



City of Irving *City Manager's Report*

February 6, 2008

Strategic Goal No. 2: Vibrant Neighborhoods

Broken Windows Workshop – Code Enforcement hosted a Broken Windows Workshop on Jan. 26. Drew Diamond facilitated an overview of the Broken Windows Theory, demonstrating how Code Enforcement violations in a neighborhood are directly related to crime. He also conducted a problem-solving exercise using the SARA (Scan/Analyze/Respond/Assess) Model to help attendees learn to solve problems in a quick and easy collaborative fashion. Approximately 50 employees were in attendance including representatives from the following departments: Code Enforcement, Police, Fire, City Attorney's Office, Library, Housing and Human Services, Contract Administration, Planning and Inspections, and Solid Waste Services. Building and Standards Commission members attended as well.

Neighborhood Roundtable – The first Neighborhood Roundtable of the year will be held at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 26 at City Hall, 825 W. Irving Blvd., in the First Floor Council Conference Room. Residents will learn how the city is working to help reduce crime and increase its presence in Irving neighborhoods through the joining of the Code Enforcement and Police departments. Participants also will be provided with a safety update and will have an opportunity to ask questions. The quarterly Neighborhood Roundtables, hosted by the Corporate Communications Department, allow neighborhood association officers to learn about city initiatives and what other residents are doing to enhance their neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Grants – City staff from Housing and Human Services, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Library, and Code Enforcement are lending their expertise to the Corporate Communications Department on Feb. 15 to help review applications for neighborhood grants. The Community Partnership Fund provides grants between \$250 and \$1,500 to neighborhood groups annually. The fund supports projects that foster a spirit of community and renew the concept of what it means to be a good neighbor.

Strategic Goal No. 3: Economic Development

Informational Meeting for Olde Towne Project – Irving residents and business owners are invited to attend an informational meeting about the Olde Towne project planned for the downtown area. The meeting is set for 9 a.m. Feb. 8 at Receptions on the Main, 109 S. Main St. A presentation by developer Delbert McDougal of McDougal Companies will update the public on the redevelopment plan for the area. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions following the presentation.

Parker Group Locating in Irving – Parker Group, an industry-leading company in the healthcare services field, has leased 65,796 square feet in the Urban Towers for its corporate headquarters. Parker Group consists of a third-party administration company, a proprietary PPO network, a utilization review company, a technology services company and, most recently, an organization that provides primary care medical services at the workplace.

Anheuser-Busch Consolidating in Las Colinas – Anheuser-Busch Inc. has signed a 12,242-square-foot lease at Las Colinas Tower II and will take possession of the space in March. This will serve as a new regional headquarters for the company. Approximately 40 personnel will relocate from Houston and St. Louis to the North Texas region.

Irving Unemployment Rates – Texas' unemployment rate rose from 4.2 percent to 4.5 percent in December despite the addition of 18,600 jobs. Irving's unemployment rate was 3.8 percent, up from 3.7 percent in November. It is about the average rate of unemployment experienced during 2007.

State of the City Event – Mayor Herbert Gears presented his State of the City Address on Jan. 29 to a sold-out crowd of more than 600 residents and business leaders. The outlook for Irving is extremely positive: crime is at its lowest recorded rate, more than \$4 billion of new transit-oriented development is moving forward, the city has four finalists for the Best Real Estate Deals of 2007, the Best Economic Coup of 2007 was RIM's relocation of its U.S. headquarters to Irving, and North Lake College is opening a new campus in South Irving. The annual event is hosted by the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce.

Strategic Goal No. 4: Safe and Secure City

Public Input Meeting on Dog Park – Irving residents are invited to attend a public input meeting at 6 p.m. Feb. 11 regarding the design and development of a dog park. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting at City Hall, 825 W. Irving Blvd., in the First Floor Council Conference Room. The city has designated \$325,000 for the development of a dog park to be built at the site of the new animal shelter planned for Valley View Lane, between Northgate Drive and Walnut Hill Lane. All interested residents are encouraged to attend to review and provide comments on the proposed plans. The dog park is projected to be ready for use by summer 2009 in conjunction with the opening of the new animal shelter.

Irving Citizens' Police Academy – The Police Department will begin its next Citizens' Police Academy on March 11. Irving Citizens' Police Academy is an educational program designed to provide the public with a working knowledge of the Police Department's personnel and policies. Program details are available at www.irvingpd.com. The class has limited seating and those interested are encouraged to submit applications as soon as possible.

