



June 9, 2004

Re: **District 3 Neighborhood Roundtable Meeting (April 22, 2004)
Response to Issues and Comments**

Greetings:

I would like to thank you for your attendance at the District 3 Neighborhood Roundtable meeting held on April 22, 2004 at Carpenter Park Recreation Center. On behalf of City Council, we applaud your interest and involvement in our community. Much was learned from your comments, and we look forward to working with you in maintaining a strong city and excellent quality of life. The following is a synopsis of the issues discussed, as well as, some additional information on each topic.

Traffic Mobility and Safety

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

- **Citywide Traffic Safety** - Traffic safety continues to be a priority for Plano citizens. Over the past four years, safety has improved in all categories due to close collaboration between departments responsible for the design, operation, maintenance, and enforcement of roads. Safety-related programs are reviewed annually to ensure that the needs of changing demographics and traffic patterns throughout Plano are met.
- The City's Transportation Division oversees 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, 194 traffic signals are monitored throughout the City and timing plans are changed when needed to minimize vehicle stops and delay. This fall, staff will begin upgrading all traffic signals with new traffic control technology. The new equipment will increase the flow and safety of traffic by reducing even further the number of stops drivers make. Staff has also started using advanced technologies that are better at changing a traffic signal when a car is present. The equipment allows the signal to operate when road maintenance and other construction would cause the signal to fail. Through use of these advanced technologies, traffic monitoring cameras, and coordination with police patrols, quick and effective response to traffic collisions, significant travel-time savings, and improved air quality are attained.
- A concern voiced at the meeting was of street lighting, particularly at the Alma/Gannon intersection. There is an existing streetlight on the west side of Alma and Gannon. Median streetlights, as well as landscaping, are typically installed as a part of the widening of a street to six lanes. The Alma Drive widening is currently scheduled in Fiscal Year 2007/08.

Pat Evans
Mayor

Shep Stahel
Mayor Pro tem

Ken Lambert
Deputy Mayor Pro tem

Scott Johnson
Place 2

Phil Dyer
Place 3

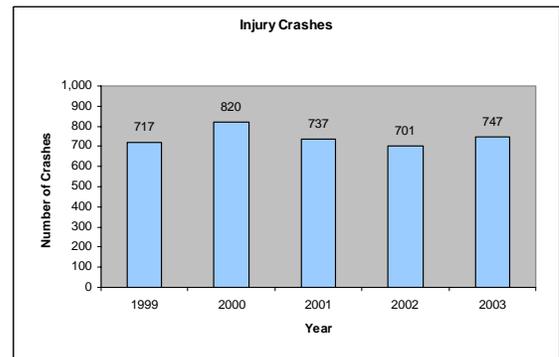
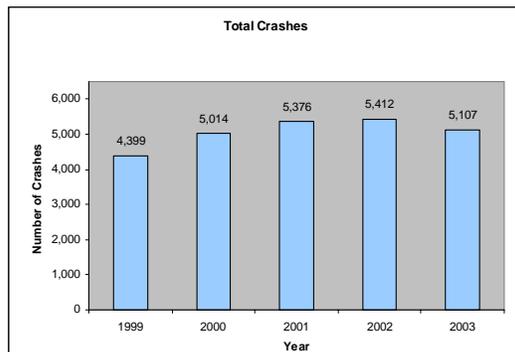
Sally Magnuson
Place 4

Steve Stovall
Place 5

Jean Callison
Place 7

Thomas H. Muehlenbeck
City Manager

- Another concern referenced was the lack of lights in the Beverly Elementary School zone. The existing school zone on Hedgcoxe Road is managed by the City of Allen. The request to install flashing lights in this zone has been forwarded to their Engineering Department for consideration. Should you require more information about this request, please contact City Traffic Engineer Stanton Foerster, P.E. by calling (972) 727-0178.
- Speeding in alleys is a concern raised at the meeting. The Alley Speed Bump Program manages speeding vehicles in neighborhood alleys by placing speed bumps after confirmation of neighborhood support and the prepayment of one-half the cost of the speed bump. In some cases, speed compliance can be improved by the placement of speed limit signs at key locations. These signs are placed at no direct cost to the impacted residents. For more information on this program, please contact the Transportation Engineering Division by calling (972) 941-7151.
- **Neighborhood Traffic Safety** – To address other specific neighborhood traffic safety problems, such as speeding vehicles or school zone safety, the City has implemented the Safe Streets Program. This program works with citizens and homeowner associations on specific traffic problems impacting their neighborhoods. If you would like more information regarding the Safe Streets Program, please call the Transportation Engineering Division / Engineering Department at (972) 941-7151. Problems with speeding vehicles can be reported directly to the Police Department's Traffic Enforcement Unit by calling (972) 208-8055 or by completing a Special Enforcement Request (SER) that is further explained on page 3 – Community Partnership.



