

February 15, 2002

Re: **District 1 Neighborhood Roundtable Meeting (January 17, 2002)**
Response to Issues and Comments

Dear

The City Council and I were very pleased with the turnout at our community outreach meeting at Oak Point Recreation Center. We learned much from your comments and look forward to working with you to build a stronger city and a better quality of life. Following is a synopsis of the issues discussed as well as some additional information on each topic.

Traffic

As voiced at the meeting, some of the most important issues facing Plano today relate to traffic.

Congestion - Rapid growth has increased traffic congestion, and transportation improvements must be balanced between development and need. Traffic flow is being improved through new road construction, intersection improvements and signalization throughout the City.

At this time, the City has a program to install separate right turn lanes at the approaches to all major intersections.

The City uses criteria based on the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) to determine when a traffic signal is needed at a particular location. The criterion considers the amount of delay experienced by side street traffic, proximity of other signals, the speed of traffic on the road, and past reported traffic collisions. Intersections are routinely monitored and signals are installed when the criteria are met. These criteria were recently revised to allow more intersections to qualify for signalization.

A Traffic Engineer is specifically assigned to oversee the City's Neighborhood Traffic Management program. This program works with citizens and homeowner associations on specific traffic problems such as determining the need for traffic calming devices in areas. If you would like more information, please call the Engineering Department at (972) 941-7151.

The Transportation Division also has an ongoing program that retimes traffic signals in response to changing traffic volumes/patterns. Staff works with adjacent cities to foster uninterrupted traffic flow across city limit boundaries. Using state-of-the-art technology, 160 traffic signals are monitored throughout the city and timing plans are changed when needed to minimize vehicle stops and delay. Through use of traffic monitoring cameras and coordination with police patrols, quick and effective response to incidents involving disabled vehicles or traffic collisions is possible. At this time, however, Texas State law does not permit the use of cameras and photographs for the enforcement of red light violations. When and if this changes, the City will pursue this enforcement option.

By effectively responding to these variable traffic conditions, significant travel timesavings and improved air quality is attained.

Violations - It was also voiced that the City should continue to take a tough stance on traffic violations. I wish to assure you, City Council and the Police Department place traffic safety as a high priority. As such, the following initiatives have been implemented:

- ◆ **Two additional officers were assigned to the Traffic Unit in 2001.** - Motorcycle officers are extremely effective at traffic enforcement and the Department has a total of nine with the new additions.
- ◆ **Red Light Hotline** – Citizens can call directly to the Traffic Unit at (972) 941-LITE and report motorists running red lights. The Department will identify the registered owner of the vehicle and send them a letter outlining the complaint and explaining the program.
- ◆ **Red Light/Speeding Pledge Card** – The Department is educating citizens by asking them to read a short narrative describing the red light and speeding problems in our community and the consequences of these violations. Citizens are asked to sign a card pledging they will drive courteously and not violate traffic laws.
- ◆ **Warning Signs** – Red warning signs have been placed at the top 10 red light crash intersections in the city, indicating the number of red light citations issued at that particular intersection to date. Additional signs have been placed at all city limit sites. These signs are updated quarterly.
- ◆ **Red Light Enforcement Grant** – The Police Department has taken advantage of a state sponsored grant allowing officers to work in an overtime status enforcing signal light violations at the top 20 accident-prone intersections in Plano.
- ◆ **Commercial Vehicle (Rock Haulers/18 Wheelers) Inspections** – The Police Department currently has 12 officers certified as Department of Transportation Commercial Vehicle Inspectors. These officers are allowed to stop commercial

vehicles for the purpose of performing safety inspections in areas such as brakes, radar detectors, fire extinguishers and weight limits. Citations are issued when measures are not met. The Department strives to perform commercial vehicle inspection operations at least once per month, focusing on random major thoroughfares throughout the city.

- ◆ **Increased Fines** – Last year, the Plano Municipal Court raised the minimum fine for a red light violation from \$50 to \$100. Effective April 1, 2001, the fine for a red light violation in which an accident was involved was raised from \$100 to the state maximum of \$200. The fine for a minor driving under the influence of alcohol was raised from \$200 to \$500.

