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Ensuring efficient city government during times of extraordinary growth

Dear citizens,

We are blessed to live in the greatest city in the world. You, the citizens, are the special ingredient that makes Fort Worth the exceptional community that it is. The high quality of life, safety of our neighborhoods, quality of our schools, attitude of our citizens, availability of jobs, acceptance of diversity and the willingness to work together make our city a place where we want to live, work, retire and raise our families.

With that said, we do face many challenges as our community works to maintain the desirable quality of life for future generations. Public safety, mobility and environmental quality, fiscal accountability and responsibility, continued economic viability and population growth are key challenges. These issues affect us in our neighborhoods, our district, our city and in the entire region. I hope you find the information in this

newsletter about some of these issues informative and helpful.

Of course, growth and development continue to be some of our more pressing challenges.

When we hear the question, "Why can't we stop the growth?" I generally ask the question, "How many of you were born and raised in Fort Worth?" More often than not, about ten to twenty percent in the room raise their hands and—as they say—the rest got here as quick as they could.

Whether people were born here or not, many have chosen to make Fort Worth their home. We made this decision for a variety of reasons—either for a job, school, or family—but most of all because of the quality of life we enjoy. Fort Worth is our home.

While the rest of the nation is experiencing declines in the economy and downward business cycle, Fort Worth is enjoying a strong economy. Yes, the Barnett

Shale and other factors are helping boost our economy. But there are many in our community being severely impacted by the inflationary times.

Your City Council and city management team are very much aware of all these and other challenges. We are fully dedicated to finding an effective solution to each issue. More importantly, we are looking forward with careful consideration of future generations in these solutions we implement. As we press forward, we must work together to ensure we have a vision of what Fort Worth is to our citizens.

We have all heard the phrase "The Fort Worth Way." Said another way, in Fort Worth, we live by the "Golden Rule." Thank you for living, working and celebrating our city with that in mind.

Sincerely,

Fiscal accountability and responsibility, the cornerstone of municipal government

If you've followed news reports, you may have been left with the impression that the city of Fort Worth is experiencing financial difficulties. You may have heard that the Employee Retirement Fund is underfunded, the Comprehensive Annual Finance Report (CAFR) is late and that audits are finding issues with the Municipal Courts and other departments.

The facts are that the city had identified problems and the City Council and city manager are demanding that every taxpayer penny is accounted for accurately and in a timely manner. As keepers of the public trust, the City Council is actively auditing every function in the city to ensure that the city is efficiently and effectively managed. We've made great progress addressing the problems we've found.

The City Council, city management team and the Employee Retirement Fund Board have worked together to overcome the fund's unfunded liability (reported widely as \$411 million).

The Employee's Pension Fund is solvent. Thanks to the City Council's corrective actions, the fund has been removed from the state watch list and the city was commended by the Texas Pension Board for the

actions taken to resolve the status of the fund. The issue was resolved by more specifically defining the roles and responsibilities of the City Council and the Retirement Board in Texas statute and by increasing city contributions to the pension fund.

The increased contribution was funded in lieu of employee pay raises this fiscal year. Today the fund is one of the best managed in the nation. We can be proud of that.

In the area of audits, the City Council established the Audit and Finance Advisory Committee to oversee municipal governance and audit activity. The city's independent auditor has been directed to conduct detailed audit reviews of city activities with the goal of ensuring full accountability of public resources.

While audits sometimes uncover deficiencies in accountability or in management processes, independent audits are essential in any effective, efficient organization.

One major issue is that the city has not kept pace with the modern processes and systems required for a city the size of Fort Worth. For example, the city is looking to update its financial systems with new software to replace the current

antiquated "paper and pencil" accounting systems. This will require prudent investment of public resources in new equipment and technology.

The City Council is demanding full accountability of city resources. Moreover, the city management is providing the resources and technology required to ensure the city is performing efficiently and with accountability and responsibility. ♦

Coffee with Jungus!

