



# City of Irving *City Manager's Report*

**April 16, 2008**

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

**Tudor Lane Initiative** – The Police Department's Problem Solving Team and Code Enforcement investigators are continuing the collaborative effort to address the root causes of problems on Tudor Lane. To date, 65 arrests have been made, 475 code violations identified and 389 citations issued. Following is an update on the properties in the area:

- Seven buildings vacated and secured
- Seven buildings in compliance
- Two buildings scheduled for jury trial
- One building being addressed by the Building and Standards Commission
- 12 known offenders with lengthy criminal histories have relocated
- Police calls in this area have been reduced by 50 percent

City staff will continue to work on these and other initiatives to improve the long-term viability of the area.

**Neighborhood Roundtable** – The Corporate Communications Department is getting ready for its upcoming Go Green! Neighborhood Roundtable meeting on April 29 at City Hall. The meeting will encourage residents to take the "Think Green ... Be Green" pledge to improve the environment by recycling and conserving water and energy. Featured speakers include Fran Witte, solid waste services program and marketing supervisor; Ramiro Lopez, contracts and fuel administration director; and Chris Michalski, parks and recreation director. All neighborhood officers in attendance will receive a "Guide to Planting Native Texas Plants," produced by the Parks and Recreation Department.

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

**Construction Valuation** – During the first six months of the 2007-08 fiscal year, the Planning and Inspections Department issued 7,306 permits with a total construction valuation of \$250 million. This total includes permits for 278 new homes.

**Transit Oriented Development Projects** – Gables Construction has applied for a building permit for the initial phase of the Water Street project, which includes 475,000 square feet of construction valued at \$28 million. LPC Contractors has applied for a building permit for the Lincoln at Las Colinas apartments, to be located on Spur 348 and Las Colinas Boulevard. This project includes seven buildings that total 849,636 square feet and are valued at \$45 million.

**Job Fair** – The Irving Public Library's Job Center will host a job fair from 1 to 4 p.m. April 17 in the Central Library Auditorium, 801 W. Irving Blvd. Recruiters from local companies will meet with job-seekers to discuss employment openings, collect résumés and schedule interviews. Call (972) 721-2606.

**Job Center Workshops** – A series of free workshops will be provided by the Irving Central Library's Job Center to help residents with the skills they need to find a job in today's marketplace. Classes take place daily at 2 p.m. April 29-May 2. Topics include writing résumés, interviewing, online job searching and company research. No registration is needed. Call (972) 721-2608.

**New Development Maps** – Maps that showcase development projects throughout Irving are available for viewing on the city Web site. These maps designate the areas planned for new development, new construction projects, and recently completed projects in Irving. Information Technology's Geographical Information System team works with the Planning and Inspections Department, as well as the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce, to develop the maps. They are updated monthly and can be located from a link on the front page of the Planning and Inspections Department's Web page at [www.cityofirving.org/planning-and-inspections](http://www.cityofirving.org/planning-and-inspections).

**Shop Irving Texas Web Site** – The Preservation and Redevelopment Board has launched its Shop Irving Texas Web site ([www.shopirvingtexas.com](http://www.shopirvingtexas.com)). Businesses located in the Heritage District and the surrounding downtown area have been contacted and encouraged to create a Web page on this site. There is no cost to the businesses to participate. The rollout of this new Web site is a joint effort of the Preservation and Redevelopment Board, Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce, Irving Downtown Association, and Irving Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Various workshops were held the week of April 7 to educate businesses about the new Web site. A joint letter from the mayor and the chairman of the Preservation and Redevelopment Board went to each business in the designated area.

**Tom Thumb Store Acquired** – Henry S. Miller has acquired the 55,395-square-foot Tom Thumb supermarket property in the Towne North Shopping Center at the southwest corner of Belt Line Road and Northgate Drive. Henry S. Miller already owns other property in the shopping center.

**Jimmy John's Gourmet Sub Shop Coming to Irving** – Jimmy John's Gourmet Sub Shop has purchased 33,000 square feet of land at the southeast corner of Interstate 635 and Belt Line Road. The Illinois-based franchise company features fresh-baked bread at each sandwich store.

**Greystone Communities Expands Lease** – Irving-based Greystone Communities Inc. has renewed and expanded its lease in the Urban Towers to 41,999 square feet. Greystone provides a broad array of technical and professional skills critical to successful client relationships, with a goal of protecting each client's investment and enhancing the value of each senior living community.

**Lehigh-Hanson Lease** – The North American headquarters for Lehigh-Hanson, the merged company of Lehigh Cement and Hanson Products, has selected 45,814 square feet in the Point at Las Colinas office building, 300 E. John Carpenter Freeway.

