



December 5, 2006

**Pat Evans**  
Mayor

**Scott Johnson**  
Mayor Pro Tem

**Sally Magnuson**  
Deputy Mayor Pro Tem

**Shep Stahel**  
Place 1

**Loretta Ellerbe**  
Place 3

**Harry LaRosiliere**  
Place 5

**Jean Callison**  
Place 7

**Lee Dunlap**  
Place 8

**Thomas H. Muehlenbeck**  
City Manager

**Re: District 2 Neighborhood Roundtable Meeting (November 9, 2006)  
Response to Issues and Comments**

Greetings:

Thank you very much for your attendance at the District 2 Neighborhood Roundtable meeting held on Thursday, November 9, 2006 at the Plano Sports Authority Star Center. On behalf of City Council, we applaud your interest and involvement in our community. We value your comments and look forward to working with you in maintaining a strong city and excellent quality of life.

At the roundtable meeting, we presented to you several topics to initiate discussion based on feedback we've received from other Roundtable meetings over the past several years. Discussion questions listing topics which may be of concern to you were distributed asking for your feedback. We discovered that traffic congestion and safety with a special interest in red light cameras, are of great importance to you. Property standards remain a concern to our citizens, along with creek maintenance and redevelopment issues. Water Supply, residential/apartment construction and the Parkwood Green parking project were also among the issues brought to our attention through the discussion questions.

The following is a synopsis of the above issues as well as additional information pertinent to the District 2 area:

### **Traffic Mobility and Safety**

Some of the most important issues facing Plano today relate to traffic. Traffic mobility and safety are valid concerns among our citizenry and are priorities with City Council and staff.

Over the past four years, mobility and safety has improved 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.

## **Traffic Signal Timing**

Managing traffic flow on major arterial roads and across city limit boundaries is accomplished via an ongoing program that retimes traffic signals in response to changing traffic volumes/patterns. Using state-of-the-art technology, 204 traffic signals are coordinated during peak travel times throughout the city. Timing plans are changed throughout the day to minimize overall vehicle stops and delays. Last fall, staff completed upgrading all traffic signals with new traffic control technology. The new equipment increases 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.

## **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 partnership with the community.

- **Enforcement** – This aspect of our traffic safety effort includes high visibility patrol, which also aims to curtail crime. In 2005, the Plano Police Department conducted 61,141 traffic contacts that resulted in some form of enforcement action. From those contacts 25,543 speeding citations were issued and 4881 red light citations were issued.

To further reduce collisions, the Police Department recently implemented the use of cameras to monitor and cite red light runners. Implementation and operational costs will be offset through the collection of civil penalties assessed to persons photographed running red lights. The goal of this program is to increase traffic safety by decreasing the rate of injury accidents at intersections.

It should be noted that since the year 2000, the Plano Police Department has participated in a Texas Department of Transportation STEP (Selective Traffic Enforcement Program) grant to increase their 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 focus on the intersections with the highest rates of collisions. In November 2003, the Police Department began participating in a new STEP grant that allows them to continue to focus on red light violations while also enforcing speed limits throughout the City as well.

In addition, the Police Department also participates in the Texas Department of Transportation's "Click it or Ticket" campaign. The purpose of this campaign is to increase the use of safety belts. The campaign consists of public service announcements and high intensity enforcement during the Memorial Day and Thanksgiving holiday periods.

On January 1, 2006, the police department began a pilot program to tow uninsured vehicles under certain circumstances. Drivers are required to maintain financial responsibility for vehicles they operate on Texas roadways. Uninsured motorists are involved in many accidents

each year. There is a cost associated with these uninsured motorists for those that comply with the financial responsibility requirements. According to the Texas DPS, one in five drivers in Texas does not have insurance. In 2005, 14,715 citations were issued for no insurance. Of those, 780 were issued at accident scenes. Through May 2006, 6391 citations have already been issued for no insurance. Due to the frequency and concern for drivers not maintaining proof of financial responsibility as required by law we have developed a policy to tow the uninsured vehicles when they are encountered. Uninsured vehicles that are involved in accidents and vehicles that are known to have been operated in the past uninsured and are still being operated uninsured will be impounded. The owner will be required to present proof of financial responsibility before the vehicle will be released from the impound lot.

