

PARK GAZETTE



October 2008

From the Mayor's Desk...

On May 31, as Mayor, I hosted a Strategic Planning session attended by community leaders from the City Council, Board of Adjustment, and Planning and Zoning Commission, as well as current committee members and representatives, such as the City Attorney and financial advisers. The group agreed about the fundamental importance of the city government providing effective, cost efficient, basic services, such as public safety, the sanitation program and street maintenance,

and lighting.

In addition, the small group sessions generated a list of top priorities. There was good consensus on completion of the new municipal buildings, a city master plan, revitalization of the business district, evaluation of a railroad quiet zone, an Olmos Park Foundation, and better overall communications with citizens.

Council and staff worked all summer to prepare a proposed 2009 fiscal year budget, which was considered at a public hearing on September 1, 2008. Faced with rising costs, the council was pleased to adopt a budget that is \$21,591 less than last

year's and will result in a 6.6% lower tax rate than last year. We invite you to review the budget on the city's Web site.

At a special meeting on August 18, 2008, the council approved putting a one-fourth of 1% economic development sales tax proposal on the November 4, 2008, ballot. If you as voters approve the tax, the Council will create an Economic Development Corporation to oversee utilization of monies for the improvement of the business area, as well as other statutorily allowed projects. These could include development of a city master

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City Hall Update

We are excited to update you on the progress of our City Hall project. As promised, preliminary designs, approved by the City Council last spring, were displayed and presented to the public. After hearing your comments, we

further modified the plans and are pleased with the changes.

We continue to negotiate a contract with Guido Brothers Construction and look forward to groundbreaking around November 1. Construction of the Police Station/ Administration



Architectural drawing of new City Hall

building will take approximately eight months and, once complete, we will begin demolition of the existing City Hall and construction of the Fire Station. We anticipate this second phase of the project will take about nine months.

Save the Date! Olmos Park Night Out

Tuesday, October 7
5:30 p.m., Alameda Circle

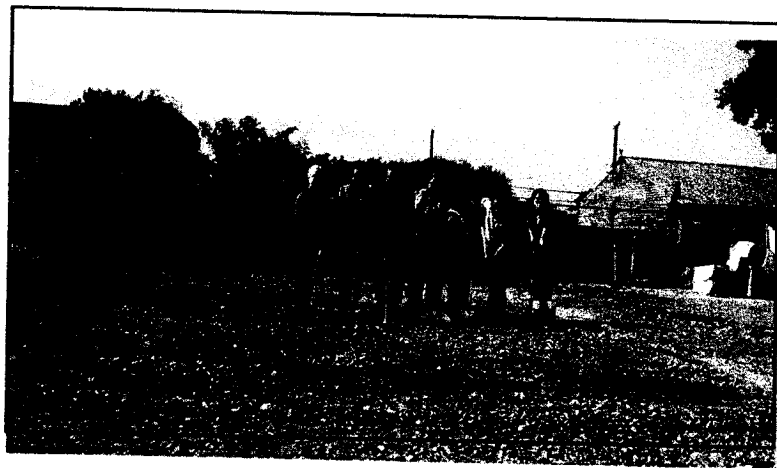
Many of you will remember that several years ago we decided to hold Olmos Park Night Out in the fall, when the weather was nicer, rather than the first Tuesday of August when other cities observed National Night Out. Now it seems we were ahead of our time. This year the state of Texas is joining us and will hold National Night Out in October.

Please join us on Tuesday, October 7, beginning at 5:30 p.m., for food and fun. There will be activities for the whole family, and all of your city employees will be there to meet and greet.

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New Public Works Building

We are pleased to report that the City Council approved a much-needed new Public Works building located at the impound lot on Clarence. The building will be 25 ft. x 50 ft. and will include a break room, lockers, restroom, and air conditioning. The turnkey construction project is estimated to cost approximately



Groundbreaking for new Public Works addition

\$87,000. Miller Millworks will begin construction shortly, and the work is scheduled to take approximately 90 days.

This improved facility will give your hard-working Public Works employees a place to take breaks and have their lunch, in addition to providing the other basic facilities they need.