Transit - Last year the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) system had over one million trips to and from Plano destinations. Although the level of ridership is down 8% this year, it is expected to increase as the regional economy continues to improve. To meet the public transit needs of Plano residents and business owners, the Transportation Division works with DART to evaluate bus route ridership, plan for new rail stations, and create effective senior citizen services. Your input and public meeting participation is encouraged in guiding the development of these services. More information about these activities can be obtained by calling the Plano Transportation Division at 972-941-7151 or visiting the DART web page at www.dart.org.

Traffic Enforcement - The highest public safety priority in the City of Plano is traffic safety. The Plano Police Department utilizes a three-pronged approach to addressing this problem: strict enforcement, education and awareness, and a partnership with the community.

- **Enforcement** - As of November 1, 2003, the Plano Police Department has issued 78,969 traffic citations, compared to 77,781 issued through October, 2002. Additionally, through October, a total of 24,192 citations were issued for speeding violations; and 4,311 citations were issued for

red light violations. As a result of our enforcement actions, the total number of collisions within the City of Plano has dropped more than 6% as compared to the same time period last year.

Since 2000, the Plano Police Department has participated in a Texas Department of Transportation STEP (Selective Traffic Enforcement Program) grant to increase enforcement efforts. This grant has allowed the Plano Police Department to increase its enforcement of red light violations by utilizing state funds to pay additional officers to work intersections throughout the City. Officers focused their enforcement efforts on the intersections with the highest rates of collisions. In November 2003, the Police Department began a new STEP grant that allows them to continue to focus on red light violations and will also allow them to increase the enforcement of speed limits throughout the City.

This past year, the Police Department also participated in the Texas Department of Transportation's "Click it or Ticket" campaign. The purpose of this campaign was to increase the use of safety belts. The campaign consisted of public service announcements and high intensity enforcement during the Memorial Day holiday period and the Thanksgiving holiday period.

- **Education and Awareness** – The Police Department Traffic Unit spearheads the efforts to increase the awareness of drivers in the City of Plano. The Traffic Unit conducts numerous seminars and classes regarding traffic safety. Additionally, the unit has developed an educational video titled "In a Blink of an Eye", which addresses the dangers of red light running. During the spring season of every year, the Traffic Unit partners with the high schools to educate students on the dangers of drinking and driving. Recently, two traffic officers became certified as Child Safety Seat Inspectors. These two officers now provide inspection and instruction of child safety seats to citizens. The Police Department also periodically distributes traffic safety information to Plano residents via their utility bills.
- **Community Partnership** – In order to maximize our responsiveness to the traffic safety problems of the City of Plano, we must create an atmosphere of cooperation with citizens. The Police Department actively seeks input of motorists who travel the streets of Plano through the use of their web site and a telephone reporting system. Motorists can report dangerous drivers and red light runners by calling (972) 941-LITE (5483), or by sending a message to the Police Department utilizing the department's web page (www.planopolice.org). Furthermore, citizens can report dangerous areas and request extra enforcement through the use of a Special Enforcement Request (SER). An SER can be completed by contacting the Traffic Unit at (972) 208-8055, through the web page at www.planopolice.org/ser.htm, or by stopping in at the main station at 909 14th Street, or the Joint Use Facility at 7501A Independence Parkway.

Red Light Cameras - The City Council and staff support the use of red light enforcement cameras as a tool to combat flagrant intersection violations. The utilization of cameras for enforcement purposes can be accomplished in two ways; as either a criminal offense, or a civil violation.

The Texas Attorney General has issued an opinion that permits cities to use cameras to identify red light violators. This may seem like a success, but it is not. Because red light violations are criminal offenses, the driver must be identified. We would need the violator's Texas driver's license photo to compare against the photo taken by the red light enforcement camera to make the required identification. Currently, the Texas Department of Public Safety may only release driver's license photos to other law enforcement agencies for felony offenses.

The Attorney General's Opinion also states that home rule cities such as Plano may not adopt a City Ordinance that makes red light violations a civil offense without enabling legislation from the Texas Legislature. If red light violations could be handled as civil offenses, the Police Department could send a citation to the registered owner after taking a photo of the vehicle's license plate. Attempts have failed in the last two legislative sessions to allow cities to adopt red light violations as civil

offenses. Absent this enabling legislation or access to driver's license photos for traffic offenses, it would not be feasible for us to move forward with red light enforcement cameras.