- **Education and Awareness** – The Police Department’s 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. The Police Department also employs three speed trailers that are deployed in problem areas throughout the city to make drivers aware of their speed, in an attempt at voluntary compliance with speed laws.
- **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 our 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 at [www.planopolice.org](http://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 <https://forms.plano.gov/police/ser.htm> or by stopping in at the main station at 909 14<sup>th</sup> Street or the Joint Use Facility at 7501A Independence Parkway.

### **Specific Areas of Concern**

- Traffic congestion concerns along Preston, particularly at Legacy. What are the plans for these intersections to relieve the backup?

The City has plans to reconstruct the intersection at Plano Parkway and Legacy Drive beginning in year 2007. The reconstructed intersections will reduce traffic back-ups, improve air quality, and increase traffic flow by using an innovative design called a Median U-Turn. This design has the potential of improving traffic throughput by up to 30% by redirecting left-turn traffic in a manner that reduces their impact on other traffic. More information on this design

can be obtained by going to the following Internet link:  
<http://attap.umd.edu/UAID.php?UAIDType=1&iFeature=2>

City transportation engineers also retime and coordinate the traffic signals on Preston Road every three years. The result of doing so is reduced traffic stops, fuel usage, and improved air quality along Preston Road and surrounding areas.

- Are the red light cameras working? Are more going to be installed?

We believe the red light cameras have been effective. Since installing the cameras at the four intersections, we have seen a 41.9% decrease in crashes caused by red light violations and a 39.6% overall decrease in intersection crashes at the monitored locations. The following table shows the changes in crash data at the four locations from March 2006 through October 2006:

Type of Crash	March through October 2005	March through October 2006	Percent Change
Red Light Crash	31	18	-41.9%
Intersection Crash	53	32	-39.6%

Furthermore, we have seen a decrease in the number of violations since the beginning of the program. We began enforcement using the red light cameras on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006. During this first month of operation we issued 2,406 Notices of Violation. During the month of October, we issued 403 Notices of Violation. This is an 83.3% reduction from the first month to the last month. The following table shows the number of Notices of Violation issued each month since the beginning of the program:

Month	Total
March	2406
April	860
May	1303
June	840
July	585
August	811
September	573
October	403
YTD	7,781

Currently, we are in the process of expanding the Automated Red Light Camera Enforcement program. In October we added a second camera to one of our intersections, and we anticipate beginning operations at six new intersections within the next two months. Additionally, we are in the process of adding four state highway locations. The City of Plano must first request and receive permission from TXDOT before installing on state highway rights-of-way. These requests have been submitted, and we are currently awaiting final approval, which is expected by the end of November. We therefore anticipate implementation of cameras at the four state

highway intersections to by March 2007. The following is a list of locations currently in operation:

- Park Boulevard and Ventura Drive
- Legacy Drive and Dallas Parkway (WB and EB)
- Independence Parkway and 15<sup>th</sup> Street
- Custer Road and Spring Creek Parkway

The following is a list of intersections at which expansion is underway:

- 1) Avenue K and Park Boulevard
- 2) Jupiter Road and Plano Parkway
- 3) Coit Road and Park Boulevard
- 4) Coit Road and Spring Creek Parkway
- 5) Parker Road and Dallas Parkway
- 6) Plano Parkway and Dallas Parkway
- 7) Preston Road and Plano Parkway\*
- 8) Preston Road and Spring Creek Parkway\*
- 9) State Highway 121 (SH121) and Custer Road\*
- 10) State Highway 121 (SH121) and Dallas Parkway\*

\* State highway right-of-way

## Crime

The Police Department continues to maintain a low crime rate. Our success in maintaining a low crime rate is directly tied to the cooperative efforts of our citizens.

