



# City of Irving *City Manager's Report*

September 17, 2008

## **Strategic Goal No. 1: Land Use**

**Construction of Entry Gateways** – Work is under way on the new entry gateway being constructed at the northwest corner of MacArthur Boulevard and Weathered Street. The contractor is beginning the grading and preparing to install the foundation for the gateway arch structure. In the next week, work will begin on a second entry gateway on the northeast corner of MacArthur Boulevard and Shady Grove Road. Both entry gateway developments are projected to be completed in December. These projects are the second phase of improvements for the MacArthur corridor. Additional enhancements will begin later this fall.

**Construction Code Hearings** – Lawrence Crow, field operations manager for the Planning and Inspections Department, represented the City of Irving at the International Code Council Annual Conference and Final Action Hearing in Minneapolis, held the week of Sept. 14. Building officials and other voting members concluded the three-year cycle of code changes that will be incorporated into the 2009 edition of the International Building Code.

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

**Vista Del Lago Update** – City Manager Tommy Gonzalez and representatives from several city departments—Police, Code Enforcement, Housing and Human Services, Fire and Corporate Communications—met with displaced residents of Vista Del Lago on Sept. 8 to discuss additional needs. City employees are conducting a school supply and clothing drive to assist the children who were relocated from the closing of the apartment complex. Following the meeting, staff discussed opportunities for improvement that will be incorporated into procedures for future planned and emergency evacuations.

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

**Hurricane Ike Assistance** – To prepare and provide for better response to natural and manmade disasters, two Irving paramedics and an ambulance assisted with evacuating the Gulf Coast in response to Hurricane Ike. Irving paramedics met with other EMS units in San Antonio and provided immediate care for persons with serious health problems and safely removed them from the storm's path. In addition, three Irving dispatchers have been sent to the Galveston area to assist with communications at the state's Command Center. The dispatchers will stay for a three-day rotation.

**Fire Training** – Firefighters will soon attend realistic fire training using state-of-the-art simulators at DFW International Airport. The gas-fed simulators provide realistic scenarios to give firefighters a chance to study their tactics in a controlled format.

**Star of Texas Award** – Fallen officer Andrew Esparza was selected to receive a Star of Texas Award from Governor Rick Perry on Sept. 11. The Texas Legislature created the award to honor peace officers, firefighters and emergency medical first responders who have been killed or sustained serious injuries in the line of duty on or after Sept. 1, 2003. Officer Esparza's family accepted the award in his honor.

**Officer Recognition** – Officer Jonathan Plunkett was selected as the National Police Officer of the Year by the Military Order of the World Wars. Officer Plunkett, who also was selected earlier this year as the Irving Police Officer of the Year, was chosen from a group of nominees from across the nation.

**Injury Accidents Decrease** – Since Oct. 1, personal injury accidents in Irving have declined by 20 percent as compared to the same time period last year. This success is due to state grant initiatives, directed traffic enforcement and automated red light enforcement programs.

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

**New City Web Site Design** – The city Web site has a new design that went live this month. The updated design features a video on demand player on the home page, which showcases a city video. Other recent enhancements include Google searches, public input opportunities, traffic updates and key focus area information.

**Water Utilities Partnership with Irving ISD** – The Water Utilities Department is working with Irving ISD to teach students the process of delivering safe drinking water to the public and preparing students for a state water exam. Irving ISD is building a new applied technology center for students at the Union Bower Learning Center, 101 E. Union Bower Road. The 20-hour basic water utility course takes about three months to complete. Students finishing the course are eligible to take the state exam. After passing the state exam and graduating from high school, students will be issued a Level D water license, making them marketable in the water industry. In conjunction with this partnership, Water Utilities provided a course overview for 29 students and five teachers on Sept. 12. The group toured City Hall, the Valley View Municipal Complex and the Northgate Pump Station.

**Health Information Distributed** – The Corporate Communications Department distributed health services information to more than 500 people at the Austin Middle School parent-teacher night on Sept. 8. As part of the parent education process, local nonprofit and governmental agencies were invited to share their services and programs with Irving families. Information concerning local childhood obesity also was distributed.

**“Irving: Game of the Week”** – Time Warner Cable will be replaying all of the “Irving: Game of the Week” football games produced by Irving Community Television Network (ICTN) on its On Demand channel. The first game featured Irving and Mansfield high schools on Aug. 29. A schedule of fall football games that will air on ICTN and Time Warner On Demand is available at [www.ictn.tv](http://www.ictn.tv).

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

**West Irving Aquatic Center** – Planning for the development of the new West Irving Aquatic Center began with the first community input meeting on Sept. 16. A second community input meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Sept. 25 at Georgia Farrow Recreation Center, 530 Davis St. Interested residents are invited to participate in the meeting and provide input on the design of the aquatic center. In addition, a survey is available on the city Web site to allow residents to provide their preferences for various aquatic features. Plans are to have the new aquatic park open for summer 2010.

**Family Picnic and Concert** – Northwest Park Recreation Center will host a family picnic and concert in the park from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Sept. 20. The event will consist of food, music provided by a disc jockey, and games for the entire family. Northwest Park Recreation Center is located at 2800 Cheyenne St.

**Bioblitz Invitational** – The Parks and Recreation Department, Solid Waste Services and the ecotourism team will host the Bioblitz Invitational on Sept. 20 at Campión Trails. Bioblitz will kick off the city's new ecotourism program. Groups representing recreation centers, home schools, youth services and scouts will explore various trails to identify and document plants, birds and other wildlife species. Participants will receive T-shirts and other giveaway items. Professional nature specialists will lead the groups. Approximately 100 children between the ages of 10-12 have registered to participate. Lunch will be provided. In the event of rain, the program will shift to the University of Dallas campus.