Currently, the City of Plano is evaluating an amendment added to SB1184 during the last legislative session as to whether or not it authorizes cities to begin civil enforcement actions.

Property Crime and Nuisance Crime

Property Crime - From time to time the City may experience unexpected spikes in the number of Burglary of Motor Vehicle offenses and other property crimes. When these spikes occur, the Patrol Division and the Criminal Investigation Division coordinate enforcement and surveillance efforts in an attempt to identify, apprehend, and deter these types of violations. Our Crime Analysis Unit identifies the time, day of the week, and locations most frequently victimized in order for us to deploy our resources more effectively. Strategies such as surveillance, baiting, bicycle patrol, and saturation patrol have proven to be effective. Additionally, we have found a large number of these offenses involve unsecured vehicles and property left in vehicles. Citizens can reduce their risk of being victimized by criminals by locking their vehicles and removing valuables from plain view.

The majority of residential burglaries in the City of Plano are the result of open garage doors. Often these offenses occur in broad day light while the owner is doing yard work or other chores. Because these are crimes of opportunity, they are easily prevented and deterred. The Police Department has taken efforts to educate citizens as to the risk of leaving property unattended in a vehicle, as well as leaving garage doors unsecured through the use of utility bill inserts. Additionally, officers patrolling alleys routinely contact residents who have left their garage doors open. Citizens interested in learning more about protecting themselves from criminal acts can contact the Crime Prevention Unit at (972) 941-2431 or (972) 208-8045.

Nuisance Crime - Offenses such as barking dogs, loud music, and parties impact neighborhoods and individuals' enjoyment of their homes. The Police Department is committed to ensuring all residents are free from disturbances that interfere with this enjoyment. In order for a police officer to take enforcement action, the officer must witness the offense or obtain information from a witness that observed the violation. The witness to the offense may be required to testify in court. Also, citizens can contact the Municipal Court directly and swear out a complaint against individuals for committing nuisance violations. When reporting a nuisance violation, the Police Department encourages callers to provide the location of the offender as well as their own name, address, and phone number.

Animal Services has produced a pamphlet in response to the concern of a barking dog nuisance, which outlines responsibilities of pet ownership and helpful hints for addressing barking dogs. These pamphlets are being distributed to HOAs, at special events, and as a letter insert to homes that have been identified with concern of barking dogs. You can obtain a copy of this pamphlet by calling (972) 964-4371.

Solicitation and Handbill Distribution - Neighborhood solicitation was another issue identified at the meeting. Solicitation and handbill distribution on private property is governed by Plano City Ordinance 11-145. By ordinance, (a) "It shall be unlawful for any person to conduct commercial solicitation upon residential property within the City, without first obtaining a written permit as prescribed..." Further, Ordinance Section (d) states, "It shall be unlawful for any person to distribute or cause to be distributed...any handbill upon any residential property if requested by anyone thereon not to do so, or if there is placed on such premises in a conspicuous place upon or near the main entrance to the residence, a weatherproof card, not less than three inches (3") by 4 inches (4") in size bearing the words "No Trespassing", "No Peddlers", "No Advertisement", "No Solicitation", "No Handbills", or any similar notice indicating in any manner that the occupants of such premises do not desire to have any such handbills left upon their premise. The letters on such cards shall not be less than two-thirds (2/3) of an inch in height."

The Police Department will respond to solicitation violations. It is incumbent on the resident to get a good description of the solicitor for identification purpose. If the solicitor is found in the area, he/she may be cited for not having the required permit, or if identified by the resident for violation of the solicitation ordinance. You will find a 'Common Questions and Answers on Solicitation' pamphlet attached for your use.

Crime Watch – Another crime prevention tool available to you is participation in your neighborhood Crime Watch Program. The Crime Prevention Unit of the Police Department is very active with these 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. Further information related to the Police Department can be found on our website: www.PlanoPolice.org.

School Crossing Guards – Plano Independent School District offers special programs during the summer; however, the City of Plano does not participate in providing crossing guards for these programs. The City and PISD have agreed to provide crossing guards for the regular school calendar and school hours. Special summer programs are not included in our agreement.

For regular programs, any resident can request a guard or school zone through the school principal. Those requests are then reviewed by a joint City/PISD Safety Committee for consideration. If approved, the City would then add the zone or a new guard.