Zoning and Development Activity

Please be assured, the City of Plano is committed to protecting the rights of neighborhoods, as well as developers, to pursue their interests within the established legal framework of procedures and standards. Historically the City of Plano has been development friendly. Non-residential development helps fund city streets, water and sewer facilities, parks, police and fire stations, schools and other public improvements that citizens value as important to a good quality of life. However development-friendly does not equal lower standards or the waiving of requirements. City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission have adopted very stringent development policies. All projects are subject to the same high standards.

The City strives to inform neighborhoods of proposed development and provide the opportunity for neighborhoods to express their desires and concerns to public decision-making bodies. The City of Plano continues to encourage developers and neighborhoods to openly communicate and seek ways to ensure beneficial and compatible development.

Information regarding requested zoning changes within a particular area is sent to nearby homeowner associations. In addition, information on new zoning and development requests is placed on the City's Internet home page at www.planotx.org and Plano cable channels A-30 and B-58, and is also available in the public libraries. Although not required by state law, applicants for zoning cases in Plano must place a zoning sign on the property notifying the public of the pending zoning action. The City gives a small sign to the applicant for specific use permit requests. For larger tracts of land, the applicant must contract with a sign company to have a large wooden sign erected on the property. All of the signs give the Planning Department's phone number, (972) 941-7151, so that citizens may call in to get more information about the proposed zoning action.

The City sends written notices 20 days in advance of the public hearing for a zoning case, although state law only requires 10 days advance notice. The City elected to extend this time so that homeowner groups would have more time to learn the details of the case and meet with the property owners to discuss their concerns. The notices are sent to property owners within 200 feet of the affected property, as required by current state law. Notices are also sent to the presidents of homeowner associations that are within 1500 feet of any request for rezoning. The president of the Plano Homeowners Council receives a notice of all zoning cases that have been requested.

The following properties have land studies, preliminary site plans and/or final site plans approved or under construction in the District 1 area. Projects that have been approved generally mean development is imminent.

- ◆ **Staples (Retail Office Supply)** - East side of Central Expressway between Parker Road and Spring Creek. (Approved)
- ◆ **Wal-Mart Expansion** – Southwest corner of Central Expressway and Spring Creek. (Under Review)
- ◆ **Posado's (Restaurant)** – West side of Central Expressway between Parker and Spring Creek. (Approved)
- ◆ **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints** – West side of Los Rios, northwest of Plano East High School. (Approved)
- ◆ **Plano Transit Village, Phase 2** – Northeast corner of 14th Street and K. Mixed use – residential and retail. (Approved)
- ◆ **Bowman Middle School and Memorial Elementary School** – Site plan amendments. (Approved)

In addition to the above, the following zoning requests are pending at this time:

- ◆ **Southwest corner of Los Rios and 14th** – From Research Technology to Retail
- ◆ **Northwest corner of 14th and Dublin** – From Agricultural to Retail
- ◆ **Amend the Business Government District (old downtown)** - Parking standards.
- ◆ **Amend zoning for the north side of 14th street east of Los Rios** - To allow soccer fields in addition to the existing golf driving range, course and clubhouse.

Below I would like to address a couple of development-related questions submitted on comment cards during our meeting.

- ◆ **Northeast corner of Park and Los Rios** – This property is zoned Planned Development-13-Retail. This zoning designation permits a wide range of retail, service, restaurant and office uses. Retail zoning allows two-story buildings with a maximum height of 35 feet, however this planned development district restricts buildings to one story with a maximum height of 32 feet.
- ◆ **Pawnshops** – Section 211.0035 of the Texas Local Government Code mandates that cities must allow pawnshops in one of more zoning classifications, and that cities can not require pawnshops to obtain a specific use permit or other special permits. By Plano's Zoning Ordinance, pawnshops are permitted by right in the Business Government, Light Commercial, Central Business-1, Light Industrial-1, and Light Industrial-2 zoning districts.

I would like to add the City's Planning and Information Division is currently developing an implementation plan for the "City Center Plan". This is a study consolidating recommendations and proposals from previous plans and studies for the area bounded by Spring Creek, Avenue K, Plano Parkway and Central Expressway. City staff will be working with the Planning and Zoning Commission to determine actions required to implement major recommendations of the City Center Plan. Issues to be addressed include zoning and land use, streetscaping, revising the Parker Road DART Station study, and heritage preservation.