- **Criminal activity in the general area** – Below are the crime statistics for District 2. We would ask that every citizen act as the eyes and ears for the police. Report suspicious activity to the police immediately and protect yourself and your property by following some simple rules. Lock doors, do not leave valuables in plain view and be aware of your surroundings.

Sept 1 2005 to Aug 31 2006	Offenses for District 2	Offenses Citywide	Percentage
<b>Murder</b>	0	5	0%
<b>Sexual Assault</b>	6	65	9%
<b>Robbery</b>	29	141	21%
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	99	634	16%
<b>Burglary</b>	397	1443	28%
<b>Larceny/Theft</b>	1885	7161	26%
<b>MVT</b>	123	551	22%
<b>Population</b>	64789	252950	26%

- **Crime Watch** – An excellent crime prevention tool available to you is participation in your neighborhood Crime Watch Program. Crime Watch Bulletins are provided by Crime Watch Program coordinators to the program participants. The bulletins can also be accessed under the “Crime Watch Information” tab at [www.planopolice.org](http://www.planopolice.org). 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.

### **Specific Areas of Concern**

- Enforcement of ordinances regarding noise from loud vehicles, either being "revved up" or running in driveways or racing/driving through neighborhoods. Who should be called and what can be done?

The Plano Police Department is committed to ensuring that all residents are free from disturbances that interfere with enjoyment of property or public peace and comfort. In most cases of excessive noise, the violator is first given a verbal warning and voluntary compliance is requested. If the problem persists, it could result in the issuance of a citation or an arrest. In order for a police officer to take any action, he or she must witness the offense or obtain information from a witness who observed the violation and is willing to testify in court. When a nuisance violation is reported, the caller is encouraged to provide the location of the offender as well as their own name, address, and phone number. In addition, any citizen can contact the Plano Municipal Court directly and swear to a complaint against an individual for the commission a nuisance violation.

- More enforcement is needed for violators who turn left in front of traffic on red lights.

The Plano Police Department evaluates crash causes and locations each month, and traffic enforcement efforts are directed based on this data. If a location is determined to be problematic, resources will be deployed accordingly. In addition, officers are encouraged to take appropriate enforcement action at all times when any hazardous traffic violation is observed.

### **Infrastructure Construction, Repair and Maintenance**

The City has an aggressive construction, rehabilitation and 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. 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 that it is within the City's construction standards.

- **Water Issues** – The City of Plano declared Stage 3 of its Drought Contingency Plan on June 19, 2006. Information on the drought is available at <http://www.plano.gov/Departments/Water/Water+Quality+Education/2006+Drought+Information/> The City of Plano provides a water conservation program that educates and offers ways for homeowners to conserve. To learn more about the programs being offered, please contact the Water Conservation Coordinator at 972-769-4328.

- **Notification of Road Construction** – Citizens can now be notified of road construction sites in Plano by subscribing to the Road Construction listserv on our web site. To do so, go to [http://www.planotx.org/email\\_lists.html](http://www.planotx.org/email_lists.html). This information is also routinely aired on Plano Television Network, channel A30.

### **Specific Areas of Concern**

- How is the City maintaining its water supply with all the development and extra water usage that comes with that?

The city's water system has been designed to provide a more than ample water supply for the day-to-day health and safety needs of residents and businesses and for emergency fire-fighting purposes. There is sufficient water to meet these basic needs for new development as well. However, landscape irrigation is the activity that most severely strains the city's water system and the area where the most gains can be made in conserving the city's drought-strained water supply. The city's landscaping ordinances allow developers to install more drought-tolerant and native plants and to provide more efficient irrigation systems. Since the drought began, the city has also allowed developers to delay the installation of landscape plants at new developments until sufficient water can be provided to insure that the plants will survive.

- What is being done to maintain creeks and drainage systems, especially in residential areas, to keep them from clogging up and/or eroding?