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 of Plano has always sought a balance between the interests of homeowners and the business community. Although state and federal legislation and court precedents define many of the practices in our planning policies and regulations, the Planning Department is committed to keep all citizens informed of potential development projects within the City. For example, notices for rezoning cases are mailed 15 days prior to the first hearing instead of the 10 days required by state law, and homeowners associations (those registered with the City) within 1500 feet of rezoning cases receive written notice by mail. A complete list of all rezoning cases, site plans and plats submitted for review are posted on the Planning Department page of the City's web site (www.planoplanning.org). Homeowner comments are welcome and encouraged in the development review process to help us achieve a well-developed community.

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.

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 to get more information about the proposed zoning action.

In addition, information on new zoning and development requests is placed on the City's Internet home page at www.planotx.org, Plano cable channels A-30 and B-58, and is available in the public libraries. The City also 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 period 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 notice of all zoning cases that have been requested.

We are also updating the Land Use and Transportation Elements of the Comprehensive Plan, which could affect this area, as well as the rest of Plano. The Transition and Revitalization Commission recently completed the "Plano at Maturity" report, which makes recommendations for addressing issues that will face the City as it moves from a fast growth mode to a mature city. The City Council recently adopted an implementation plan to address vacant and/or undeveloped retail properties throughout the city. The implementation plan emphasizes removing regulatory barriers to redevelopment and developing a good understanding of the issues that affect the revitalization of older retail centers.

The Comprehensive Plan forms the basis for preparing other critical documents such as the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, and the Capital Improvements Program. These documents, in turn, contribute to the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Ordinance defines the land uses that are appropriate for various locations in Plano and the development standards that apply to them. The Subdivision Ordinance defines standards for utilities, drainage, streets, and alleys that are necessary to prepare a tract of land for development. The Capital Improvements Program establishes a schedule for providing the required public facilities and infrastructure to serve the community's needs and expectations.

- **Zoning (undeveloped/underdeveloped property)** – With any rapidly growing city, there are going to be "left-over" tracts of land that are not part of the first wave of development. Among the reasons that these infill tracts are undeveloped or underdeveloped are:
 - The owner is **not** interested in developing the property or there are multiple owners with mixed opinions about how and when to develop it.
 - The property may be zoned for retail and office and the market area is saturated with those types of uses.
 - The property may be difficult to develop because of size, shape, slope, drainage issues, or other problems impacting its suitability for certain uses.
- **Aging Infrastructure/Maturity (vacant buildings)** – With any fast-growing city, there is always the potential that a major portion of its infrastructure, particularly streets, will require repair or replacement in the same timeframe. With this in mind, Plano has undertaken an aggressive program of replacing and upgrading streets and utilities in a systematic fashion. Vacant buildings around Plano are primarily owned by the private sector. In many cases, the vacancies have resulted from changing retail trends and market saturation. The Cities of Carrollton, Richardson, and Plano recently completed a study of ways to increase the productivity of retail properties. As a first step in the implementation phase of this program, the Planning and Zoning Commission is currently considering changes to the "Retail" zoning district of the Zoning Ordinance that would increase its land use flexibility so that patio homes, townhouses, duplexes and retirement housing could become alternative uses for such properties.
- **Maturity versus "Boom"** – Plano's Comprehensive Plan has emphasized methodologies for dealing with rapid growth, but it has also envisioned a mature city that would evolve from the developmental process. In addition to the Comprehensive Plan, the City has prepared plans and

other documents that relate directly to the city's transition from a growing to a maturing city. These include:

1. Ten Big Ideas for Eastern Plano;
2. The City Center Plan, and
3. The Plano at Maturity Report.

The Plano at Maturity Report, recently completed by the Transition and Revitalization Commission (TRC), addresses nine major issues that will require attention as Plano matures:

1. Changing demographics
2. Aging infrastructure
3. Financial resources availability
4. Pursuing redevelopment/revitalization/infill opportunities
5. Maintaining accessibility and accommodating multiple forms of transportation
6. Maintaining a strong educational system
7. Enhancing air and water quality
8. Enhancing aesthetics and the "visible" environment
9. Perceptions and concerns relating to safety and security

TRC is now in the process of developing a plan for implementing the critical recommendations of this report. It should be completed this summer.

Public Information

Below is a list of various media and access information you may find useful in contacting staff and keeping abreast of activities in our City.