Councilmember Jungus Jordan and his Council Aide Cyndi Caldwell want to



hear about your neighborhood, needs, issues, comments and suggestions. They would love to visit with you, your board members and interested friends and neighbors. Please call (817-392-8806) or e-mail (District6@fortworthgov.org) the District 6 Office and we'll set up a date and time to have a conversation over some coffee. They're both looking forward to a great visit with you!

Filing a police report just got a bit easier in FW

There's a new way to file a report with the Fort Worth Police Department. The Internet is now available to file police reports for theft, harassing phone calls, identity theft, vandalism, criminal mischief and lost property where no suspect

information is available.

The online reporting system can be accessed through the Fort Worth Police Department's Web site at www.fortworthpd.com. Click on "File a Report Online."

The new system, available in both English and Spanish,

offers convenience for those wanting to make a report, and saves valuable police time and manpower. Fort Worth police will continue to take reports in person or by telephone if there is suspect information or leads.

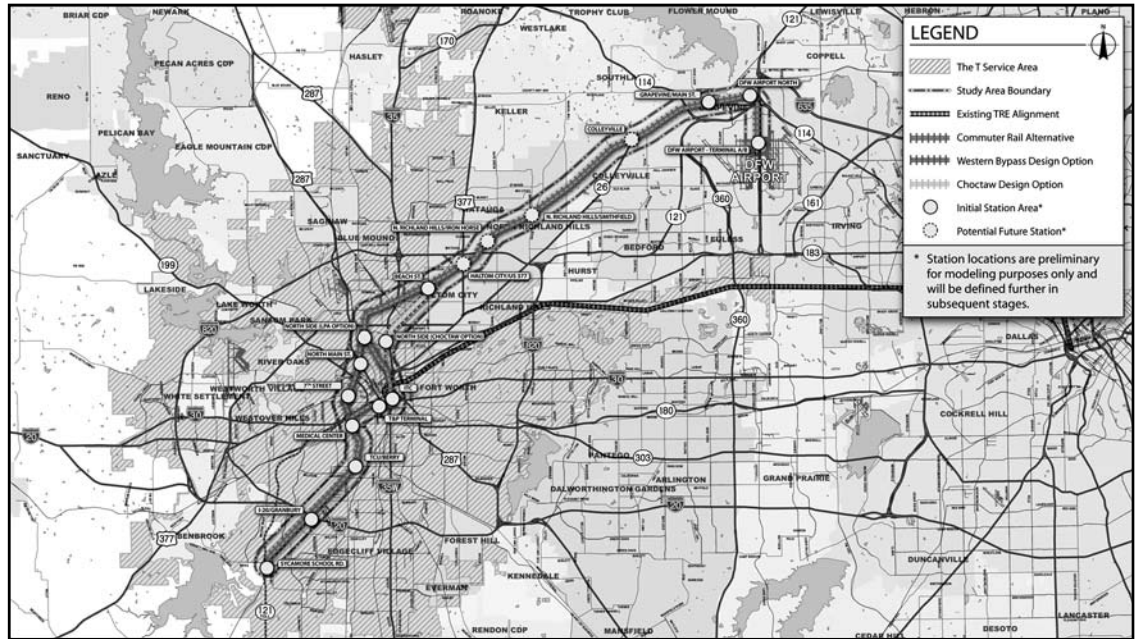
Mobility initiatives moving forward in District 6

A lot is going on in District 6 and the City Council continues to press forward with initiatives to improve mobility in southwest Fort Worth.

Summer Creek Parkway is under construction and will be open from Alta Mesa Blvd. to Risinger Rd. in the near future. Additionally, construction should start this fall on improvements from Risinger Rd. to McPherson Expressway (to serve the new Crowley Middle School).

Construction is also scheduled to begin on Dirks Rd./Alta Mesa Blvd. from Granbury Rd./Summer Creek Parkway to Bryant Irvin Rd. and the Southwest Parkway this winter.

Regional rail is another way that Fort Worth is working to reduce commute times and congestion along its major thoroughfares. The City Council is working with the Regional Transportation



Council (Councilmember Jungus Jordan chairs the Rail North Texas Committee) and other regional partners to finalize plans for the regional commuter rail system.