Fall Haul Off

The semi-annual Haul Off will be Saturday, October 18, beginning at 7:00 a.m. Please leave your items at curbside by 7:00 a.m., or the night before. Remember, we cannot take any of the following items:

- paint, unless cans are completely dried out
- no pesticides
- batteries
- tires
- large appliances
- anything containing Freon
- no items weighing more than 40 pounds
- no building materials (including lumber, sheetrock, or concrete)

In case of very heavy rain, the alternate pick-up date will be Saturday, October 25. Light rain will not delay the Haul Off! If you have questions, please call City Hall or ask any of our Public Works employees.

What Can I Recycle?

Are you unsure about what you can leave in your recycling bin? We have some good news for you! Vista Fibers has expanded the list of recyclables, and you may leave any of the following in your bin for curbside pickup each Wednesday:

- Newspapers
- Mail
- Magazines
- Aluminum and steel cans
- Plastic containers #1 through #7
- Cardboard and food boxes
- Phone books

Everything that you recycle not only helps the environment but also generates revenue for the City. The average monthly revenue for the sales of recyclables from January through July was \$544!

Mayor (from p. 1)

plan, sidewalks to encourage better pedestrian access, landscaping enhancements, and so forth. The Olmos Park Business Association was in favor, presenting a petition signed by thirty-five Olmos Park business owners. Informational presentations will be made in late September and in October for residents to attend.

You may have seen that there is construction activity at the Roundabout. Installation of the new fountain has begun and is expected to be completed by the end of October. This will be a new focal point and enhancement for Olmos Park.

On August 28, 2008, a petition signed by at least 5% of registered voters in Olmos Park was presented to City Council by Mr. George Wilkins III, requesting an election for a property tax freeze/cap for senior citizens over 65 and individuals with disabilities. Because the timing was after a statutory deadline, the matter

cannot be on the November ballot, but will instead be on the May 2009 ballot.

Construction began in September on our public works building to provide space for streets and sanitation workers. In addition, the city expects construction on the new City Hall building to begin before year end. This building will house administration, police, court, and council chambers. Late in 2009, the city expects to start construction of the new fire station.

As you can see, a great deal is happening in Olmos Park.

On behalf of the Council, we always welcome your attendance at our meetings. Regular monthly meetings occur on the third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. All meetings are posted on the city Web site www.ci.olmos-park.tx.us.

Respectfully,

Ron Tefteller, Mayor

PARK GAZETTE

4B Sales Tax Election

The City Council has ordered a special election on November 4, 2008, on the question of whether the voters of the City authorize the imposition of one-fourth of one cent sales and use tax for economic development purposes. The City will participate in a joint election administered by the Bexar County Elections Administrator for the November 4, 2008, election.

The special election will be on the same ballot with your other choices this November. Early voting begins October 20 and ends October 31. Due to the high demand for voting machines, **WE WILL NOT HAVE EARLY VOTING AT CITY HALL.** During early voting, however, you may vote at any polling site in Bexar County. You **WILL** be able to vote at City Hall on Election Day, Tuesday, November 4, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

What is a 4b Sales Tax?

The 4b Sales Tax is a funding mechanism for improvements for use by certain entities, including a city such as Olmos Park. The tax is collected at the point of sale like other sales taxes.

What is our current sales tax rate?

- State of Texas: 6.25%
- San Antonio Metropolitan Transit Authority: 0.5%
- City of Olmos Park: 1.0%
- City of Olmos Park Street Maintenance: 0.25%
- Total sales tax rate: 8.0%

What are sales tax rates in neighboring cities?

- San Antonio: 8.125%
- Alamo Heights: 7.75%
- Terrell Hills: 7.75%
- Balcones Heights: 8.25%
- Castle Hills: 8.25%
- Shavano Park: 8.25%

Who has spending authority over these funds?

If the voters authorize the imposition of the one-fourth of one cent sales and use tax at the November 4, 2008, special election, the City Council expects to create the Olmos Park Economic Development Corporation.

The Olmos Park Economic Development Corporation will have a seven-person Board of Directors appointed by the City Council. The Board of Directors will administer the sales and use taxes collected for economic development and will review and recommend to the City Council economic development projects to be funded with the sales and use tax revenue. Projects must be approved by both the Board of Directors of the Economic Development Corporation and the City Council.