Apartment Disorder Operation – In the continuing effort to reduce crime and disorder occurring in and around apartment complexes, the Police Department conducted a disorder operation in the areas of Nursery Road, Sixth Street and Estrada Parkway on Jan. 19. The operation resulted in 107 total contacts, 24 arrests and 22 citations issued.

Blood Drive – The Police Department will host a blood drive for Carter Blood Care from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 15 in the Patrol Briefing Room of the Criminal Justice Center, 305 N. O'Connor Road.

Employees Attend Firefighting School – The Fire Department has three new members who began firefighting school on Feb. 4. Jason Bates, Sven Haterius and Steven Saffel will complete a rigorous basic firefighter course, as well as a five-week EMT school prior to being assigned to a fire station.

Medical Studies – Irving paramedics are participating in two medical studies along with hospitals and EMS providers nationwide. The studies are designed to look at patient care in the field and to follow patient outcomes based on patient care provided by paramedics.

Animal Services Volunteer Class – Irving Animal Services conducted another volunteer class in January and now has five new graduates, including the first junior volunteer. Trained volunteers assist the shelter in finding good homes for adoptable animals. Irving Animal Services hosts a volunteer training class the second Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon. Contact Animal Services at (972) 721-2256 for registration information.

Tethering Ordinance Presentation – Fred Sanderson, animal services manager, gave a presentation about Irving's new tethering ordinance for the Texas Animal Shelter Coalition in Lewisville. Nearly 50 members representing 20 animal welfare organizations were present. There has been much interest and many questions from area cities since Irving adopted its tethering ordinance in November.

Strategic Goal No. 5: Diversity

Storytelling Around the World – The Storytelling Around the World program continues in February with two free programs featuring African-American storytelling. The Southwest Branch Library, 2216 W. Shady Grove Road, will showcase the storytelling skills of Esther Malone at 4:30 p.m. Feb. 15, and the Valley Ranch Library, 401 Cimarron Trail, will feature Melody Bell at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 21. Storytelling Around the World is a program series designed to bring tales from different cultures to Irving children. 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.

Reaching Our Spanish-Speaking Audiences (ROSA) Workshop – Thirteen Irving Public Library managers and supervisors attended the ROSA workshop, a professional development program provided by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and Webjunction's Spanish Language Outreach Program on Jan. 22 at the Irving Central Library Auditorium. This professional development program equips library staff with knowledge and resources to reach out to community Spanish speakers and increase their access to technology.

DCET Conference – The City of Irving is co-sponsoring a Youth in Crisis Spanish Conference at 9 a.m. Feb. 16 at Irving Bible Church, 2435 Kinwest Parkway. Youth in Crisis is a nonprofit program that provides guidance to youth and families to prevent family violence, and drug and alcohol addiction. The event will feature Spanish author and speaker Carlos Cuauhtémoc Sánchez and bilingual musician Tony Melendez. Advance tickets are \$25 for adults and children ages 10 and older. Tickets will cost \$30 at the door. For more information, call (972) 669-5031 or (972) 669-5036 (Spanish).

Strategic Goal No. 6: Effective Communications

Downloadable Audio Books – The Irving Public Library now offers a wide selection of digital audio books, consisting of popular titles, classics, non-fiction, children and teen titles, for tech-savvy customers. With a valid library card, customers can check out and download titles to a personal PC, transfer to an MP3 player, and burn many titles to CD. The service is free, easy-to-use, and available anytime, anywhere. Call (972) 721-2606 to learn more or visit www.cityofirving.org/library.

Business Exchange Days – Mayor Herbert Gears, Councilman Rick Stopfer and 19 city employees participated in this year's Business Exchange Day. A cooperative effort of the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce and the Irving ISD, Business Exchange Day allows teachers to select topics specific to their classes and have speakers from the world of business, government and education address those topics. Representing 12 city departments, the following employees spoke to classes at The Academy of Irving ISD, MacArthur High School and Irving High School: Charles Anderson (City Attorney's Office), Laura Anderson (City Attorney's Office), Rodney Bergeron (Police), James Fairbairn (Police), Homer Garza (Information Technology), Maura Gast (ICVB), James Hallum (Police), Jan Hart (Library), David Leininger (City Manager's Office), David Mallette (Inspections), Mario Molina (Fire), Les Moore (Police), Clark Nethers (Police), Diana Soto (Municipal Court), Kristin Spivey (Police), David Springob (Public Works), Cathy Whiteman (Corporate Communications), Scott Witt (Police), and Fran Witte (Solid Waste Services). In addition, the Fire Department conducted 32 programs in Irving ISD schools during the month of January for a total attendance of 279 students.