The City's Planning Division is also participating in a joint study with the Cities of Richardson and Carrollton to improve the productivity of vacant and underused retail centers and undeveloped and partially developed retail properties. This study will allow the three cities to share experiences and opportunities and develop recommendations for revitalization, redevelopment and conversion of properties to different uses where appropriate. The study will establish a process for evaluating individual sites and developing programs to address their specific conditions. Completion of the study is anticipated in June 2002.

Below is a list of various media and access information you may find useful in keeping abreast of future development activity in our city.

◆ **Publications**

Information is carried in the Friday edition of the Dallas Morning News, (Page 2 of the Plano Section, Plano City Briefs).

◆ **Cable TV**

Information on upcoming development and zoning cases are listed on Plano's cable channels - A30 and B58. Planning & Zoning Commission meetings are broadcast live every 1st and 3rd Monday of the month at 7 p.m. P & Z Worksessions are broadcasted live as well.

◆ **Public Library**

Information on upcoming development and zoning cases is available at all Plano public libraries.

◆ **Internet**

Again, the City of Plano's web site address is www.planotx.org. A list of new development applications and zoning applications can be found on the City's web page under the "Meetings/Agendas" section. Click on "Tentative Items for Future Meetings" to access this list. The list is available approximately two weeks before the cases are scheduled for the Planning & Zoning Commission agenda.

◆ **Training**

The Planning Department sponsors several classes throughout the year on zoning and development issues. These classes are specifically tailored for homeowner association representatives. If you would like more information regarding these classes, please contact the Planning Department, at (972) 941-7151.

Code Compliance

Currently, ten Property Standards Specialists are assigned to monitor the City of Plano. Specialists proactively inspect their assigned areas, as well as respond to citizen concerns relating to Zoning Code and Code of Ordinance violations. These codes and ordinances include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Parking on unimproved surfaces,
- ◆ Junked motor vehicles,
- ◆ Low tree limbs and branches,
- ◆ Trash and debris,
- ◆ High grass and weeds,
- ◆ Open storage of goods or materials,
- ◆ Home occupations,
- ◆ Non-Permitted Garage Sales,
- ◆ Substandard structures, and
- ◆ Fence maintenance.

When a concern is received by the Property Standards Department, the call is assigned to the appropriate specialist who then inspects the property within 2 business days. After the initial inspection is completed, the complainant will receive a follow-up status report from the property specialist. Callers may choose to remain anonymous if they wish.

I would also like to explain the process. When most violations are observed, the property owner and/or occupant are notified by mail. A notice of violation letter is issued, noting the violation and the timeframe in which the property owner should come into compliance. For high grass/weeds and trash/debris, only one annual notice is required. The property owner may not receive additional notifications prior to immediate abatement of the violation. If a property owner chooses not to comply with the request, the City may contract to have the work completed at the owner's expense and/or a notice to appear before municipal court may be issued.

To provide increased service levels, Property Standards Specialists are assigned to work one Saturday per month. Doing so provides the opportunity to witness activity that may not occur during regular business hours, such as non-permitted garage sales, parking on unimproved surfaces and illegal home occupation activity. As necessary, staff will also rearrange work schedules to monitor activity occurring outside regular business hours.

In addition to the above, a rental inspection program has been approved by City Council which will involve the hiring of an additional staff member that will focus on the inspection of rental properties. Due to current budget/hiring constraints this program has been placed on hold. However as budget restrictions are lifted, implementation of this program will resume.

For the time period October 1, 2001 to present, the City of Plano has issued 674 notices for vehicles parked on unimproved surfaces, 175 notices for junk vehicles, 141 notices for non-permitted garage sales and 292 notices for low tree limbs. If you have a concern to report, please contact the Property Standards Department at (972) 941-7124.

Infrastructure Construction, Repair and Maintenance

The City has an aggressive road construction/rehabilitation/maintenance program to keep roads and drainage systems operating at their optimum. Staff takes great effort to coordinate these projects (city crews, utilities, and private contractors) to not cause undue delay and congestion to motorists. Many projects are performed during non-commute traffic periods or during the night to minimize their impact on traffic. Staff also takes great effort in repairing reported potholes in a timely manner. The Street Division, since October 1, 2001, has responded to 96-service requests to patch potholes. All of these service requests were patched within 48 hours. Problems involving street/alley construction may be reported to the Public Works Department at 972-769-4140 (after hours call (972) 727-1623).