The Public Works Department does respond to citizen inquiries about removal of fallen trees. The homeowners are responsible for maintain the creek if they own the property. For more information please call 972-769-4140

- What is being done to combat train noise at crossings near residential areas?

The city is actively working on a newly approved program that would allow cities to establish quiet zones at railroad crossing. We are working on the Parker Road crossing and should be able to implement the quiet zone within six months. For further information please contact Alan Upchurch at 972-941-7152.

### **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. We encourage developers and neighborhoods to openly communicate and seek ways to ensure beneficial and compatible development.

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 zoning cases are mailed 20 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 zoning cases receive written notice by mail. A complete list of all zoning cases, site plans and plats submitted for review are posted on the Planning Department page of the City's web site at [www.planoplanning.org](http://www.planoplanning.org), aired on Plano cable channels A-30 and B-58, and are 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 to get more information about the proposed zoning action. Homeowner comments are welcomed and encouraged in the development review process to help us achieve a well-developed community.

- **Land Studies, Preliminary Site Plans and/or Final Site Plans** – For a list of rezoning requests, site plans, plats and other development-related items that are up for review, please go to <http://pdf.plano.gov/planning/DEVREV/Revlist.pdf> . This list is updated every two weeks.
- **Vacant and Underused Commercial Buildings** – In 2002, the cities of Carrollton, Richardson, and Plano jointly produced a report entitled "Retail Study of Underperforming and Vacant Retail Areas". This study explored a number of issues relating to the retail industry, the local economy, and the opportunities for improving current conditions. Upon completion of the study, each city had the responsibility of identifying and implementing those recommendations that were most applicable to its needs. Plano began by trying to reduce the amount of existing retail tracts of land that remain for future development. The City Council passed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance that give it the authority to review and approve requests to convert vacant properties from retail to residential uses such as patio homes and town houses. The Planning and Zoning Commission is currently considering new policies to use when evaluating zoning requests to convert leftover commercial tracts for residential uses. Competition in today's retail market often requires larger stores with a wide product ranges serving larger market areas than in the past. Many of Plano's existing retail centers have become vacant or underutilized due to this change in marketing strategy. In some cases, it may be possible to redevelop or reorganize older centers to meet new retailing requirements and stay in scale with surrounding neighborhoods. These projects will require attention to various details. The alternative to these redevelopment efforts may be empty structures that are obsolete for today's retail needs. The Plano Economic Development Board (PEDB) has a business recruitment and retention program that offers financial incentives to a wide range of commercial users including manufacturers, retailers, and office facilities. PEDB's efforts have

contributed to the leasing of new space at Park Boulevard and Preston Road, Plano Parkway and Coit Road, Downtown Plano, and the Research/Technology Crossroads Business Park in southeast Plano.

- **Small Business Incubator** – The city has investigated establishing a small business incubator program in the past. To set up an incubator storefront, that provides office space as well as other services to start-up companies, requires a substantial amount of funding, which has not been available. However, the Collin County Community College district's Small Business Development Center provides all of the benefits of an incubator. They can help with training, formulating business plans and acquiring loans for small businesses. The Center can be reached at (972) 985-3770 or <http://www.ccccd.edu/bc/buscomm.html>.
- **Revitalization** - The City recognizes the need to maintain our older neighborhoods. In order to prevent deterioration in our neighborhoods, we schedule infrastructure repair and replacement each year so that streets and utilities are kept in good condition. We also have a proactive code enforcement program through our Property Standards Division. Property Standards works with property owners to keep their homes free of trash and debris, junk vehicles, high grass and weeds, and other property code violations. We believe that code enforcement is very important to maintaining our older areas, and we try to address problems in their incipient stage rather than letting them grow into the large areas of deterioration which exist in many other cities.
- **Grants and Programs Available to Aging Neighborhoods** – The City has a housing rehabilitation program, in which the City will make a low-interest loan to families with limited income (for example, a family of four making less than \$53,200 would qualify) to help them repair their home. The amount of repayment required depends on the family's income level. We also operate the Neighborhood Planning program, where we assign an Urban Planner to work with a neighborhood to develop a work plan to address the neighborhood's issues. Usually the resulting plan includes things that the City will accomplish, and things that the residents will accomplish, to solve the problems. For more information on these programs, please visit <http://www.plano.gov/Departments/Neighborhood+Services/rehab.htm> .