Web Site Updates – Information Technology and Corporate Communications have implemented the first phase of the video on demand project, which included a Web page that contains 60 high-end digital media files focusing on the city's eight key focus areas. New encoder hardware also has enhanced the Webcast of ICTN Channels 1 and 2, which has resulted in uninterrupted Internet broadcasts. The third ICTN channel will be added to stream media in the near future.

IT Training User Forum – Information Technology will offer its first Training User Forum for city staff on Feb. 28. The input received from the forum will help IT assess the type of computer and software training that needs to be offered for employees. Discussion topics, which focus on customer service, will include the value of existing classes, what additional classes are needed, why certain classes are not offered, and other topics. This user forum is open to all city employees.

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

Bear Creek Freedom Settlement Museum – The City of Irving will open the Bear Creek Freedom Settlement Museum at the Jackie Townsell Bear Creek Heritage Center from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Feb. 26 in celebration of Black History Month. The newly renovated Bear Creek Masonic Lodge #263 is the third addition to the center and completes the final phase of the museums at Bear Creek. The addition continues the story of the Bear Creek Community, the state of Texas, and conveys African-American history on the national level. The center is located at 3925 Jackson St.

Lady Mavericks Wheelchair Basketball Tournament – Cimarron Park Recreation Center will host the Lady Mavericks Basketball Tournament on Feb. 9-10. The tournament will feature four games each day. Teams are members of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association. One of the stars participating is Lorraine Gonzales, a member of the U.S. Paralympic Women's Wheelchair Basketball team.

I Love Karaoke – The East Branch Library, 440 S. Nursery Road, invites teens ages 13-19 to try out their vocal skills at the I Love Karaoke Valentine's program at 5 p.m. Feb. 11. For more information, call (972) 721-3722.

Make a Pop-Up Card – Children ages 6-12 are encouraged to get out of the cold with a cup of cocoa and make a pop-up card craft at 2 p.m. Feb. 16 at the Northwest Branch Library, 2928 N. Belt Line Road. For more information, call (972) 721-2691.

Tea & Talk – Every month book fans gather on the second Thursday of the month at the Irving Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd., for tea and to discuss a variety of literature. February's discussion will be held at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 14, and will explore African-American themes through the titles "The Watsons Go to Birmingham" by Christopher Paul Curtis and "The Measure of a Man" by Sidney Poitier.

Father Daughter Valentine's Day Dance – Mustang Park Recreation Center will host the annual Father Daughter Valentine's Day Dance from 7 to 9 p.m. Feb. 8. The event is a dress-up affair for fathers and their daughters ages 5-13. The special evening will consist of dancing, dessert, photos, gift bags for girls, games and prizes.

New Exhibits at the Irving Arts Center – The following exhibits are now on display at the Irving Arts Center: "The Forgotten Soldier: The Perils, The Triumphs, The Legacy"; "Humberto Saenz: The Reel"; and "Robert Sabuda: Travels in Time and Space." The exhibits are free to the public. "The Forgotten Soldier," in the Main Gallery, features local and regional artists including Larry Alexander, Burl Washington and leather craftsman Arthur Porter of Red Horse Chaps. "Humberto Saenz," in the Focus Gallery, features the original works of Saenz, a graduate student at the University of Dallas. Saenz's pieces reflect Mexican-American culture and family. "Robert Sabuda," in the Dupree Lobby, showcases the designs and production techniques used by Sabuda, the nation's premier designer/illustrator of children's pop-up books.

Strategic Goal No. 8: Sound Governance

On-the-Spot Awards – The following city employees received On-the-Spot Awards from City Manager Tommy Gonzalez in January in recognition of exceptional customer service or work beyond their normal job responsibilities: Ken Bloom (Planning and Inspections), Bob Chapman (Public Works/Engineering), Chris Collier (Public Works/Engineering), Brad Duff (Financial Services), Larry Frassinelli (Public Works/Engineering), Marivi Gambini (City Attorney's Office), Paul Gooch (City Manager's Office), Rick Hose (Code Enforcement), Gary Hurtado (Public Works), Kathleen Mullins Jost (Public Works/Traffic), Steve Junker (Police), David Klapp (Public Works/Water Utilities), Steve Martin (Public Works/Traffic), Kris Olsen (Public Works/Water Utilities), Steve Reed (Planning and Inspections), Joseph Soto (Animal Services), Casey Tate (Parks and Recreation), Dan Vedral (Public Works/Traffic), Mike Walter (Public Works/Engineering), Sheba Ward (Planning and Inspections), and the entire Irving Police Department staff (for lowest recorded crime rate in Irving's history).

