



# ARLINGTON STRONG NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

Quarterly Report

2012 Third Quarter

Volume 3, Issue 3

## INTRODUCTION

This issue of the Arlington Strong Neighborhood Initiative (ASNI) covers the third quarter of fiscal year 2012. The report includes neighborhood and community events, partnership activities, and progress made implementing the fiscal year 2012 Business Plan during the months of April through June. Milestones focus on the areas of People, Opportunity, and Place.

### People

Service Team Updates  
Resident Engagement



Volunteers at the Community Garden

### Opportunity

Partner Initiatives



Downtown Front and Center Event sponsored by UT Arlington Schools of Urban and Public Affairs and Architecture



2012 Keep Arlington Beautiful board

### Place

Neighborhood Investment  
Capital Investment

## SERVICE TEAM UPDATES

- Multiple City departments immediately pulled together to start the recovery process after a devastating tornado rocked parts of Arlington on April 3. On site, Police and Fire worked together at the damaged properties, conducting searches and setting up checkpoints to maintain safety and security. Public Works staff began setting barricades, repairing signal lights, clearing trees and debris from the roads, and arranging for hauling of storm debris to the landfill. Animal Services also rolled out their Lost and Found webpage earlier than planned to accommodate pet owners. A Tornado Recovery Center was established as a coordination site for City services, where residents were able to receive face-to-face assistance from City department staff and representatives from Oncor.
- The Arlington Housing Authority was host to the Texas Chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials' Annual Conference in April. Approximately 350 housing officials from across Texas attended a variety of sessions and a bus tour to showcase central Arlington projects made possible with funds from CDBG and the HOME Investment Partnership Program.
- The Community Development and Planning Department launched an enhanced webpage about gas drilling to make more information available to the public. Searches for



information can be made by operator or address through an interactive map. Links to numerous documents are provided, such as individual well permits, Railroad Commission information, compliance reports, and site activity.

- The Parks and Recreation Department's Keep Arlington Beautiful program included projects for UT Arlington's Big Event, a Lake Arlington Cleanup, and several workdays with the Friends of O.S. Gray Natural Area. In total, 17 projects were included, using 1,629 volunteers that worked 14,924 hours.
- The Code Compliance Department closed four dangerous and substandard structures this quarter, with all four properties brought into compliance by the property owners. In addition, four other cases were taken to hearing, two of which were apartment complex/hotel properties.
- Arlington Animal Services launched a pet licensing video made possible by a grant from the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation. Every dog or cat is required to be licensed annually, along with proof of valid rabies vaccination. Identification tags are issued to animals licensed to help reunite lost pets with their owners.



## RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

- A group of Citizens On Patrol (COP) Mobile members were recognized for their dedication to helping in the aftermath of the tornadoes that struck Arlington in April. COP Mobile volunteers were presented with the Citizens Community Service Award for patrolling the damaged neighborhoods, reporting suspicious activity, driving officers and volunteers to posts, and delivering water and food for officers. With over 200 hours logged, these volunteers provided a critical service to officers and first responders as they were a physical presence in their neighborhoods.



- On June 30, the Parkview Addition Community held a work day for their community garden and park area on Circle Drive. General Motors provided box lunches and water for all volunteers. Later that day, a neighborhood meeting was held at the future garden. New officers were elected, and Chris Boehle from General Motors spoke to the organization about activities taking place at the assembly plant. Hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and drinks were provided by the neighborhood.

- In conjunction with officials from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Arlington Housing Authority hosted a Father's Day event at Fielder Road Baptist Church where participating dads and their children enjoyed games, activities and snacks. Housing Authority staff members were on hand to provide resources for parents.



- Approximately 150 people attended the Naturally Fun Fishing event at Lake Arlington on June 2.
- In June, the Library collaborated with Tarrant County College to offer Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED) classes in English and Spanish. Spanish GED classes began in June with 4 sessions held and 57 in attendance. In addition, GED classes in Math, Writing, Science, and Social Studies were offered by Arlington Reads with 538 students in attendance this quarter. There are 138 students enrolled in the Pre-GED and GED programs and nine have received their Graduate Equivalency Diploma.
- A free bicycle safety class was held May 19 at City Hall. The class was taught by a League of American Bicyclists Certified Instructor, and funded by a grant from the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation.

### Arlington Reads

Arlington Reads, the Library's literacy initiative, obtained accreditation status in June from ProLiteracy, an nonprofit organization that supports literacy programs throughout the nation and abroad. Arlington Reads was also invited to submit two 'Promising Practices' for the Life through Literacy program, which offers programs and services to new and expectant teen moms at several AISD high schools, and for their community partnership with Rotary and First United Methodist Church that allows use of the space at the Literacy House for literacy classes and programs.



- The Parks and Recreation and Public Works & Transportation departments, in partnership with Keep Arlington Beautiful, provided free mulch to Arlington residents beginning April 21 at Richard Simpson Park. The mulch was a result of native trees that were destroyed in the April tornadoes. Residents were able to bag as much mulch as desired for personal use, and Public Works employees provided loaders to help fill pickup trucks and trailers.



