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The Long Range planning Division is currently working on updates to the Land Use, Transportation, and Economic Development Elements of the Comprehensive Plan which guides the City's future growth, development, and redevelopment. The vast majority of issues that the Planning and Zoning Commission and staff are focused on in these updates are of a citywide nature not focused on a particular area of Plano. As these updates are discussed with the Commission, they will be included in the P&Z agenda packets posted on the City's website for anyone interested.

## **Neighborhood Revitalization**

- **The Plano Economic Development Board (PEDB)** – 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>.

## **Property Standards**

Property maintenance violations in the City of Plano are inspected by Property Standards Specialists who proactively inspect their assigned areas as well as respond to citizen concerns received in reference to Code and Zoning Ordinance violations. Designated employee districts enable staff to proactively and reactively respond to concerns within their assigned areas. When a concern is received by the Property Standards Department, the call is assigned to a designated Specialist to inspect 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.

Violations are addressed proactively through on-site inspections by Property Standards Specialists within their designated employee district and violations reported to the Property Standards Department in person, by telephone, email, or the Property Standards webpage located on the City of Plano website are inspected for substantiation. All concerns received are inspected by Specialists to establish whether a violation exists prior to pursuing any other action(s). Usually parties responsible for maintenance of a property are notified to correct noted violations within an established timeframe.

Codes and ordinances regulated by Property Standards 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, overcrowding and home occupation activities that do not comply with specified zoning regulations.

### **Code Enforcement**

**Absentee Landlords** – Due process is exercised in the regulation of all noted violations. Efforts are made to contact all responsible parties to communicate noted violations and afford an opportunity for voluntary compliance. If voluntary compliance is not attained or in the event of repeat violations, other appropriate enhanced enforcement actions may be taken. These actions include authorizing a city contractor to abate the nuisance at the property owner's expense, filing a lien against the property to recoup the assessed charges, issuing a Notice to Appear in Municipal Court, seeking civil penalty judgments, etc.

**Single Family Occupancy Standards** – Federal law, through the Fair Housing Amendments Act passed by Congress in 1988, prohibits the regulation of how many people may live at a residence based on familial status. The number of persons living in one residence may be regulated, but the restriction cannot be based on the relationship or health status of the persons at the residence. Restrictions are enacted to protect health and safety by preventing dwelling overcrowding, not to impermissibly limit the family composition of dwellings. Maximum occupancy restrictions cap the number of occupants per dwelling, typically in relation to the available floor space or the number and type of rooms.

The City of Plano regulates occupancy limitations based on criteria established in the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC). The IPMC is a model code adopted by many jurisdictions to govern the continued occupancy and maintenance of existing structures and

premises to ensure public health, safety and welfare. Regulation of adequate habitable space, light and ventilation requirements sets provisions for privacy, safety and protections against overcrowding conditions. For example, bedrooms occupied by one person must have at least 70 square feet of floor area and bedrooms occupied by more than one person must have at least 50 square feet of floor area for each occupant. Kitchens and non-habitable spaces, such as hallways, bathrooms, closets, utility rooms, storage and similar areas are not considered habitable spaces and shall not be used for sleeping purposes.

**Rental Inspection Program** – The Property Standards Department registered and systematically inspected 55 multi-family complexes and over 425 individual units as part of a Rental Registration and Inspection Pilot Program. The pilot included multi-family dwelling complexes consisting of five or more dwelling units designed for rental purposes built in 1986 or prior. All exterior grounds, common areas and a relative sampling of vacant and occupied interior units were inspected. Findings during these inspections included items such as inadequate exterior wall covering, lack of weatherproofing, faulty window and door hardware, obstructed egress, inoperable smoke alarms and defective hand/guard rails. Expansion of this program is continuing with the incorporation of approximately 47 additional multi-family rental dwelling complexes consisting of an estimated 14,425 units built from 1987 through 1997. Further expansion is planned to add in all rental properties within the City of Plano, including single-family structures occupied as rental dwellings.

Property Standards views code education and awareness as vital components to our desired effectiveness. Deliberate efforts are made to educate our citizenry regarding rules and regulations that govern public nuisance and property maintenance matters. 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 forums and functions. Additionally, governing rules and regulations are periodically reviewed for their appropriateness to the health safety and welfare of our community. Citizens' desires and input are considered during these reviews.

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.

## **Transportation**

### **Traffic Safety and Signal Operation Projects:**

- Neighborhood concern about Plano Alley Bump Program procedures; Neighborhood met with Transportation Advisory Committee, staff re-issued neighborhood petition, neighborhood consensus reached, 1 set (out of three) of alley bumps removed.
- Midway Road @ Willowdale Drive: Recently completed road improvement project on Midway slightly reduced the view to approaching north/southbound traffic. Sight restriction was subsequently removed to provide adequate view to approaching traffic.
- Dominion Parkway: Next month city council will consider the staff recommendation to post this new road at 40 mph.
- SH-121 Traffic Signals: After completing significant intersection modifications, TxDOT returned the operation of traffic signals back to Plano.
- International Parkway @ Plano Parkway road widening project: Intersection is now fully open to traffic.

- Dallas North Tollway from President George Bush Tollway to W. Parker Road ramp modification project: Held business and public meetings (10/9 and 10/10) to receive input. Now working with Willow Bend Shopping Mall consultant to assist them with their independent traffic study. After completion, staff will bring recommendations on design and funding to city council for consideration.

## 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.
- **Publications** - Municipal information can be found on a daily basis at <http://www.plano.gov/news/>. This is the City's initiative to provide more timely information in an electronic format.
- **Cable TV** - Information regarding upcoming City activities and events is available on Time Warner Cable Channel 16 and on Verizon Cable Channel 30.
- **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.
- **Email Subscriptions** - the City of Plano now offers email subscriptions. This service which is offered free of charge, will allow you to customize your experience with the City of Plano's website by choosing to subscribe to various web pages. Once subscribed to any of the available web pages, you will receive a notification email with a link to the specific web page any time that it is updated with new information. To sign up to receive updates for your specific pages of interest, log on to [www.plano.gov](http://www.plano.gov) and click on the "Sign up for Email Updates" link. You can subscribe to information in 27 different categories that encompass more than 150 individual items or web pages including minutes and agendas for city board and commissions, news and press releases, and much more.

The City's Public Information Department serves as the liaison between the City and Time Warner Cable. If you have any Time Warner related cable complaints, please email them to Susan Helt at [susanh@plano.gov](mailto:susanh@plano.gov) or call her and discuss with her (972-941-7315). These complaints are then turned into Time Warner for resolution.

## Other Topics of Interest

- **Water Issues** – 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 or log onto <http://www.plano.gov/Departments/Water/Water+Conservation+and+Education>

- **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 pickup 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 [www.plano.gov/Departments/Water](http://www.plano.gov/Departments/Water) and/or call the Water Education Coordinator 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 Citizen's 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 and procedures of the Plano Police Department. This is accomplished through a series of lectures and hands-on activities. Further information can be found by logging on to [http://www.plano.gov/Departments/Police/citizen+Programs/citizen\\_academy.htm](http://www.plano.gov/Departments/Police/citizen+Programs/citizen_academy.htm) or by calling 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 1<sup>st</sup>. 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