### **Specific Areas of Concern**

- What is being done to encourage development and redevelopment?

Many people think of Plano as being “built-out” with no land left for new development. Although most of the land with residential zoning is already developed, about 30% of the non-residential land is still available. With its excellent transportation access and good schools, the city continues to be very attractive to commercial developers and to homebuyers. This is fueling a trend towards rezoning commercial land for new residential development. A good example of this is a new subdivision presently under construction at the southeast corner of Ohio Drive and McDermott Drive, on land formerly zoned for retail uses. The city certainly wants to maintain sufficient land for future economic development purposes, but also wants to be able to respond to this demand for new housing.

Redevelopment of properties will play an increasing role in Plano's future. Several vacant gas stations around the city have been torn down and replaced with new banks and small retail centers. The new Home Depot store at the northeast corner of Parker Road and Custer Road is a good example of the redevelopment of an aging retail corner. The City Council has also adopted a retail incentive program to attract retailers that are unique to the Plano market. Redevelopment will also continue to occur near the city's DART rail stations as living and working near a transit center becomes more popular. The City continues to look for ways to partner with the private sector to encourage transit oriented development.

- Why are so many apartments being built? How does this benefit the city?

Plano has always encouraged a variety of housing types, including apartments, in the city. Since Plano is a regional employment center and not just a bedroom community, the city's ability to provide housing for workers in all income groups is important to attract and retain companies. Apartments provide housing not only for low and middle-income workers but to young families who cannot yet afford to buy a home and an increasing number of elderly who want to live near their children but who can no longer maintain their homes.

The City Council has not zoned land for garden style apartments in a number of years. The recent garden style developments have been on land that was zoned for this purpose in the late 1980's and early 1990's. The Council has approved the development of higher density apartment developments in the Legacy Town Center area and near downtown Plano to create areas where people can live and work in a more urban environment. This style of living is increasingly attractive not only to young professionals but to other age groups as well. Based on the current zoning in place, staff estimates that apartments will comprise between 30-31% of the city's housing stock when these areas are developed.

Developers have also taken a number of properties zoned for apartments and built single-family houses and for-sale townhouses instead. A good example of this is the Avignon development on the north side of Windhaven Drive, east of the Tollway. This land had been zoned for apartment development since the early 1980's.

- Does the City maintain a current list of HOA's and can citizens obtain this list?

The city does maintain homeowner association information for those groups that provide contact information. This information is linked to a map on the city's web site at [http://maps.planogis.org/gis\\_main.htm](http://maps.planogis.org/gis_main.htm). The site does not provide this information in a list form because staff had received numerous complaints from HOA presidents that companies were using the prior list on the web site to send advertisements, spam and junk mail. HOA presidents have also voiced concerns about their phone numbers, e-mail addresses and other information being available to the public. As a result, the city now only has information for about 70 of the approximately 200 associations in the city. The city uses this information to contact associations about upcoming zoning changes, meetings and other city business, and developers use the information to contact HOA presidents about new projects they plan to build. For these reasons, it is very important for associations to register with the city. Please encourage your associations to register at <https://forms.plano.gov/planning/hoasubmit.htm>.

## Property Standards

Property maintenance violations in the City of Plano are addressed using a sound proactive approach. Twelve (12) Property Standards Specialists proactively inspect their assigned areas as well as respond to citizen concerns received in reference to Code and Zoning 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, equipment or materials, substandard structures, and fence maintenance. As needed, work schedules are rearranged to address activity that may occur outside regular business hours such as non-permitted garage sales, parking on unimproved surfaces, and home occupation activities that do not comply with zoning regulations.