**ExxonMobil Honored by Women's Business Enterprise** – Irving-based ExxonMobil has been recognized by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council as a top corporation supporting women-owned businesses.

**Chamber's Annual Awards Banquet** – The Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce will hold its annual awards banquet April 29 at the Marriott DFW Airport North. Contact the chamber at [www.irvingchamber.com](http://www.irvingchamber.com) or (214) 217-8484 for more information.

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

**Police Department Survey** – Results of a recently conducted survey indicate that 92 percent of residents are satisfied with the services provided by the Irving Police Department. Respondents were residents who have reported crime and disorder to the Police Department. A Capstone Team from the University of Dallas created and conducted the survey.

**All About Kids** – About 1,200 children and their parents attended this year's All About Kids event at Georgia Farrow Recreation Center on March 29. The free event provided entertainment, music, food and public health education on proper nutrition and physical activity. The city's new public outreach efforts focus on reducing obesity in children. Fruits and low-fat snacks were distributed as an incentive for children and parents to buy and eat healthy food choices.

**Immunization Round Up** – Dozens of Irving families participated in the Immunization Round Up on April 5 at Kinkeade Early Childhood Center. Of the 261 residents immunized, 132 were children. The City of Irving collaborated with several partners to make the event a success: UT Southwestern Medical Center, Irving ISD, Baylor College of Dentistry, Dallas County Health and Human Services Department, AMERIGROUP, Blue Cross Blue Shield/Care Van, Parkland/Irving Health Center, and Irving's CHIP Coalition.

**Noteworthy Arrest** – The arrest by the Plano Police Department of a suspect in an ATM burglary has linked the suspect to approximately 20 sexual assaults in the Metroplex, including a homicide in Plano. Approximately three years ago, the Irving Police Department obtained DNA evidence while conducting a thorough investigation of an aggravated sexual assault case. This DNA evidence was matched to the suspect's DNA and charges will be filed on this defendant for aggravated sexual assault.

**Robbery Arrest** – Irving police arrested a robber on April 4 who has been linked to several robberies in Irving and the surrounding area. The arrest came after a woman was robbed at gunpoint in the parking lot of a North Irving apartment complex. After being struck with the gun, the victim was able to provide police with a partial license plate number. Officers recognized the license plate numbers from a robbery the week before and quickly located the vehicle a short distance away. Officers McPherson and Worley stopped the vehicle and took the suspect into custody without incident.

**Municipal Court Recognized** – The City of Irving has been named as the 2008 Traffic Safety Award recipient for the large volume court category, serving populations of 150,000 or more. The Texas Municipal Courts Education Center recognized the hard work and dedication of City of Irving employees from Police, Fire, Public Works, City Attorney's Office and Municipal Court for their outstanding contributions to the community. The City of Irving will be presented with the award May 22 at the Omni Mandalay Hotel at Las Colinas.

**Firefighters Status** – Capt. Tony Harvey and Lieut. Jeffrey Judd are attending the Fire Instructors Association national conference in Indianapolis. They will be studying several subjects in order to provide training to all members of the Fire Department. Daniel Kabetzke, Adam MacGorman, Nicholas Miller and David Schieck started their careers on April 14 with the Irving Fire Department. Kabetzke and MacGorman already are certified and will be working at a fire station soon. Miller and Schieck will start basic firefighter training at the Dallas Fire Academy. Three firefighters—Jeff Brown, Chuck Collins and Keith Martin—currently are attending paramedic school.

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

**Storytelling Around the World** – The East Branch Library, 440 S. Nursery Road, will present Storytelling Around the World at 1 p.m. April 26. The free program features African-American storytelling with Baba Kwasi. Storytelling Around the World is a program series designed to bring tales from different cultures to Irving. It is made possible by a grant from Texas Reads, a program administered by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission to promote reading and literacy within local communities.

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

**Town Hall Meeting** – More than 150 residents attended the City of Irving's Town Hall Meeting on April 8 at the Irving Arts Center. The presentation updated residents on key initiatives such as public safety, code enforcement, economic development, neighborhood improvements and corridor enhancements. Audience members also viewed a newly produced video that provided an update on the city's Strategic Plan. Department directors and city staff were on hand to help answer resident questions. Prior to the meeting, attendees visited informational displays staffed by city employees. The meeting aired live on Irving Community Television Network, and taped repeats are being shown.

**Citizen Inquiries** – The Corporate Communications Department responded to 525 inquiries during the months of January, February and March. There were 198 inquiries addressed through the inquiry system, 171 Web-based inquiries that were answered directly without departmental assistance, and 156 inquiries that were immediately addressed. The primary concerns consisted of outside storage, barking and loose dogs, trash and debris, and traffic control requests. Residents who initiate concerns are provided regular updates about how and when the issue is being addressed.