What would a one-fourth of one cent sales and use tax raise?

A one-fourth of one cent sales tax is equivalent to \$0.25 for every \$100 spent. Based on current sales tax revenues, one-fourth cent will generate

approximately \$80,000 per year.

What types of projects may be funded by this tax?

This tax allows communities to undertake projects that contribute to economic development, such as

- Improvements to streets, roads, and sidewalks, particularly in a business district
- Drainage improvements
- Demolition of existing structures
- Development of a Master Plan
- Landscaping for visual enhancement of a business district
- Any other project that the Board of Directors of the Economic Development Corporation determines will contribute to the promotion of development of new or expanded business enterprises that create or retain primary jobs

The State Comptroller's Web site has further details and is a useful resource for additional sales tax questions. Please visit www.window.state.tx.us for more information.

Bicycle Master Plan

For several years, Olmos Park officials and those from other cities have met with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) concerning their Bicycle Master Plan. The goal of the plan is to provide safe routes for bicyclists to share city streets, including McCullough, with motor vehicles.

In August, the City Council heard a presentation from Scott Erickson, senior public involvement coordinator for MPO. Mr. Erickson updated them on the plan and reported on possible funding sources should Council decide to provide a bike lane on the portion of



McCullough within Olmos Park. He stated that since there is a designated bike lane on McCullough south of Hildebrand, there may be an opportunity to fund 80% of the project with federal grants. The remaining 20% would be funded by the City.

As with any expenditure of public funds, Council must consider all options before making a decision. They discussed this issue at the meeting on September 18 at 6:30 p.m. You are welcome to submit your thoughts and comments to the City Manager or City Council. We will continue to keep you up-to-date on the progress of this important issue.

PARK GAZETTE

Railroad Safety/Quiet Zone

The establishment of a railroad quiet zone may soon be a reality for residents of Olmos Park and surrounding neighborhoods. A Quiet Zone is a section of track designated by the Federal Railroad Administration as a zone where trains no longer sound their horns. The FRA grants quiet zones when the intersections have been made safer through the installation of supplemental safety measures.

Train traffic has increased in recent years. On average, 18 trains per day traverse the section of track that crosses McCullough, 11 of these at night. Residents in the first two blocks closest to the tracks are frequently disturbed by the 135 decibel train horns. But depending

upon the wind direction, residents throughout Olmos Park are bothered by the noise. The proposed QZ would encompass the crossings at Basse, McCullough, Zilla, Dora, and Olmos Drive.

Since all of the crossings are in the city of San Antonio, Olmos Park cannot, by itself, initiate the quiet zone process. Happily, in a recent meeting with Olmos Park City Councilman Jeff Judson, San Antonio City Councilwoman Mary Alice Cisneros expressed her strong support for the QZ and for helping fund the improvements. All of the crossings are in her council district.

With her support, it is likely that the QZ improvements can be made next year, with the cessation of train horns soon to follow.

What Is the Status of Our Street Lights?

Many of you are concerned about the status and maintenance of our historic gaslights. As you know, many of the service lines were damaged during our infrastructure project. The Fire Department spent many hours repairing the lights and, as of today, only 6 or 7 of the 76 lights are not working. We are coordinating repair with the contractor and CPS and hope to have all lights working in the near future.

Be assured that the City is committed to keeping all lights in good working order and has a plan for routine maintenance. The Fire Department will be monitoring the lights weekly from this point forward. If you notice one that is not working or needs attention, please call City Hall.

A citizens committee chaired by Councilwoman Susan Gragg is looking at long-term solutions to improve lighting within the residential and business districts. Some options for consideration are additional gaslights, solar lighting and electric lighting. We will keep you informed of their progress.

the end of October. We know you will be proud of our new "entrance to the City." We thank Councilman McNelis, the City Council, and OPTIC for their dedication to making this long-awaited beautification project a reality.

Interested in joining your friends and neighbors in contributing to this beautification project? Please contact Councilman McNelis at 822-2134.

Sign Up for E-Mail Updates!