When a concern is received by the Property Standards Department, the call is assigned to a designated Specialist, who inspects the property within 48 hours. Callers may choose to remain anonymous however, if the caller provides their name and telephone number, the Specialist will contact the caller to provide a status update of action(s) taken after the inspection is completed.

### Specific Areas of Concern

- Who determines if there is a property standards violation and how can violations be reported?

Violations are validated one of two ways; 1) accomplished proactively through on-site inspections by Property Standards Specialist assigned to one of the 12 employee districts throughout the City and 2) violations are reported to the Property Standards Department in person, by telephone, email, or the Property Standards webpage located on the City of Plano website. All complaints are inspected by a Specialist to determine whether a violation exists prior to any other action(s) taken. Complaints are typically inspected within 48 hours.

- What if a citizen is not sure a violation is taking place? Is there a place to go to look at the rules/laws/ordinances before the citizen makes a complaint?

The Property Standards webpage has a listing of the most common zoning and code of ordinance violations addressed by the department. Citizens may also contact the department at (972) 941-7124 with questions or concerns that may not be addressed on the webpage. The department webpage address is:

[www.plano.gov/Departments/PropertyStandards](http://www.plano.gov/Departments/PropertyStandards) (COB)

- Are letters sent to alleged violators only after someone has complained, or are they generated by Property Standards personnel also?

In addition to responding to complaints, Specialists also conduct daily routine inspections within their assigned districts to proactively identify violations. Typically notices are generated for those properties found to be in violation. In certain recurring situations a citation may be issued to appear in Municipal Court or a contract work order may be completed to have the violation abated by a City contractor.

- What more can be done to enforce property standards regarding fences, retaining walls and unkempt yards?

While routine inspections are conducted on a daily basis, Specialists are limited by the amount of area that can be covered and the number of inspections that can be effectively conducted in a given day. Educating well-informed citizens concerning code and ordinance regulations is our best resource for identifying violations and addressing them in a timely manner. Educational materials regarding code requirements and ordinance regulations are disseminated through the distribution of brochures, water utility bill inserts and speaking at Neighborhood Association meetings and other community functions. Citizens are encouraged to contact the department should they have concerns about a violation or possible violation.

The city's Public Works Department does have a program that addresses deteriorating screening walls and replaces many sections on an annual basis. For more information please call 972-769-4140

Assigned employee districts enable staff to proactively and reactively respond to concerns within their designated areas. Deliberate efforts are made to educate our citizenry regarding rules and regulations that govern public nuisance and property maintenance matters. In many instances a notice, with a reasonably established time period, may be required prior to further enforcement action to address a particular concern. 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. Some violations, including high grass/weeds and trash/debris require only one annual notice and the property owner may not receive additional notifications prior to immediate abatement of these violations. If a property owner chooses not to comply with the request to bring the property into compliance, 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.

Property Standards view code education and awareness as vital components to our desired effectiveness. Educational materials regarding code requirements and ordinance regulations are disseminated through the distribution of brochures, water utility bill inserts and speaking at Neighborhood Association meetings and other community functions.

Please contact (972) 941-7124 or [www.planotx.org/prop\\_stds](http://www.planotx.org/prop_stds) should you have any questions or further concerns relating to property maintenance in Plano.

## **Parks**

There are many parks and facilities located in and around the City's District 2 area. Please visit [http://www.plano.gov/Departments/parksandrecreation/Parks\\_Facilities/locator\\_map.htm](http://www.plano.gov/Departments/parksandrecreation/Parks_Facilities/locator_map.htm) to view an informative, interactive map of the parks and facilities available to you. You may also wish to visit [http://www.plano.gov/Departments/ParksandRecreation/Help+Center/construction\\_proj.htm](http://www.plano.gov/Departments/ParksandRecreation/Help+Center/construction_proj.htm) to become apprised of current and planned construction projects for new and existing parks in the area. The Parks Department also offers many recreational courses for our citizens throughout the year. For more information and to view a course schedule, please select the Leisure Courses tab on the main web page <http://www.planoparks.org>

## Specific Areas of Concern

- How can landscaping and trees be maintained with the water restrictions that are in effect?