**'Open Line' Show** – Irving Community Television Network (ICTN) will feature the three mayoral candidates in the upcoming City Council election April 23 on "Open Line," a live talk show that airs at 7 p.m. Mayoral candidates Herbert Gears, Roland Jeter and Rigo Reza will speak with host Courtney Mason during the hour-long program, and residents are encouraged to call (972) 721-2300 to ask questions. "Open Line" will broadcast live on ICTN 1 (Time Warner Channel 16 and Verizon Channel 30) and online at [www.ictn.tv](http://www.ictn.tv). Repeats of the show will air on ICTN and will be available on the city Web site. The "Open Line" shows featuring candidates for Place 3 and Place 5 are available for viewing on the city Web site.

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

**New Valley Ranch Facility Recognized** – The Valley Ranch Library, 401 Cimarron Trail, has received national recognition in the April issue of *American Libraries*. The Valley Ranch Library is one of the 27 academic, public and school libraries featured in the publication's annual Library Design Showcase. The new facility, which opened in October, is a 26,000-square-foot building designed by the architectural firm PSA Dewberry.

**Washington Irving's 225<sup>th</sup> Big Birthday Bash** – The Valley Ranch Library, 401 Cimarron Trail, encourages families to come celebrate Washington Irving's birthday. Join in the fun with games, contests, entertainment and cake from 2 to 4 p.m. April 20.

**Genealogy Society Program** – Professional genealogist, author and lecturer John Wylie will be the guest speaker for the next genealogy program at 7 p.m. April 21 at the Irving Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd. Wylie will discuss the use of online databases and offer tips on saving money on genealogical books, software and maps. The program, which is free and open to the public, is cosponsored by the library and the Irving Genealogical Society.

**Spring Fling** – Approximately 5,000 people from Irving and surrounding communities attended the annual Spring Fling on April 5 at the Irving Arts Center. The daylong festival featured two performance stages, hands-on activities, art projects and a visual arts area. In addition, several Irving organizations participated in the festivities through volunteering or offering an activity in which children could participate: Irving Gymnastics, Lone Star Youth Orchestra, Irving Public Library, Entertainment Series of Irving, Irving Black Arts Council, Irving Art Association and the Irving City Sparklers. This year, Spring Fling was expanded from a three-hour to a nine-hour event. The Arts Center hopes to further expand the Spring Fling festival next year.

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

**GIS Software Upgrade** – Information Technology staff has upgraded a portion of the current GIS software, as well as moved the software to a new server. The software upgrade will improve quality, performance and scalability of the GIS maps for users, and the new server will speed up the display of the GIS maps. The testing of this upgrade is being conducted and is expected to be fully implemented by the end of May. The GIS software is being used by the city for the benefit of economic development, land use, tax parcels, and planning and analysis.

**Vision, Mission and Value Statements** – The City Manager's Office, in conjunction with the Strategic Resources and Budget Department, is holding employee meetings to unveil the city's new vision, mission and value statements. These sessions are designed to give employees an opportunity to ask questions and receive clarification on their respective roles in achieving the city's established goals. The Corporate Communications Department assisted with the development of the printed materials and produced a special video using employees to explain the new statements.

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

**Railroad Grade Crossing Reconstruction** – The railroad grade crossing reconstruction on East Pioneer Drive, east of Wildwood Drive, was completed on March 28. The railroad grade crossing on Wildwood, south of Union Bower Road, is next in line for reconstruction.

**Railroad Quiet Zone** – Irving notified all railroad users and the Texas Department of Transportation on March 26 regarding the railroad quiet zone project at MacArthur Boulevard and Rogers Road. The governmental agencies have 60 days in which to comment on the project. Implementation of the railroad quiet zone is anticipated in May, following the addition of new railroad gates and flashers at the crossing.

**Developing Future Water Resources** – Irving has entered into a contract with the Texas Water Development Board to perform a survey of Pat Mayse Lake. When completed, the current storage capacity of the lake will be determined. Irving has approved an agreement with the City of Paris to study and exclusively negotiate the potential sale of water from Pat Mayse Lake. The City of Paris owns the water rights to Pat Mayse Lake and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers owns and operates the lake.

**Computer Room Upgrade** – The Information Technology Department is upgrading the computer room at the Criminal Justice Center. The upgrade will consist of new electrical panels, new uninterruptible power supply, and new cables and wiring to replace aging equipment that has reached its maximum capacity. The project is expected to be completed by August.

**Wireless Access in City Facilities** – The final phase of implementing wireless Internet and network access in city facilities is being conducted by Information Technology. This project includes city recreation centers, Housing and Human Services, and the Irving Arts Center. The wireless access points will give employees wireless access to the city's network from their computer tablets or laptops. Access includes the Internet, e-mail, software applications and network drives. This project should be completed by August.