- **Internet** - As stated previously, the City of Plano web site address is www.planotx.org. To reach a particular staff member by phone, you may go directly to www.planotx.org/topic.asp. For City staff email addresses, go directly to www.planotx.org/ctystaff.html. The City web site provides valuable information about the services of each department. Functions of the City's site include viewing City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission agendas, submitting code enforcement concerns, and making online water bill payments.
- **Publications** - Municipal information can be found on a daily basis at www.planocitynews.com. This is the City's new initiative to provide more timely information in an electronic format.
- **Cable TV** - Information regarding upcoming City activities and events is broadcasted on Plano's cable channels - A30 and B58.
- **Public Library** - Information on upcoming City Council Meetings, as well as Planning and Zoning cases, is available at all Plano public libraries.
- **Water Bill Inserts** - Another method the City uses to inform citizens of community events, activities, and resources is through water bill inserts.
- **Current Studies** - It was suggested during one of our previous Roundtables that the City provide information on our web site regarding current studies in which we are involved. This excellent suggestion has been implemented. You may find the link entitled *Current On-Going Studies* on the front page of our web site.
- **Email Newsletters** - The City of Plano is currently offering several auto subscriptions to newsletters which interested citizens can subscribe to via email. You may view and subscribe to these newsletters at www.planotx.org/email_lists.html.

Code Compliance

Specialists proactively inspect their assigned areas, as well as respond to citizen concerns relating to Zoning Ordinance and City Code. These inspections are performed for owner and tenant occupied properties. Most of Property Standards' informational brochures distributed to residents are printed in both English and Spanish to ensure information concerning the most common code violations, requirements, and regulations reach the vast majority of our citizens. Protecting the health, safety, and welfare of citizens through adherence to City codes and ordinances, and maintaining property values to prevent neighborhood decline are the primary goals of the Property Standards Department. During the current season (from March through September), the most common violation notices address high grass/weeds, trash/debris, tree limbs/branches, and fence maintenance violations. Code and Ordinance related issues that Property Standards respond to include, but are not limited to:

- Parking on unimproved surfaces,
- Junked motor vehicles on private property,
- Low tree limbs and branches,
- Trash and debris,
- Numerous residents/overcrowding,
- High grass and weeds,
- Open storage of goods or materials,
- Home occupation regulations,
- Non-permitted garage sales,
- Substandard structures, and
- Fence maintenance.

As the City matures, concerns regarding maintenance of all properties, including vacant and rental properties, become paramount. Focus on regular and thorough inspections of aging apartment complexes and vacant retail developments has increased to effectively address safety concerns and general upkeep of these areas. Occupancy limitations are determined by calculating required floor area for each occupant. Due to the need to obtain access for interior inspections and verifying the actual number of tenants, it is often a difficult and complex method to determine whether a property meets compliance. A review of other ways to better regulate and respond to occupancy concerns is being studied.

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

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. In these instances, the property owner may not receive additional notifications prior to immediate abatement of subsequent violations. 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 violation of the City's home occupation regulations. As necessary, staff will also rearrange work schedules to monitor activity occurring outside regular business hours.

Property Standards also works jointly with other City departments including Police, Solid Waste, Planning, and Building Inspections to address property maintenance. A database is being created to regularly monitor closed service stations, shopping strip centers and other vacant properties. As a result of the City's Budget Contingency Plan, funding for the Rental Licensing and Inspection Program was cut; however, routine exterior inspections of rental units throughout the City will continue. Interior inspections will also be performed on a complaint basis.

Abandoned shopping carts are also another area of increased concern. An ordinance is currently being drafted to address an effective way to control abandoned carts and is expected to be brought before City Council by July 2004.

Property Standards may be contacted at (972) 941-7124 or at http://www.planotx.org/prop_std for questions and/or to report violations.

Several times each year, the Drainage Division goes through all the gabion lined channels and sprays the vegetation growing in and through the gabion baskets and along the bottoms of these channels with a herbicide to control growth. The City will assist the homeowner with fallen trees in any channel to prevent the blockage or flooding caused by the fallen tree. The City does not maintain trees in natural drainage channels. Any concerns or questions regarding drainage maintenance can be directed to the Public Works Department at (972) 769-4140.

Infrastructure Construction, Repair and Maintenance

The City has an aggressive construction/rehabilitation/maintenance program to keep roads, brick screening walls and drainage systems operating at their optimum. Staff makes great effort to coordinate these projects (City crews, utilities, and private contractors) to prevent 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. The inspection team in both the Engineering and Public Works Departments are assigned to ensure that contractors are providing the City of Plano with the highest quality of work delivered and within the City's construction standards. Problems involving street/alley or screening wall construction may be reported to the Public Works Department at (972) 769-4140 or after hours call (972) 727-1623.

The City of Plano is scheduling pavement repairs along several major thoroughfares in the District 3 area.

The following roadways are scheduled for repairs.

- On Coit Road from 15th Street north to McDermott were begun in May, 2004.
- On Alma Drive from 15th Street north to Hedgcoxe during summer, 2004.