Want to know more about your community? Sign up for e-mail updates at www.ci.olmos-park.tx.us. Scroll down and enter your e-mail address in the box under the animated yellow flyer that says, "Send Email." You will then be sent a verification e-mail.

Once you verify that your e-mail is correct and you do want to be added to the list, you will receive Council agendas, special notices, and other informational updates from the City.

Spanish-Style Fountain Being Donated for Olmos Park Roundabout

The City Council has approved plans to beautify the City's most visible landmark, the roundabout at McCullough and Olmos. Thanks to the hard work of Councilman Sean McNelis and the Olmos Park Terra Improvement Committee (OPTIC), approximately \$70,000 in private donations has been raised thus far for the purchase of a 47,000 pound, hand-carved, Spanish-style fountain, lighted bollards, and native landscaping. The fountain is being donated to the City by OPTIC, and the City is contributing \$50,000 toward the cost of installation.

A ground-breaking ceremony was held on August 15, and installation is scheduled to be completed before

October
20-31,
2008!



Early Voting
Dates

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• Use the Olmos Park Web Site See www.ci.olmos-park.tx.us for forms, information, the City Code, and other details • • • • •

PARK GAZETTE

Alarm Registration

Although there is no charge for registration of your home or business burglar/fire alarm, we do have an ordinance requiring annual registration. With this information on file, we know immediately who to contact if there is a true emergency at your home while you're away. By requiring annual registration, you also have a chance to update the information.

Lock Your Vehicles!

Please take care to store your valuables out of sight and lock your vehicles when parking overnight. There have been a number of cases of vehicles being sorted through and various items being taken. None of those vehicles were locked at the time of the break-in, and most had their valuables out in plain sight. If temptation is removed, criminal mischief may be more effectively deterred.

Brush Collection

When placing brush at the curb for collection, keep in mind the following regulations:

- Trees or limbs cannot exceed three (3) inches in diameter or six (6) feet in length, with all lateral branches trimmed; quantity cannot exceed 250 cu. ft.
- If you hire someone to trim your trees, whether an individual or a company, that person is responsible for removing all branches, cuttings, and debris.

Most other cities do charge for alarm registration and issue citations for a City Code violation if they receive an alarm call for an address for which there is no permit on file. We do not impose any fees, but we do want to be able to respond properly if we receive a call from your alarm company.

Please call or come by City Hall for an alarm registration form.

Don't Forget...

City Code requires temporary signs, such as realtor and contractor signs, be located **behind the front building setback line**, which is 40 ft. from the front property line in the residential district. In cases where the home is not 40 ft. from the property line, we require that you place your temporary signs as close to the house as possible.

Please share this information with your realtor or contractor. Be sure that any signs on your property are back from the curb to comply with this ordinance.

Soliciting Ordinance

While the law allows solicitors, we have strict rules, including charging for solicitation permits, limiting the number of solicitors from each organization, and limiting the hours to 9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M., Monday through Saturday.

These rules *do not apply* to religious organizations and political parties unless they are requesting donations. Call non-emergency dispatch at 822-2000 for problems.

OP CALENDAR

October

October 7, Tuesday
OLMOS PARK NIGHT OUT
5:30 P.M.

October 16, Thursday
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
6:30 P.M.—City Hall

October 18, Saturday
FALL HAUL-OFF
7:00 A.M.

October 20, Tuesday
Early Voting Begins
NO EARLY VOTING AT CITY HALL

October 25, Saturday
ALTERNATE FALL HAUL OFF
7:00 A.M.

October 30, Thursday
PLANNING AND ZONING MEETING
6:30 P.M.—City Hall

October 31, Friday
HALLOWEEN
Watch for children on the sidewalks and streets!

November

November 2, Sunday
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS
Set clocks ahead one hour!
2:00 A.M.

November 4, Tuesday
ELECTION DAY
7:00 A.M.—7:00 P.M.

November 20, Thursday
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
6:30 P.M.—City Hall

November 27-28, Thursday & Friday
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
NO GARBAGE PICKUP

December

December 18, Thursday
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
6:30 P.M.—City Hall

December 24-25, Wednesday & Thursday
CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY
CITY HALL CLOSED
NO RECYCLING OR GARBAGE PICKUP