The following are current or upcoming improvements slated in or around District 1:

- ◆ **Reconstruction of 14th Street G Ave to K Ave** – Complete reconstruction along with drainage improvements.
- ◆ **Bellevue Subdivision Reconstruction** – Complete reconstruction of Hillside Dr, Meandering Way and 15th Street.
- ◆ **P Ave Parker Rd to Park Blvd** – Complete reconstruction along with drainage improvements.
- ◆ **Jupiter Rd Spring Creek Pkwy to Chaparral Rd** – Construction of two lanes of roadway.
- ◆ **Los Rios Blvd PESH to Kite Landing** – Construction of two lanes of roadway.
- ◆ **Parker Rd, Jupiter Rd, Park Blvd and Plano Pkwy** – Making street repairs to various pavement sections along each roadway.
- ◆ **Street Lighting Installation** – Installation of median street lighting on 14th Street from Los Rios to east City Limits and Los Rios Blvd from 14th St. to Plano Pkwy.

There were several specific infrastructure issues brought up during or after the roundtable meeting which I would like to address:

- ◆ **Williamsburg Alley** – The lower end of the alley was in a deteriorated condition and needed work. The construction of a section adversely affects the other sections. Therefore the decision was made to replace the entire alley at one time rather than do a section now and have to come back later to reconstruct the other portion.
- ◆ **Quality of Construction Projects** – Over the years the City has improved its requirements for construction practices such as requiring higher strength concrete and compacted backfill. These are monitored by qualified construction testing laboratories. The concrete is tested as it is placed to verify strength. There have been some instances where the concrete did not hold up. The City has followed up on these cases and taken steps to ensure the final project is of quality.

Unfortunately, barricading is an ongoing problem with just about every project. There are barricading standards but contractors do not always follow them to detail. The same goes for construction trash and clean-up. We agree improvement is needed in this area and the City will continue to work toward it.

- ◆ **Sidewalks in Douglass Community** – Several years ago the City surveyed the Douglass Community for placement of sidewalks. As there is limited right-of-way, easements would have to be acquired. Also, there are many improvements that would have to be removed to allow for sidewalks. Taking the above in consideration, the Douglass Community opted not to have sidewalks installed.
- ◆ **Pedestrian Bridge over U.S. 75** – There are sidewalks at each of the road crossings of U.S. 75. A pedestrian bridge has been discussed on occasions but the question of where and how it would collect pedestrian traffic is unresolved.

For additional information on the City of Plano's Capital Improvement Program, a new web page has been dedicated and features a status interactive map. This web page offers citizens information on street closures, status of CIP projects, and City contacts for each project. You can find this information at www.planogis.org.

Water Conservation Education

Water conservation was another important topic discussed during our meeting. I am please to state the City has implemented a new, comprehensive Water Conservation Education Program Plano that will expand over a five-year period. The education plan will start with two prongs:

- ◆ General education outreach to schools and citizens, including teacher training and a web site, and
- ◆ Irrigation efficiency surveys for city properties and other properties.

Parks

There were a few comments brought to my attention after our meeting that pertained to City parks. I would like to address the concerns below and also provide a general update on Parks Department activities in District 1.