Other Transportation projects exclusive to District 3 include new traffic signals at 1) Hedgcoxe Road @ Bent Tree (turned on March, 2004) and 2) Hedgcoxe Road @ Robinson Road (under design)

A traffic congestion reduction project is scheduled for Legacy @ Alma (adding a westbound right-turn lane). To obtain information about increasing traffic safety in your neighborhood, to report malfunctioning traffic signals, or to suggest other traffic safety improvements throughout Plano, please call (972) 941-7151.

A request was made to provide the status of capital projects. The Engineering Department has an interactive capital project map that provides status data for active projects. It is available on-line at www.plano.gov. From there, go to the Engineering Department, then Capital Improvement Plan, then to Current Map. Just click on an area, then the project. This web page offers citizens information on street closures, status of CIP projects, and City contacts for each project. You can find this information directly at www.planogis.org.

Parks

The Plano parks system has over 3,600 acres of park land. Several large sites such as Oak Point Park and Nature Preserve and the Tennyson/Archgate athletic site have yet to be fully developed. Once these sites are fully developed, the community will have more usable open space.

The Park Master Plan identifies several additional sites that have not yet been acquired. One site is along White Rock Creek and another, slated as a community park, is located near Alma and Park Boulevard. There are also several linear sites along creeks and under power lines that will be acquired to expand the recreational trail system.

Below are other topics of interest relating to the Parks Department:

- **Clark Recreation Center** – Clark Recreation Center will be moved to Carpenter Middle School, located at 1501 Cross Bend Road between Alma Drive and Custer Road, for the summer.
- **Jack Carter Pool** – The renovation of Jack Carter Pool will begin this fall and will be completed before the summer of 2005. The renovation will include a new wading pool with water play features, additional shade structures around the pool, restroom improvements and renovation of the pool plumbing system.
- **Carpenter Park Recreation Center** – The existing fitness equipment at Carpenter Park Recreation Center will be replaced with new equipment by early summer 2004.

As discussed at the Roundtable meeting, there will be another recreation center located west of Preston Road in the vicinity of Spring Creek Parkway and Parker Road.

Plans for two (2) additional dog parks are included in the Capital Improvement Program for the Parks and Recreation Department. One of the parks will be located in East Plano and the other one west of the existing park, which is centrally located in Plano. No location has been determined yet. There is no funding currently available, however, the proposed bond referendum for 2005 may include funding, if approved by the voters. Actual construction will depend on the availability of funding for operation and maintenance of the facility.

Pond/Creek Cleanup. Interest was shown at the Roundtable in the clean up of the pond on bike trails, specifically behind Cross Creek Apartments. This pond is in Hoblitzelle Park and is an old stock pond. The pond presents many maintenance challenges due to its location in the hollow and trees. It is currently being treated for algae and aquatic weeds, but it is extremely shallow which creates warm water conducive to vegetation. Deepening the pond by dredging could create a hazard if someone were to fall in. The Parks staff will continue to clean and treat the pond. In addition, the Park Planning staff will evaluate design alternatives to the current situation.

Unfortunately, all creeks in Plano become littered and have debris build up. It is especially unsightly after winter and early spring rains flood and deposit debris while the trees and foliage are dormant.

Difficult terrain and steep banks along creeks make clean up challenging and even dangerous at times. Thus, the cost to clean the creeks is very high, in terms of both time spent and money. Also, as soon as the area is cleaned, another rain or flood returns the creek to the previous condition. The City does not have resources to regularly clean litter out of the many miles of creeks on a routine basis. For these reasons, creek areas are generally cleaned by volunteer groups during events such as the "Great American Clean Up" in the spring, and through Adopt-A-Creek programs. However, City forces will clean creeks if there is a problem that could limit the flow of the creek and possibly cause flooding. Citizens are encouraged to report debris dams and areas where litter has accumulated so that those areas may be targeted for action by the appropriate labor force.

Citizens may call the Parks and Recreation Department at (972) 941-7263 to report creek issues that run through parks or Public Works at (972) 769-4140 for other creek and drainage area problems. If

citizens are unsure whether a creek is in a park or not, they may contact either department and the staff will determine who is responsible.

The Parks and Recreation Department organizes volunteer groups for the Adopt-A-Park program.

The Water Education Coordinator in the Public Works Department manages the Adopt-A-Creek program. Interested volunteers or organizations can contact Lorrie Reeves at (972) 769-4328.

Keep Plano Beautiful (KPB) in the Environmental Waste Services Department organizes volunteer groups for the Adopt-A-Highway program to aid in cleaning roadways. In addition, KPB organizes the annual "Great American Clean Up" (a one day event) which encompasses all areas of the City. Interested volunteers or organizations can contact Casey Eckert-Luker at (972) 769-4216.