Resident Survey – The City of Irving is distributing a survey to receive resident input regarding city services to nearly 15,000 randomly selected households. Feedback from residents provides the city administration with the necessary tools to improve the accountability of city government, assist the City Council and management in setting budgetary priorities, and improve the delivery of services. The findings also will be used to evaluate current and proposed programs. The survey will ask questions about such functional areas as police, fire/ambulance, parks and recreation, library services, the Irving Arts Center, streets and transportation, code enforcement, employee customer service and communications. Residents who do not receive a survey, but wish to provide their input, can complete the survey online at www.cityofirving.org or call (972) 721-4965 to request a paper copy.

Executive Leadership Forum – Strategic Resources and Budget will host the second quarter forum for the city's senior management team on Feb. 13 at the Irving Arts Center. The workshop topic will be Twelve O'clock High, and will provide attendees an opportunity to learn more about leadership, motivation, performance and organizational readiness levels.

Strategic Goal No. 9: Infrastructure Network

Air Handlers – The installation of 5-ton air handlers has been completed at Senter Park East. The entire installation was handled in-house by staff electricians and HVAC mechanics. The new units, which have a higher energy efficiency rating, replaced older models that could not be repaired. In addition, two commercial thermostats were installed to better control and regulate the temperature in the facility.

O'Connor Road Reconstruction Project – The purchase and removal of 10 houses for the expansion of O'Connor Road, from State Highway 183 to Rochelle Boulevard, have been completed. The cost to purchase the houses totaled \$989,491, which included relocation expenses for the previous owners. The cost was less than the initial \$1.25 million estimate. Rather than demolishing the houses, they were sold and moved to locations outside of Irving at a cost savings of \$200,000. This part of the project was completed under budget and on time. Construction is set to begin in early 2009.

Strategic Goal No. 10: Environmentally Sustainable Community

U.S. Conference of Mayors – The City of Irving has received first place in the U.S. Conference of Mayors fourth annual Cans for Cash: City Recycling Challenge. Solid Waste Services, in partnership with Keep Irving Beautiful (KIB), applied under the category of Most Innovative Idea – Partnership with Local KAB Affiliate. The City of Irving will receive \$5,000 and KIB will receive \$2,500. Throughout the month of October, the city joined with the Dallas Cowboy Football Club and Irving Independent School District to collect the cans. Along with the cans provided by residents at the drop-off recycling centers, 126,840 cans were collected and recycled. Solid Waste Services is working with the U.S. Conference of Mayors to schedule a formal presentation of the plaque and check to the City Council.

Green Initiatives – Solid Waste Services has been “green” for many years and has created and sustained many environmental programs. One of these programs includes the collection and reuse of used motor oil as a heating source in the maintenance building at the Hunter Ferrell Landfill. The city received a grant from the North Central Texas Council of Governments in 1997 for the acquisition of equipment, which converts recovered motor oil into heat. The system has been operational since 1997, saving the city energy costs in heating the maintenance building at the landfill during the winter months, as well as efficiently diverting gallons of spent motor oil.

KIB Grants – Keep Irving Beautiful has received two grants that will be directed at recycling: a \$10,000 grant from Anheuser-Busch, which will focus on recycling in multifamily communities, and a \$5,000 award from the Embrey Foundation of Dallas to promote recycling in schools. The funding will be used to provide \$1,000 “Green Principal Awards” to the most improved campus program (per capita) at the high school, middle school and elementary school levels. The overall winning school will receive up to \$1,500 to purchase, repair or replace a school mascot costume. This promotion augments efforts that have already increased recycling at schools by almost 900 percent in recent years.

President's Circle Award – For the fifth consecutive year, Keep Irving Beautiful has received the President's Circle Award from Keep America Beautiful (KAB). The award is the highest recognition to local affiliate programs that consistently and thoroughly follow KAB's best program management practices. The presentation was made at the organization's national conference in Washington, D.C. Keep Irving Beautiful focuses on changing the community-wide behavior that brings about unwanted environmental consequences.