will receive a 25.5 percent royalty. The well laterals run parallel to each other from the well site northwesterly toward the Urban Center, terminating near Teleport and Las Colinas boulevards.

**Gas Lease Extension** – Trinity East Energy has exercised the option to extend its gas lease on 446.63 acres of city-owned minerals located in the Urban Center/Campión Trails for two more years. This brings the total payment of this lease to \$2.25 million.

## **Strategic Goal No. 9: Infrastructure**

**Accessible Playground and Miracle League Field** – The Accessible Playground and Miracle League Field will be dedicated for the public at 10 a.m. Oct. 24. The \$2.2 million facility provides ramps and wider play platforms, as well as a rubber surface to provide access to all parts of the playground. It also features four tree houses designed to create a fun play environment. In addition, the Miracle League Field allows children with disabilities to participate in softball. The lighted field is surfaced with rubber and includes covered dugouts, covered bleacher seating, a scoreboard and more than 106 seats from Texas Stadium.

**Valley Ranch Lift Station Upgrade** – Water Utilities crew members completed an upgrade to the Valley Ranch Lift Station. Crews replaced pumps and installed piping to reduce the opportunity for sewer overflows. The project involved lining the facility walls with a protective coating that crews completed in-house for \$3,000, a savings of \$13,500 from a quote received from a contractor.

**Hospital District Bridge Railing Project** – The Capital Improvements Program Team has completed the installation of new decorative bridge railings within the Hospital District neighborhood to the east of MacArthur Boulevard, between Grauwlyer Road and State Highway 183. The new bridge railings at the seven bridge locations along Delaware Creek improve safety and are more aesthetically pleasing. The new railings begin on Puritan Drive at Jaycee Park and follow Delaware Creek down to Live Oak Drive. For added safety, vertical slats and a new section of railings were installed along the sides of the channel adjacent to the street. The cost of all seven bridge rail modifications is \$49,774. Staff also installed pavers at each bridge between the curb and sidewalk to accent the bridge.

## **Strategic Goal No. 10: Environmentally Sustainable Community**

**City Hall Parking Garage Lighting** – The HVAC and Electrical Division partnered with Parks and Building Maintenance to design and install a lighting control panel that reduces the energy consumption for lighting in the City Hall parking garage. Minimal lighting can be used during the day, saving the city an estimated \$3,500 a year in energy costs. And by using components salvaged from Texas Stadium, HVAC eliminated the cost of parts and installation, saving an estimated \$7,000.