- Arlington Water Utilities hosted a free do-it-yourself drip irrigation class on April 9 at the Southwest Branch Library.

- The Police Department and Holt Chrysler Jeep Dodge hosted Operation Kidsafe on June 1-2. Operation Kidsafe captures a child's picture and fingerprints using digital video and digital ink-less fingerprint software. Parents were provided a quality printout that they can give any law enforcement in the world to instantly aid in an investigation.



- El día de los niños/Day of the Child was celebrated at the Library on April 28 with 130 in attendance. The event is a celebration of children, families, and reading that culminates yearly on April 30. The celebration emphasizes the importance of reading and literature for children of all linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The Homeschool Drama Club and Speer Elementary's Ballet Folklorico provided cultural and artistic entertainment.

- The Animal Services and Information Technology Departments launched a new online lost and found pet reporting site just one day after the tornadoes struck in April. Many animals became lost when fences and homes were damaged or destroyed. This new site has helped reunite lost animals with their families. There were 804 pets logged into the database, with 528 reported lost and 276 reported found. To date, 116 pets have been reunited with their families.

- The second annual Mother & Son Overnight at the Rec event, held April 27-28 at Cliff Nelson Recreation Center, drew 200 attendees.

- Students at Amos Elementary School organized a penny war with the goal of helping the shelter animals at Arlington Animal Services. The result was lots of fun, smiles and a feeling of accomplishment after raising \$481.00 for a great cause.

- Stories to Our Children, a five-series writing workshop offered by Arlington Reads where parents wrote and illustrated stories to present to their children and families, culminated in a final celebration on May 19 with renowned children's author Pat Mora. The workshops focused on writing skills and the final collection of stories are now part of the Library's collection. This final celebration had over 250 in attendance.



- Randol Mill and Bad Konigshofen Family Aquatic Centers opened during the Memorial Day weekend and accommodated more than 5,600 visitors.

## PARTNER INITIATIVES

- The Tarrant County Housing Finance Corporation approved providing funding to support construction and/or furnishing of the first Nurse Family Partnership Program home. The site, formerly a foreclosed, substandard and dilapidated home, is being developed by the Arlington Housing Authority as part of the City's Neighborhood Stabilization Program. The new home will be home to new moms who participate in Tarrant County's Nurse Family Partnership Program, and a house parent. Construction is expected to begin in 2012.
- Parks and Recreation assisted with the Cardboard Boat Regatta at Hurricane Harbor for a 23rd consecutive year on April 28. The event is an annual fundraiser for the River Legacy Foundation.
- On April 14, the Arlington ISD held Papá-paloosa at Swift Elementary. AISD Dads' Outreach hosted dads' clubs from across the district for a day of live music, classic cars, games, and bounce houses. Papá-paloosa is an event to raise awareness of the important role dads play in their child's life. This year AISD honored dads that have served in the military.
- On April 28, dozens of south Arlington families turned out to join Mayor Cluck at the YMCA of Arlington's Cooper Street branch location in celebration of Healthy Kids Day, a national Y initiative. To kick off the festivities, the mayor led a half-mile nature hike through a wooded area on the southwestern portion of the Cooper Street campus.
- On April 28, graduate students from the School of Urban and Public Affairs and the School of Architecture at UT Arlington partnered to create a unique economic development opportunity in the heart of downtown Arlington. The event, Downtown Front and Center, was a temporary installation that transformed Front Street between Center and Mesquite into a vibrant streetscape that brought together local businesses,



community organizations and students to demonstrate how a currently underutilized space can develop and help visitors realize the potential of downtown Arlington.

- Arlington Mansfield Library Partnership celebrated National Library Week April 8-14 by kicking off an Adult Library Card Campaign. This collaborative effort allows library patrons in both cities to access a wider collection of materials, including audiobooks and e-books, with a combined total of roughly 698,718 items. Public training in the use of e-readers and other personal audio devices are now being offered in Arlington and Mansfield Public Libraries.
- The Downtown Arlington Management Corporation unveiled its new logo as a pair of skydivers parachuted towards the lawn of the Levitt Pavilion at Founder's Plaza. One of the skydivers carried a flag emblazoned with a new logo, which spells d-o-w-n-t-o-w-n in colorful letters and playfully alternative typefaces along with the words "music, culture, food and shopping."
- The Arlington Funding Information Center and the North Texas Minority Chamber of Commerce presented Start Your Own Business Workshops and provided details to starting a small company, including how to take advantage of opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses. A Grant Writing Basics for Non-Profits Workshop offered an overview of the grant writing process, an introduction to proposal writing, as well as tools and techniques of grant management. These workshops provided assistance and valuable information to 101 individuals.
- The Parks and Recreation Department participated with East Arlington Renewal to host the second "See Litter, Pick It Up" community cleanup event on June 16. Aldersgate United Methodist Church hosted the group that worked to clean up right-of-way along Park Row Drive from Sherry Street to State Highway 360. Results included 75 bags of trash collected and the involvement of over 30 volunteers.