This system includes the Southwest to Northeast Rail Line (SW2NErail.com). The city is working with the Fort Worth Transportation Authority and other regional authorities to begin rail service from Summer Creek Station to downtown, DFW International Airport, Grapevine, Dallas and other destinations by 2012.

To coincide with the new commuter rail system, the city is looking at a plan for modern streetcars to feed off of the major rail line. Other plans also include bike paths, pedestrian-friendly community development and land use initiatives near future train stations.

Suffice it to say, easing traffic congestion and reducing commute times remains one of the top priorities for the district. Stay tuned as we continue to move forward with more mobility improvements. ♦

Hulen Heights receives national recognition

The Hulen Heights neighborhood placed third nationwide as Neighborhood of the Year in the category of Social Revitalization/Neighborliness at the annual Neighborhoods USA (NUSA) conference held in May in Hampton, Virginia.

Hulen Heights also received the Mayor's "Spirit of Fort Worth"

award at the annual Neighborhood Luncheon in February. These awards recognize the social revitalization efforts, initiated by one neighborhood organization, that focus on the social or cultural aspects of the neighborhood. In general, these efforts support the spirit of 'Neighborliness.'

Hulen Heights plans many events that bring neighbors together, building community pride and involvement. Most events include educational, social and charitable aspects. Congratulations to Hulen Heights!

For more information, visit www.NUSA.org or www.hulenheights.com. ♦

City Council launches modern streetcar study

The modern-day street car may prove to be another opportunity to move commuters, reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality in Fort Worth. The City Council recently appointed a 15-member committee charged with determining the feasibility of developing a modern streetcar network.

The streetcar would be a part of the overall public transit system under development and would connect to commuter rail and other modes of public transportation in the city.

The members of the newly formed committee will review Fort Worth's previous streetcar studies; take a look at successful light rail and streetcar systems in other cities (like Portland, Seattle and Tacoma); and conduct a preliminary assessment of costs and benefits.

While the benefits of a new streetcar system are obvious, there are many challenges to such a system, not the least of which is the cost associated



with installing various streetcar stations and the required overhead electric power supply.

The City Council, officials with the Fort Worth Transportation Authority (The "T"), along with the members of the Streetcar Committee recently began their work with a trip to Dallas via

the Trinity Railway Express to ride the DART transit system and tour Mockingbird Station, one of the country's foremost examples of transit oriented developments. Other discovery trips to Portland, Seattle and Tacoma will take place in the coming months.

The committee is expected to present their findings to the city council by December.

If the study committee determines that a streetcar system is desirable for Fort Worth, they will work with the City Council and city staff to identify a pilot corridor, potential funding sources and prepare a preliminary funding strategy.

In 2002, the city approved a streetcar proposal but was unable to acquire the needed funding for the system. At the time, the plan was for the proposed streetcar system to connect downtown with the Cultural District, the Stockyards, and the near south and southeast portions of the city.

District 6 continuing its focus on public safety

District 6 consistently ranks as the safest district in the city of Fort Worth statistically, and Fort Worth ranks as one of the safest major cities in the nation. Residents can be very proud of this record.

It's well known that Fort Worth is home to the finest Police and Fire Departments in the country — maybe even the world. The city's officers are well trained and well equipped. Our Neighborhood Patrol Officers are an integral part of our communities and our Citizens on Patrol Program is a model for other communities around the globe.

But that does not mean that crime and code enforcement aren't concerns. The city continues to work on hiring more police officers, fire fighters and code enforcement officers to support the city's growth with appropriate resources.

Evidence of this growth in public safety enforcement is the fact that District 6 is scheduled to open a new police district office in the shopping center at McCart and Sycamore School Road by October 1, 2008.

The city's Crime Control and Prevention District is critical to the

continued funding of important public safety programs.