The City Web site has many educational links related to the drought and water restrictions. The Water Education Coordinator and members of the Parks and Recreation Department are available to help answer specific questions about landscape maintenance. There is also a link describing the process to request a variance if the circumstances are truly exceptional.

- What is the status of the plan to add parking spaces to Parkwood Green Park?

The project is currently in a planning process being administered by Park Planning. Representatives from homeowner associations adjacent to Parkwood Green Park are communicating with the Landscape Architect assigned to the project. No decision has been made, and the final design of the parking solution has not started yet. Input from residents in the area will be solicited directly by the city in the next month. After evaluating the input, the city will implement the best possible solution with the consensus of the residents.

- What is being done to keep bicyclists safe, particularly as they ride near and under the Dallas North Tollway?

The City has a Bicycle Transportation Plan to improve mobility for bicyclists. The Parks and Recreation Department is in the process of hiring a Trail System Coordinator, which is a new position in the current fiscal year. The position will work closely with Traffic Engineering Department to implement the Bicycle Transportation Plan. Funding has been allocated in the current Community Investment Program for the implementation. The area of the Dallas North Tollway will be reviewed for safety. Existing infrastructure and traffic congestion in this area may limit the options, but best practices will be incorporated in to any improvements that are made. Residents may contact Park Planning at (972) 941-7235 for additional information.

## **Public Information**

To contact City of Plano staff for further information and/or to generally keep abreast of the activities in our city, below is a list of various access methods that are available to you.

- **Internet** - As stated previously, the City of Plano's main web site address is [www.plano.gov](http://www.plano.gov) . To reach a particular staff member by phone or by email, you may go directly to [http://pdf.plano.gov/staff\\_directory.pdf](http://pdf.plano.gov/staff_directory.pdf) . 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. For answers to frequently asked questions log on to <http://bbs.plano.gov>
- **Publications** - Municipal information can be found on a daily basis at <http://www.plano.gov/news/> . 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 channel - A30.

- **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. In total, there are 36 different reports, flyers and letters mailed each year with the utility bill.
- **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, including **Emergency Alerts**. You may view and subscribe to these newsletters at [http://www.plano.gov/online/email\\_lists.htm](http://www.plano.gov/online/email_lists.htm)

### Specific Areas of Concern

Is there a way for the City to use more direct mailings to citizens to disseminate City information?

Yes, this can be done and is being done for more neighborhood-specific issues. Example is the Parkwood Green parking issue where Parks and Recreation is sending letters to homeowners in the affected area near the park.

## **Health Department**

The Health Department has developed an Outdoor Air Quality program to increase awareness about air quality issues and motivate the public to take personal responsibility and action. Our goal is to improve overall air quality and reduce harmful ozone levels in our community. Some strategies and activities we have sponsored include the following:

- annual poster contests in PISD schools
- promote industry partnering with Texas Emissions Reduction Program (TERP)
- provide educational programs for schools, community groups, homeowners associations and civic groups
- organized ride share programs
- brown bag lunches to provide educational materials to city employees

### Woodstoves

The traditional pot-bellied stove is a thing of the past - today's woodstove models feature improved safety and efficiency. They produce almost no smoke, minimal ash, and require less firewood, they can be sized to heat a family room, a small cottage, or a full-sized home. The best choices are appliances labeled by the Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada (ULC) or another testing and certification body for safety. They should also be certified to be low-emission according to EPA standards. While older uncertified stoves and fireplaces release 40 to 60 grams of smoke per hour; new EPA-certified stoves produce only 2 to 5 grams of smoke per hour.

EPA certified woodstoves burn more cleanly and efficiently, save you money, reduce the risk of fire, and improve air quality inside and outside your home.