**African-American Authors Book Circle** – The African-American Authors Book Circle will meet at 10:30 a.m. Sept. 20 at Northwest Branch Library, 2928 N. Belt Line Road, to discuss Pearl Cleage's *What Looks Like Crazy on an Ordinary Day*. The book circle meets at 10:30 a.m. on the third Saturday of each month. For more information, call (972) 721-2691.

**Box Car Drive-In** – Senter Park Recreation Center will host the Box Car Drive-In event from 7 to 9 p.m. Sept. 26. Participants will construct box cars out of cardboard and other materials, and then compete for awards. Following the contest, participants will enjoy a movie on the big screen. Senter Park Recreation Center is located at 901 S. Senter Road.

**Home School Fair** – The Lee Park Recreation Center will host a Home School Fair from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 27 at 3000 Pamela Drive. The event will feature Olympic games, demonstrations, vendors and competitions in categories including photography, fine arts, hobbies/crafts, sewing, baking and other talents by homeschooled students. The cost is \$5 per family and includes food and drinks.

**Family Camping and Fishing Event** – Northwest Park Recreation Center will host a family camping and fishing event beginning at 8 p.m. Sept. 26 and continuing overnight to 9 a.m. Sept. 27. Families will bring sleeping bags and tents to camp out in the Northwest Park Recreation Center gym at 901 S. Senter Road. Early Saturday morning, participants will fish in the pond.

**Irving Main Street Event** – Irving residents are invited to attend the Irving Main Street Event from 3 to 8 p.m. Sept. 27 in the Irving Heritage District. The theme will be Music and Magic on Main, and the event will feature a car show, artists, music, magic, food and children's activities. The schedule of events includes:

- Manifolds on Main car show, with on-site registration beginning at 1 p.m. Visit the car show Web site at [www.manifoldsonmain.com](http://www.manifoldsonmain.com).
- Jazz performance by Fingerprints from 3 to 4 p.m.
- High School Caesar Band from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.
- Dave Thomas World of Magic Show from 6 to 7 p.m.
- Cavalcade of Stars presented by Tapley Entertainment from 7 to 8 p.m.

The new event is being organized by the Parks and Recreation Department. For details, call (972) 721-2501.

**Annual Ms. Mature Irving Pageant** – The 26<sup>th</sup> annual Ms. Mature Irving Pageant will be held at 7 p.m. Oct. 3 at the Irving Arts Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd. The award-winning program features senior ladies vying for the title of Ms. Mature Irving. Contestants compete in categories including personality, talent and evening wear. The winner will represent Irving in the state Ms. Mature Pageant, which could lead to the national Ms. Mature Pageant.

**Summer Camp Summary** – The Irving Arts Center completed another successful summer of art and theater camps. Of the 11 camps offered for children ages 6-18, four camps reached 97 percent enrollment capacity, with one selling out. The average enrollment capacity for the summer was 85 percent, compared to 88 percent in 2007 and 80 percent in 2006. A total of 554 registrations were sold throughout the summer, with 29 percent of families returning from 2007. In addition, 20 scholarships covering the cost of one camp were presented to local children at the beginning of the summer.

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

**Internal Customer Service Survey Results** – Thirteen internal city departments/divisions were rated by 551 employees in the areas of responsiveness, accuracy, courteousness, timeliness and overall customer service in an internal customer service survey. The five departments/divisions receiving the highest overall customer service ratings are as follows: Print Shop (99.4%), Warehouse (99.1%), City Secretary's Office (97.0%), Financial Services (97.0%) and Risk Management (95.7%). While overall results from the survey were positive, management in individual departments will use the survey findings to identify areas for improved customer service delivery.

**Service Desk Training** – A 14-part training series, Telephone Doctor, was put in place three months ago in the Information Technology Service Desk Division as part of its internal customer service improvement program. Ten personnel within the division have received training on how to recognize and handle different situations, how to respond to each effectively, how to take an active lead, and actions to help solve customer problems.

**Child Support Payments** – Financial Services is now submitting child support payments to the State of Texas via Automated Clearing House, an electronic network for financial transactions. Before this service, approximately 260 checks were being generated, sorted, folded and mailed monthly.

**American Heart Association Start! Heart Walk** – Even with the threat of high winds and rain from Hurricane Ike, more than 50 employees, friends and family members braved the weather to participate in the American Heart Association (AHA) Start! Heart Walk in downtown Dallas on Sept. 13. Members of 14 city teams (which included three canine participants this year) walked the three-mile course and raised close to \$6,000 to support the AHA's research and educational efforts. Although the walk is a fundraising event for the AHA, city employees also walk as a celebration of the city's continuing participation in the AHA's Start! program, an ongoing wellness initiative.

**On-the-Spot Awards** – The following employees have received On-the-Spot Award recognition for either exhibiting exemplary customer service or performing in a manner resulting in an extraordinary contribution toward the city's strategic goals: Steve Dirx (Corporate Communications), Todd Everheart (Corporate Communications), Raul Garcia (Corporate Communications), Courtney Mason (Corporate Communications), Bart Nester (Corporate Communications), Kenn North (Corporate Communications), Mike Poston (Corporate Communications), Jose Rivera (Animal Services), Stephan Silvey (Corporate Communications), Scott Snyder (Corporate Communications), Paul Wahlstrom (Corporate Communications), Cathy Whiteman (Corporate Communications) and Robert Wright (Animal Services).

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

**New Roll-off Containers** – The Solid Waste Services roll-off container program has been popular since it began in August, with customers indicating that the containers are an easy and efficient way to handle the disposal of large amounts of debris. In the first month of operation, Solid Waste Services rented approximately 50 roll-off containers to customers.