- ◆ **Clean Waterways and Creeks** – Waterways and creeks collect trash and debris, particularly after heavy rains. Removal of the debris is extremely labor intensive. Park forces will clean selected areas during the non-growing season when the worker hours can be directed to issues other than grounds maintenance. An exceptional problem will also be addressed by City crews, but resources are not available to regularly patrol the creeks. During the Spring, when it rains often and the park crews are mowing, the City depends on volunteers to assist with the cleaning.
- ◆ **Volunteer Opportunities** – Adopt-a-Park and Adopt-a-Creek are programs that individuals or groups may participate in to help keep our park properties clean. There is also a major event usually held in early April called the Great American Clean Up, which is sponsored by the Keep Plano Beautiful Committee. For information on any of these programs, or to report a problem, citizens may call the Parks and Recreation Department at (972) 941-7263.
- ◆ **Willowcreek Park Maintenance** – Willowcreek Park receives the same level of maintenance as other neighborhood parks maintained by the City crews. For the past three years, the Parks Department has had difficulty filling labor positions due to the job market. At times, the maintenance districts have been without 1/3 of their worker hours during the growing season. As a result, park and median maintenance schedules have stretch beyond the normal bi-weekly rotations. Some contractual services were utilized to partially offset the labor shortages. The labor market has changed, but so has the economy. The Parks Department plans to return (improve) the maintenance levels at all parks to previous standards. This objective will depend on the availability of resources in 2002. As you will see in the next section, improvements are planned for Willowcreek this fall, which should provide a “facelift” to the park.
- ◆ **PISD’s Outdoor Learning Center** – The City shares responsibility for upkeep of the grounds at PISD’s Outdoor Learning Center and also has an arrangement to conduct after-school and weekend activities at the Center. However the Outdoor Learning Center is considered a “public school classroom facility” since PISD classes are conducted there throughout the week. As such, the Center falls under the policies and procedures of a public school building. For the safety and security of the students, the Center is not open to the general public. If a citizen would like to participate in City-hosted functions at the Center, they may do so by contacting the Parks and Recreation Department at (972) 941-7263 for a schedule of events.

Improvements planned for parks located in District 1 are as follows:

- ◆ **Pecan Hollow Golf Course** - Construction of a new clubhouse will begin in January. The project is expected to be complete in 12 months.
- ◆ **Haggard Park** - Plans for renovation and improvements to Haggard Park are being designed at this time. Construction is expected to begin in late summer of 2002 and be complete in the late spring or early summer of 2003.
- ◆ **Shawnee Park** - Major improvements are being designed at this time. Improvements will include the addition of a park entrance on Parker Road, expansion of the pond, additional lighting, additional parking, new benches and picnic tables and associated improvements. Construction is expected to begin in late summer of 2002.
- ◆ **Willowcreek Park** - Design will start in February for additional improvements at Willowcreek Park in accordance with the neighborhood study report. Implementation of the improvements is expected to begin in the fall of 2002.
- ◆ **Oak Point Park and Nature Preserve** - Efforts continue to acquire the additional land needed along Rowlett Creek to facilitate the development of the major regional park in Northeast Plano. Land acquisitions are expected to be complete in 2002. Design of the park is tentatively expected to begin in late 2002 and construction is expected to begin in late 2003.
- ◆ **New Neighborhood Park - Timberbrook Estates Area** - Plans are in progress for a new neighborhood park at the intersection of Norwood Lane and Marsalis Lane. The park will include a playground, picnic shelter, sidewalks, sprinkler system and practice baseball and soccer area for neighborhood children. Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2002.
- ◆ **New Neighborhood Park - Stoney Hollow Area** - Plans are in progress for a new neighborhood park near the new elementary school at Oxbow Creek Lane and Coldwater Creek Lane. The park will include a playground, picnic shelter, sidewalks, sprinkler system and practice baseball and soccer area for neighborhood children. Construction is expected to begin in the summer of 2002.

Customer and Utility Services

On February 1, 2002, due to lack of customer activity between 5:00 and 5:50 p.m., the hours of the Customer and Utility Services Department reverted back to 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. However, the Customer and Utility Services Department strives to remain customer-friendly. Voice mail is not utilized on any of their main lines. Most requests are handled and responded to within the same business day. When this is not the case, the citizen is informed of the delay. It is also the goal of the Customer and Utility Services Department to respond to all written correspondence within three business days. Citizens may contact the Customer and Utility Services Department at (972) 941-7105 during business hours and at (972) 727-1623 for after hours service and assistance.

To further serve the citizens of Plano more efficiently, the Customer and Utility Services Department has initiated a new online internet application where customers can inquire and pay their utilities 24/7. This application can be reached by selecting the Customer & Utility Services Department through the City's main web site at www.planotx.org.

Public Safety

Traffic Violations – I would like to re-emphasize City Council's initiatives aimed at reducing red light and speeding violations in our City. City Council is dedicated to resolving these important safety concerns by supporting the Police Department with the following efforts:

- ◆ addition of two traffic officers last year;
- ◆ launching of a red light hotline;
- ◆ creation of a red light/speeding pledge card to educate citizens and gain compliance;
- ◆ installation of red light warning signs at the top 10 crash intersections and city limits;
- ◆ participation in state assisted red light enforcement grant; and
- ◆ certification of twelve officers as commercial vehicle inspectors.