Environmental Health

Air Quality - Please contact Environmental Health at (972) 941-7143 if you have questions or comments about air quality.

In addition to Environmental Health initiatives, the City of Plano has taken a very proactive approach to air quality by using alternative fuels in City vehicles. Here are some of the things that we are already doing to help promote cleaner air:

- The City has 63 vehicles operating on Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG), or propane, which is an alternative fuel.
- The City has approximately 35 pieces of small engine equipment operating on propane, which allows operation on ozone action days. This equipment produces substantially less pollution than those operating on gasoline.
- The City owns six hybrid-electric vehicles operating in its fleet. These are Super Ultra-Low Emissions vehicles that obtain greater gas mileage while emitting extremely low tailpipe emissions.
- In order to defer use of petroleum products, the City began propane vehicle conversions in 1994. Initially, over 30 light-duty vehicles were converted, with more added during subsequent years.
- In 1996, the City began exploring propane use in heavy-duty and light-duty applications. The use of propane fuel in these types of vehicles and equipment greatly lessened the pollution generated by their use. For example, the City currently operates two dump trucks on propane. The City also has numerous lawn and garden equipment that operate on propane which greatly reduces emissions when compared to gasoline counterparts.
- In the mid-1990's, the City adopted an ozone action policy whereby City vehicles and equipment were fueled prior to 10:00 a.m., so as not to contribute to the formation of ozone through refueling.
- The City's Equipment Services Division also participates in Earth Day, July 4th, Clean Cities, and other public relations activities. They bring alternative fuel vehicles to these events to educate the public about its practicality and emissions reducing capabilities.
- The City has been an active member of the DFW Area Clean Cities Coalition whose goal is to promote the use of alternative fuels in order to lessen America's dependence on foreign sources.
- In 1996, when original equipment manufacturers (OEM's) began to produce alternative fuel vehicles direct from the factory, the City began writing specifications requiring vehicles to be at least Low Emission (Certified) Vehicles (LEVs).
- In 1995 and 2001, the Equipment Services Division received the SuperStar Award from the Railroad Commission of Texas given to outstanding propane fleets.

- In 1999, the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coordinator nominated the City of Plano Equipment Service Division for the National Highway Administration 1999 Environmental Excellence Award, in recognition for efforts to improve air quality in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. This nomination highlighted the Division's ongoing strides for having an alternative fuel program that is among the most aggressive in the Metroplex.

OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST

The following concerns/suggestions were submitted on comment cards after the meeting.

Traffic at Movie Theater located at Legacy/US75. Although the traffic congestion produced when the movie theater releases its patrons is dense, it is often for a brief period of time. During this time, traffic backs up and drivers must exercise caution and courtesy to keep traffic flowing safely. Because the "back up" is located on private property, the City of Plano has limited input on the need for additional traffic lanes or other traffic control devices that help foster traffic flow. In this case, citizens may want to contact the movie theater manager to discuss your concerns about traffic congestion when leaving the premises.

Better Transportation for Seniors. The City of Plano, in agreement with Collin County Committee On Aging, offers low cost transportation services within Plano for persons 60 and older, called SeniorTrans. The cost is \$.50 for each one way trip. Eligible participants must have no other means of transportation, reside within the Plano Independent School District, and be able to board a van or bus with little or no assistance, with the exception of wheelchair passengers. No service is provided to nursing homes or assisted living facilities. This service is available Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 3:30 pm. A second route has been added that is intended to cover the peak hours of Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays from 7:30 am-2:30 pm. Reservations must be made 48 hours in advance by calling (972) 562-4275 between the hours of 6 am and 3 pm daily.

The Plano Senior Center provides transportation to and from its center on a daily basis. Contact the center at (972) 941-7155 for information.

Continued Community Outreach - City Council is continually seeking and implementing new ways to better connect with citizens. Through working with homeowners associations, Council receives valuable input concerning issues specific to each development. 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 a targeted area to share their specific interests and concerns. The Neighborhood Roundtable meetings are advertised on the City's web site, in area newspapers, on cable TV, by letter to HOAs and Crime Watch areas, and by individual post card notices sent to each residence in the targeted area. While the meetings are designed to focus on issues involving the targeted district, everyone is welcome to attend and participate.

In addition, a Multi-Cultural Outreach Roundtable has been formed which seeks input and makes recommendations to the City Council on methods, practices, programs, and other means by which the City of Plano can effectively serve the entire community and meet the objectives of local government. The mission of the roundtable is to partner with City Council and the citizens of Plano encouraging understanding and participation in the government process while meeting the needs and desires of its diverse citizens.