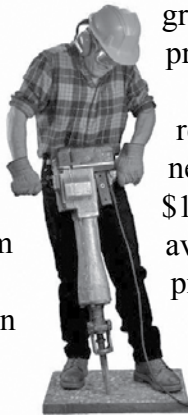
The citizens of Fort Worth are a key ingredient for the safety of our neighborhoods. "A nosy neighbor" is the best prevention. If you see someone or something suspicious in your neighborhood, do not hesitate to report it to the appropriate authority.

Suspicious activity should be reported to the police by dialing 911, non-emergency at 817-335-4222 or on line at www.fortworthpd.com. ♦

Voters approve \$150 million bond program

Fort Worth voters approved a \$150 million bond program in May that will be dedicated to street improvements across the city.

The 2008 bond program provides \$81 million for arterial streets, \$33 million for neighborhood streets, \$22.2 million for bridges, \$7.5 million for traffic lights and other intersections improvements and \$6.3 million for transportation



grants and the city's public art program.

The 2008 bond program is a response to citizen requests for new and improved roadways. \$150 million was the amount available for the 2008 bond program without raising taxes.

A detailed description of the projects identified for the 2008 bond program can be viewed on the city's Web site at www.fortworthgov.org. The projects were chosen using

feedback from residents, need, cost effectiveness and other criteria.

Additionally, parity among council districts was taken into consideration.

Although city staff has begun work to implement 2008 bond program projects, it will take about a year before actual construction begins and several years for completion.

Work continues on the six-year 2004 Bond Program, scheduled to be complete in 2010.

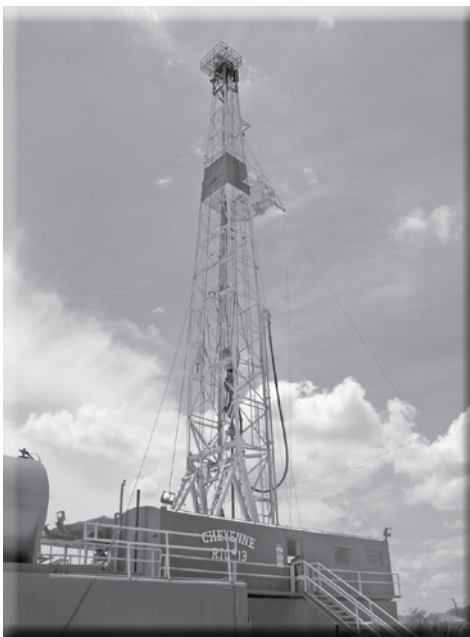
So, where's all that Barnett Shale money going?

Members of the Fort Worth City Council are often asked, "Why is the city facing tight budgets with all of the money generated from the Barnett Shale?"

The answer is simple: Roughly 95 percent of the revenue generated from publicly owned gas wells is restricted. This money, according to current federal, state and local statutes, must be saved or used only to improve the properties under which the revenues were generated. That's why, for example, we've seen a great many improvements to local parks.

Only about 4.7 percent of the money expected to come from these gas leases is unrestricted under current policies. Over the next four years, that 4.7 percent is projected to be about \$15 million, and the City Council has dedicated these funds to greatly needed street improvements.

Because the vast majority of gas well revenues are restricted,



this money cannot be used to fill gaps in the city's General Fund budget, for example.

Another factor to keep in mind is that gas well revenues won't last forever. Gas production will diminish and so will royalty payments. Eventually, the money stream will run dry. With that in mind, the City Council and others believe the best use of these dollars is to spend it on one-time, long-term capital needs,

including improvements to parks, streets and other city facilities, and save the rest in a permanent fund, leaving a legacy for future generations.

Hiring additional city staff or supporting important city services with gas well revenues could pose a problem in the future. These people or programs would eventually have to be cut or reduced once gas well revenues decline.

The Barnett Shale is expected to provide the city with opportunities related to specific, one-time capital improvements. But, as Mayor Mike Moncrief often says, "The Barnett Shale is not a panacea or a cure-all."

The Fort Worth City Council and city staff continue to look for innovative ways to use the Barnett Shale to support greatly needed capital improvements throughout the city while protecting our neighborhoods through a balanced well-crafted gas well drilling ordinance.