School Zones – A request was made for larger print on school zone signs. Unfortunately going to a larger print would require an overall larger sign. The Transportation Engineering Division provides flashing school zone beacons to help drivers clearly understand when a school zone is active. If a citizen has a concern about a particular school zone, please contact the Transportation Engineering Division at (972) 941-7152 and they will be happy to investigate the location.

Neighborhood Police Officers – Several requests were received asking the Police Department to assign a Neighborhood Police Officer to their neighborhood. A copy of the current alignment of NPO areas is attached for your information.

Although the NPO Unit has had a positive impact on neighborhoods, the Police Department does not have the resources, nor was the program designed, for city-wide deployment. The current NPO Unit is composed of ten police officers and one sergeant. Six police officers are assigned to specific neighborhoods (primarily east of U.S. 75), two are assigned to patrol the parks throughout the City, and the remaining two are assigned to perform directed problem solving projects throughout the City such as illegal alcohol sales to minors and drag racing. The Police Department periodically realigns patrol assets when warranted, to ensure the most effective delivery of police service. However, any neighborhoods added to the NPO program will be those identified as having persistent problems with crime, disorder and code violations.

The purpose of the NPO Unit is to provide designated neighborhoods with the services of police officers that concentrate their efforts in accordance with the general philosophy of community-oriented and problem-oriented policing. The specific selection of a neighborhood for assignment of an NPO is based on a variety of factors such as crime trends, calls for service data, visual blight, and renovation/revitalizations needs. NPO's are assigned to a neighborhood on a semi-permanent basis and strive to become familiar with the community and its residents.

They provide citizens with a central source of assistance for both law enforcement and non-law enforcement type problems.

Although it is not possible to assign an NPO to every neighborhood in the City, every neighborhood does have a regularly assigned beat officer for each of the three patrol shifts. Residents can call the Police Department's non-emergency number at (972) 424-5678 and request a beat officer respond to discuss problems in their neighborhood at any time. Additionally, beat officers can attend homeowner association meetings, if scheduled in advance, to address residents' concerns. To invite a beat officer to attend a neighborhood meeting, please call the Police Department's non-emergency number and request Patrol Administration during business hours or the Watch Commander after hours.

Crime Watch – Another crime prevention tool available to you is participation in your neighborhood Crime Watch. A map of the active Crime Watch areas in District 1 is attached for your convenience. The Crime Prevention Unit of the Police Department is very active with Crime Watch groups. If you would like to join your neighborhood's program or would like to begin a Crime Watch program in your area, please contact the Crime Prevention Unit at (972) 941-2431. A Crime Prevention officer will be happy to assist you with any questions you may have.

Citizens Handicap Parking Patrol – On March 26, 2001, the Plano Police Department launched a new program to combat illegal handicap parking. The Citizens Handicap Parking Patrol is a cooperative effort between the citizens of Plano and the Plano Police Department, which allows trained volunteers to issue parking citations for handicap parking violations. The volunteers are provided citation books, identification signs for their vehicles, orange vests, and a camera prior to going on patrol. This program brings enforcement to those persons violating the law and helps ensure those in our city who are handicapped will have a place to park. The Plano Police Department will train and supervise those who wish to participate in the program. Should you be interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact Sergeant J. C. Randall at (972) 941-2483.

The city of Plano continues to be one of the safest cities in the state of Texas and the United States with populations over 100,000 in which to live. Since the 1990 census, the city of Plano has experienced a 70% increase in population. During this same period of time, major crime (homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, auto theft) have increased by only 18%. But more importantly with the explosive population growth, the rate of major crime per thousand citizens has actually decreased 28% since 1990. Most recently, Plano was ranked as one of the top 25 safest cities in the U.S. with population over 75,000.

Emergency Warning System – Information about the City of Plano Emergency Warning System is distributed to the community in many ways, including: City Briefs, monthly utility billing inserts, cable TV, and on the City of Plano web site www.planotx.org. The Public Safety Communications Department takes advantage of several community events to further educate the public about the warning system. These events include the Balloon Festival, homeowner associations meetings, and police and fire citizen academies. Should you have any questions regarding this system, please contact C. J. Howard, Fire Department Emergency Manager, at (972) 941-7604.