## AISD STUDENTS ARE READY TO MOVE WITH THE MAYOR

So the bar's been set for Kadon Morton. And what a high bar it is.

The Odeal Percy Elementary fifth grader plans to take six million steps over the summer which, if he can pull it off, would be about one million more than classmate Katie Clark, the winner in last year's Let's Move with the Mayor program.

Mayor Robert Cluck sees it as doable and certainly admirable.

"I'd like to see all of them strive for something like that," he said Wednesday during the Let's Move with the Mayor Kick-off Rally at Percy Elementary. "This is all about being active, about getting up off the couch and not watching television and doing video games all summer. Mostly, it's about establishing an exercise routine you can do into adulthood."

This is the third year for the Let's Move with the Mayor campaign, which equips over 4,000 AISD fifth graders with pedometers and tracking logs to record every step they take, from the time they put on their shoes to start their day to the time they pull them off and plop into bed. Among the goodies for the top three winners are Six Flags tickets.

Let's Move With the Mayor is part of a national movement that hopes to combat childhood obesity by building healthy habits. It grew out of First Lady Michelle Obama asking every mayor in America to join her Let's Move campaign for a more holistic approach to staying fit.

Mayor Cluck was joined in the Percy cafeteria by Texas Rangers mascot Rangers Captain and AISD Superintendent Jerry McCullough, who vowed to wear a pedometer and compare his steps with the fifth graders at summer's end.

"I'm going to wear it even when I have a suit on," he told the students, adding, "You don't have to be in your P.E. clothes to go out and walk. It's a good idea to get your parents involved, too. They should be walking."



## NEIGHBORHOOD INVESTMENT

- A Day of Dedications was held on May 19 when three new City parks were opened including two in east Arlington. Ceremonies were held at Crystal Canyon Natural Area (1000 Brown Boulevard), B.C. Barnes Park (300 Daniel Drive), and Valley View Park (908 Highland Drive). The final ribbon cutting at Valley View Park, pictured above, drew 100 adults and children from the surrounding neighborhood. Residents enjoyed hot dogs, chips, cookies and lemonade. The estimated \$409,000 project included approximately \$279,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding.
- Through a donation from the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation, residents affected by the tornadoes were eligible to receive four free trees for their property. Trees will be planted at no



cost by volunteers. The program runs through August, with the planting of trees taking place in the Fall.

- The Community Garden at UT Arlington continues to be a success. Since the opening of the garden, all plots have been contracted to residents for maintenance and oversight. The Sunshine Rotary Club constructed a shade arbor, and more than 200 UT Arlington students and community volunteers have donated time and expertise to build, maintain and harvest the garden. Food donations amounting to 50 percent of each plot's production are directed to Mission Arlington, with more than 250 pounds of fresh produce being donated so far in 2012.
- In cooperation with the Downtown Arlington Management Corporation and the Arlington Convention & Visitors Bureau, a new trolley service called the "Downtown Express" will introduce tourists and visitors to the Downtown Arlington experience and new businesses.



## CAPITAL INVESTMENT

- On May 5, the City broke ground on the long-awaited 10 and Under courts at the Arlington Tennis Center, located at 500 Mayfield Road. 10 and Under tennis started at the Center in 2008, and the program will now have permanent courts for children aged 10 and below. The construction of the courts is being supported by grants from the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation and the United States Tennis Association.
- The Water Utilities Department has begun early public outreach on a sewer expansion project in north Arlington. The Village Creek 27-inch Sanitary Sewer Interceptor Project will run from Park Hill Drive to Green Oaks Boulevard. The project involves installing a 27-inch pipe to replace the current smaller 12- and 18-inch lines that are at or near capacity. The effort is designed to increase the sewer system efficiency and replace aging infrastructure.



- The Public Works and Transportation Department hosted a second public meeting about the Tri-Schools Street Improvements project on May 21 at Cross Timbers Intermediate school. The project, currently in the preliminary design stage, will provide improvements to Ledbetter Road, Russell Road and Calender Road in southwest Arlington.
- Fire Station 17 had its official opening on April 30. The 3,691 square foot station, located in the 4000 block of North Collins Street, is actually temporary. The new station will primarily serve Viridian, a master planned community under development in north Arlington, which will ultimately add 15,000 residents to the city. Housing constructed has just begun, and as more homes emerge, a larger \$3.5 million station will be constructed.



## ABOUT ARLINGTON'S STRONG NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

The goal of Arlington's Strong Neighborhood Initiative is to reinvigorate Arlington's neighborhoods and ensure sustainability by leveraging resources, increasing citizen participation and encouraging community stakeholder collaborations.

The key to developing ASNI is formulation of strategic alliances and partnerships that capitalizes on the influences of collaborative efforts. Emphasis of the initiative focuses on mobilizing citizens for dialogue, deliberations and collaborative problem solving.

For more information on ASNI, visit the website at: [www.arlingtontx.gov/planning/asni](http://www.arlingtontx.gov/planning/asni)