City Council reconvenes Gas Drilling Task Force

The City Council has asked the current Gas Well Task Force to conclude their review and make its recommendations to the City Council by the end of September.

The Task Force was convened with specific guidance to review several issues regarding city policies and other challenges related to the urban drilling and the Barnett Shale.

The four areas of concern were the impacts of trucks and traffic associated with drilling and servicing wells, noise associated with compressor stations, water use and disposal and pipelines.

Upon receiving the recommendations, the City Council will deliberate the need for changing the existing city ordinance and hold public hearings before revising the existing ordinance.

District 6 is entirely outside of I-20 with large areas of empty space. Therefore, the district has been involved in the urban drilling issue for several years now. The city has experienced and managed the early drilling and learned



much from the experience.

The City Council has been actively involved in governing well site locations, and District 6 has not yet experienced major issues with pipeline planning or locations. The city has been successful in ensuring that pipelines in District 6 don't interfere with neighborhoods.

With the recent agreement reached by the Southwest Coalition, virtually all the land in District 6 is leased or soon will be. The City Council will

continue to work hard to identify specific truck routes for servicing wells to minimize traffic through neighborhoods. Along those lines, we will soon implement a policy requiring gas well traffic to participate in appropriate repair of any street damage, and we have asked the gas well companies to maintain the medians on their truck routes.

To find out more about the gas drilling issue, visit the city's Web site at: www.fortworthgov.org/gaswells.

Residents have a say in Fort Worth's future

It happened in 1963 and '92. Now, it's happening again — a citywide conversation to stimulate dialogue among Fort Worth residents.

Appropriately called *Let's Talk Fort Worth*, the citizen-driven event has included a series of planning and discussion meetings, culminating this fall in a big town hall meeting that will generate ideas, suggestions and dreams to help shape the city's future for the next 20 years. And you're invited!

The big event starts at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 25 at the Will Rogers Memorial Center Auditorium, 3401 W. Lancaster Ave.

Let's Talk Fort Worth is an opportunity for each of the more than 700,000 residents to tell the mayor and City Council how we can work together to make Fort Worth even better. Mayor Mike Moncrief and City Council members are invited to attend the citywide conversation on Sept. 25 to hear residents' comments.

"We want to hear the concerns, observations and suggestions of our residents as to how we can make the best city in the country even better for future generations," Moncrief said.

Today, Fort Worth boasts a population of more than 700,000

and is the 17th largest city in the country, with more people moving in every day. Still, Fort Worth has a few challenges including expansive growth, traffic congestion and air quality. And, just as they did in 1963 and 1992, city leaders believe it's time to talk again.

Share your vision for Fort Worth's future in person at the Sept. 25 event, or in writing via e-mail or regular U.S. mail. You also can submit ideas, suggestions and dreams for Fort Worth's future by calling the TalkLine at 817-392-2008.

For more information, go to www.LetsTalkFortWorth.org.

Helpful Numbers

This section is included to help residents find direct access to some of the most needed services in the communities.

Trash, recycling, brush, bulky waste	Environmental Management	817-392-3279
Barking dogs, animal abuse, dead animal, lost or found pet	Animal Care and Control.....	817-392-3737
High weeds and grass, junk vehicles, debris, open and vacant structures	Code Compliance	817-392-1234 www.fortworthgov.org/codecompliance
Sidewalks, speed bumps, school zones, curbs.....	Transportation and Public Works.....	817-392-8100
Water service, billing, sewer issues	Water	817-392-4477
Permits, inspections, licensing	Development.....	817-392-7820
Construction services, engineering	Engineering.....	817-392-8306
Housing services, concerns, complaints.....	Housing.....	817-392-7546

We want to hear from you!

Please use this form to send your comments about pressing issues in our District. You can remain anonymous if you choose. Once you have completed this form, place it in a stamped envelope and mail it to: The City of Fort Worth, Council District 6, 1000 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth, TX 76102. You can also submit comments or suggestions by e-mail at district6newsletter@fortworthgov.org.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Comments: _____



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