Emergency Preparedness – The City of Plano has a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan which is updated annually. As a result of the events of September 11th, we are developing an additional document to specifically address contingency planning/activities in the event that Plano should experience an act of terrorism. The City of Plano's capabilities to deal with terrorism today are as good as any other city in America and better than most. We have a liaison assigned to the FBI Command Post 24-hours-a-day. At this time we have no indication there is any threat to the City or our residents and will continue to monitor new information as it becomes available.

New Fire Station – Also of note in District 1 is a new fire station is planned to be built northeast of Jupiter and Parker, in conjunction with Oak Point Park and Nature Preserve.

Your City Council places public safety as a high priority and continues to allocate resources to this area during budgetary considerations to ensure we maintain a safe, secure environment for our community.

OTHER TOPICS OF CONCERN

Continued Community Outreach - City Council is continually seeking and implementing new ways to better connect with the citizens. Through working with Homeowner Associations, Council receives valuable input concerning issues specific to each neighborhood. The Neighborhood Roundtable meetings also serve as a means to focus on a portion of the City at a time, allowing residents and business owners in the targeted area to share their specific interests and concerns with Council and staff. A map and listing of the upcoming Neighborhood Roundtable meetings is attached.

Homeless and Mental Health Support – In general, the City looks to non-profit agencies to provide these types of services to our citizens. To date, no agency has made any sort of proposal for a homeless facility in Plano. The Samaritan Inn, located at 212 McMakin in McKinney, accepts homeless individuals and families. The Police Department often refers, and on occasion transports homeless persons to The Samaritan Inn.

The Police Department should be notified of mentally ill persons that pose a danger to themselves or others. The Department will detain and transport the individual to a nearby hospital in accordance with the provisions of mental commitment procedures. Mentally ill persons that do not pose a danger to themselves or others should be referred to the MHMR offices located at 3920 Alma Drive in Plano.

Village Creek Improvements - A question was asked concerning improvements planned for the Village Creek area. At this time under contract are improvements to Shawnee Park, landscaping on Parker Road and the purchase of neighborhood street sign toppers.

Exposed Cable – AT&T of Plano, Inc. is the holder of the franchise to provide cable television service in Plano. The company is required to bury cables where like utility equipment is underground. Should this not occur, citizens should notify the cable operator immediately. If cooperation is not received from the cable company, please contact the City of Plano Public Information Office at (972) 941-7315.

Mass Transportation Update

- ◆ **DART Rail** – Construction is well underway to develop the first light-rail line in Plano, parallel to, and just east of US 75. The crossing gates, the overhead electrical wires, the rock bed, the rail itself and all other components will be installed by the scheduled opening date of 2003.
- ◆ **190T Station** – The City of Plano has worked with DART to develop a station design that achieves a shared facility between the two cities of Plano and Richardson. Although the boarding platform is south of 190, the parking for the facility is located under the main lanes of 190 between the cities. Executive Drive will be extended south to provide direct access from Plano to the parking area. Construction on the station is scheduled to begin very soon. The station is expected to be operational in 2003.
- ◆ **Plano Transit Village** – Or East Side Village, had its first tenants occupy units in September, 2001. Construction is still being finalized on this joint-development project but it will soon be able to lease all 240 apartment units, as well as 15,000 square feet of commercial space. A second transit-oriented development project broke ground in October, 2001 about one block south of the first. Tentatively known as Amicus II, the project will be roughly the same size and character as the first project. This newest project is a result of a less formal role by the City in its development. Other similar projects are possible in the downtown area.

For information regarding the DART system plan or any of the points above, please contact Marcos Fernandez in the City's Engineering Department at (972) 941-5333.

Couple of Reminders:

Rabid Animal Case – Please be aware the Texas Department of Health confirmed a skunk killed by a dog on December 21 tested positive for rabies. The skunk was killed near Legacy and U.S. 75.

Bulky Waste Collection Week Changed – The Solid Waste Department has changed the scheduled Bulky Waste Collection Week from Week 1 to Week 4 for the 75074 zip code area.

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On behalf of City Council I would like to again thank you for taking part in the Neighborhood Roundtable session. It is only through feedback such as yours that we can continue to be the All-America City that attracted so many of us here.

Best regards,

Jeran Akers
Mayor

Attachments