Senior Citizen Tax Freeze – Property Tax Freeze for Property Owners Over Age 65 or Disabled: On May 24, 2004, the City of Plano Council voted unanimously to approve a property tax freeze for homeowners over 65 years of age, their spouses, and the disabled. The tax freeze is effective beginning with the 2004 tax year.

Summary of Property Tax Freeze

House Bill 136 became effective when the constitutional amendment proposed by House Joint Resolution 16 was approved by an 83% margin by the voters of Texas in a referendum in September of 2003.

Proposition 13, passed by the voters in September 2003, and is worded as follows:

"The constitutional amendment to permit counties, cities and towns, and junior college districts to establish an ad valorem tax freeze on residence homesteads of the disabled and of the elderly and their spouses."

The effective date for Bill 136 was January 1, 2004. The bill gives cities, counties and junior colleges the option to freeze the taxes they imposed on the homes of the elderly and disabled. The new law provides cities with the option to "freeze" ad valorem taxes for homeowners over 65 years of age, their spouses, and the disabled.

There are only two conditions that can increase the amount of the freeze: (1) if there are improvements on the property beyond normal maintenance and upkeep; and (2) if the property erroneously received an exemption to which it was not entitled in a prior year.

Privacy at Voting Booth – A concern was raised about the lack of privacy at voting booths. In addressing this issue with the Collin County Elections Office, it was explained that the position of the screens would prohibit anyone from seeing your voting information unless they were standing right beside you, due to the glare that would be projected. In addition, the screen can be adjusted to lay flat. Should there still be additional question or concern, please feel free to contact either Patty Seals or Sharon Rowe at the Elections Office. Either can give more specific ways to address this issue and can be reached at (972) 547-1900.

Shop Plano First – As mentioned at the Roundtable, it is very important to Plano for us to invest in our City. Investing in Plano's tax base will help to provide services to senior citizens, maintain City aquatic facilities, repair our streets and infrastructure, as well as assist in many other programs that make Plano such a wonderful city in which to live.

On behalf of City Council, I would like to again thank you for taking part in the Neighborhood Roundtable session on April 22nd. 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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pat Evans".

Pat Evans
Mayor

**COMMON
QUESTIONS AND
ANSWERS ON**

SOLICITATION



1. WHAT DOES THE CITY'S SOLICITATION ORDINANCE COVER?

The ordinance regulates solicitation in the City rights of way, the distribution of handbills, circulars, pamphlets, on property, and commercial peddlers who go door-to-door. City Code section 11-145

2. MUST SOLICITORS OBTAIN A PERMIT?

Yes, if they are engaged in commercial solicitation on residential property, a permit is required. The permit is obtained from the Police Department. The solicitors are required to keep a copy of the permit in their possession while they are engaged in solicitation. Solicitors are also required to have some identification of who they are and if they are soliciting on behalf of another. A person can request that a solicitor display the identification.

3. WHAT SHOULD I DO TO PREVENT SOLICITORS FROM ENTERING ONTO MY PROPERTY?

The first step is for an owner to post notice on their property that soliciting is prohibited. The notice must be on a waterproof sign that is at least 3" by 4" in size bearing the words "No Solicitation" or "No Handbills", or any similar notice that clearly conveys that the conduct is not permitted. The letters on the card must be at least 2/3" in height. The notice shall be posted in a conspicuous place on or near the main entrance to the residence.

4. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE POSTED AN APPROPRIATE NO SOLICITATION SIGN, AND I STILL RECEIVE HANDBILLS?

In order to effectively prosecute the solicitor or those responsible for the illegal solicitation of handbills, the owner must file a complaint with the City Prosecutor. The owner should also keep copies of the handbills that were left at the location, as that will be used as grounds to substantiate the citation as well as evidence if a trial is required. If the prosecutor determines that the evidence indicates a violation occurred, a citation will be issued to the violator. If the violator contests the citation, a trial is required and the resident will need to testify. Our past history in tracking these types of complaints indicates that most violators have elected to pay a fine instead of going to trial.

5. HOW DO I FILE A COMPLAINT?

To file a complaint, please contact the Municipal Court Prosecutor's Office at 972.941.2056.

6. CAN A POLICE OFFICER ISSUE A CITATION?

Police officers cannot cite a violator unless the officer actually witnesses the offense.

7. IS THERE A TIME LIMIT WITH REGARD TO SOLICITATION?

Solicitation for any purpose is not permitted between ½ hour before sunset and ½ hour after sunrise unless the solicitor is on the premises with the permission or invitation of the resident.