Talk with experienced woodstove retailers who know the performance characteristics of the products they sell. When visiting local retailers, take along a floor plan of your home. Knowledgeable retailers can help you find a woodstove that is well suited to the space you want to heat.

[Additional information on this topic can be obtained by visiting the EPA web site at http://www.epa.gov/woodstoves/basic.html](http://www.epa.gov/woodstoves/basic.html)

## Other Topics of Interest

- **Information Packet to New Residents** – The City’s Customer and Utility Services Department delivers a packet of important information to new customers initiating water service. The packet contains information about City services, local events and other pertinent items of interest.
- **City of Plano Municipal Code of Ordinances** – The City of Plano’s Municipal Code of Ordinances can be viewed and printed online at the following web address: [www.plano.gov/City\\_Hall/CityGovernment/MunicipalCode](http://www.plano.gov/City_Hall/CityGovernment/MunicipalCode)
- **Adopt-a-Creek Volunteer Program** - Due to the unending migration of litter into our community, city staff relies heavily on volunteer groups and individuals to help keep highways (Adopt-A-Highway) and creeks (Adopt-A-Creek) clean and litter free. In reality, our goal, through our environmental education efforts, is to prevent littering from occurring in the first place.

The Adopt-a-Creek volunteer program, gives businesses, organizations, families and individuals the opportunity to make an impact on keeping our city beautiful and improving our local water quality. This program is a joint effort by the Water Education Office, the Department of Public Works and the Parks & Recreation Department.

The volunteer(s) agree to adopt a section of a creek and to take action, on a volunteer basis, to control the stream bank litter problem by organizing a general bank side cleanup at least four times per year. The City of Plano provides litter sticks and trash bags and with pre-notification will arrange for the pickup of the litter collected at the site. The City of Plano will print and erect the Adopt-a-Creek signs at appropriate public locations near the adopted creek section.

A \$35 participation fee is charged for the year. A \$15 renewable participation fee is charged if the business or organization would like to continue adopting the creek for another year. The funds raised through the fees are used to purchase new litter sticks and litter bags. Litter sticks and trash bags are available at Parkway Service Center, 4120 West Plano Parkway. It is preferable that you pre-arrange pick up of these items so availability can be assured.

If you have questions about water conservation, water quality or the Adopt-a-Creek program, please visit <http://www.plano.gov/departments/environmental+services/> and/or call the Water Education Coordinator, Lorrie Reeves at 972-769-4328.

- **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.

Quarterly 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 email to HOA presidents and Crime Watch Area Coordinators, 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 Multicultural 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.

Other areas of outreach that City Council and I recommend include:

- The Plano Citizens Academy. The mission of this Academy is to familiarize citizens with the function and purpose of City of Plano government and associated community organizations. For further information please visit <http://www.plano.gov/Departments/Community+Outreach/CitizensAcademy/> or call 972-941-7307
- The Plano Citizen's Police Academy. The purpose of this Academy is to educate the citizens of Plano on the operations of the Plano Police Department. This is accomplished through a series of lectures and hands-on activities. For further information please visit [http://www.plano.gov/Departments/Police/Citizen+Programs/citizen\\_academy.htm](http://www.plano.gov/Departments/Police/Citizen+Programs/citizen_academy.htm) or call 972-941-2527.
- The Plano Citizen's Fire Academy. The purpose of this Academy is to make citizens of Plano aware of the services the Plano Fire Department provides and increase fire and life safety awareness. For further information please visit <http://www.plano.gov/Departments/Fire+Department/Fire+and+Life+Safety/CFA.htm> or call 972-941-7421.

Additional information on these outreach programs can be found by visiting <http://www.plano.gov/departments/community+outreach> or by calling (972) 941-7747 for roundtable information.

On behalf of City Council, I would like to again thank you for taking part in the Neighborhood Roundtable session held on November 9th. 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,



Pat Evans  
Mayor