



A Monthly Report from the Office of the City Manager ★ January 2006

Excellence is more than a goal in the City of College Station -- it is the standard. And the new year always brings a host of challenges that will provide ample opportunities for us to continue to improve our level of service. Transportation will continue to be at the top of the list of topics to be discussed as the Texas Department of Transportation continues with the widening of Texas Avenue (*watch for construction to begin this month on the Southwest Parkway intersection*) and converting the access roads to one way between Rock Prairie and Greens Prairie roads. Plus the planned improvements to the intersection of Luther and Harvey Mitchell Parkway on the west side of town.

Christmas in the Park 2005 was a glowing success in Central Park as more than 12,000 visitors enjoyed six nights of weekend activities featuring dancers, singers and even a puppet show and baking contest. More than 6000 took advantage of the hayrides through the park to view handmade decorations by the Forestry Division. Add 23,000 cookies and 11,600 cups of hot chocolate, plus the year's only snowfall, and you had a lot of traffic on three weekends.

In addition to weekend visitors, more than 100,000 drove through the park on non-event nights in December, adding to the appeal and success of the annual event.

Congratulations are in order to Council members and staff who successfully completed required training at a statewide open government conference in Austin sponsored by the Texas Attorney General's Office.

Council members **Nancy Berry** and **Ron Gay** earned Certificates of Course Completion related to the Texas Public Information Act and the Texas Open

Meetings Act. Also satisfying those requirements were City Attorney **Harvey Cargill, Jr.**; Assistant City Attorney **Angela DeLuca**; City Secretary **Connie Hooks**; **Celia Hernandez**, City Manager's Office; and **Herlinda Godinez**, City Secretary's Office. Other Council members, board and commission members, and city employees are scheduled to complete the training in early 2006, with an evening session scheduled January 17. Completion of the courses satisfy legal requirements of Government Code, Section 551.005 (*Open Meetings Act*) and Section 552.012 (*Public Information Act*).

With the change in seasons comes a shift in sports. Basketball is in the headlines and when the Lady Aggies take on Kansas State January 11 in Big 12 Conference play, the halftime show will provide competition of a different kind. It is Police and Fire Appreciation Night that evening, with equipment from both College Station and Bryan police and fire departments on view for the public outside Reed Arena. At halftime, chiefs from each city (**Fire Chief Robert Alley** and **Police Chief Michael Clancey** from College Station; **Fire Chief Mike Donoho** and **Police Chief Mike Strobe** in Bryan) will compete in hamper ball, summo racing and a tug of war. Hope your plans allow you to join us for a great evening supporting our firefighters and police.

Interim City Manager



Rental Registration Ordinance Repealed

30-Day Compliance Rates

2005 YTD*	89.91%
2004	72.83%
2003	72.76%
2002	66.18%

**YTD as of presentation at November 22 Council meeting. Case load for Code Enforcement increased in 2005, but 30-day compliance rates increased 17%*

What started as a good idea -- keeping track of duplex and single family rental property in the City of College Station to provide owner contact information -- was overshadowed by an even better idea when **Fire Chief R. B. Alley** updated the City Council at a November meeting.

Substantial improvements in code compliance throughout the city was the underlying reason for the shift, as Chief Alley presented impressive improvements in compliance rates that showed almost 90% of all code violations in 2005 have been handled within 30 days. He credited the staff for innovative alternatives to common practices that are usually followed by Code Enforcement.

“Rather than noting code violations and following them up with certified letters to the residence, our staff initiated a ‘Stop and Knock’ program 18 months ago in August 2004,” said Chief Alley. “Now when a code violation is identified, the officer knocks on the door and deals with the issue one-on-one with the occupant.”

Fire Marshal **Eric Hurt** and Code Enforcement Supervisor **Cindy Dillard** worked to develop specific case handling guidelines that were established in the Fall of 2004. Also added were door hangers left on the initial inspec-

tion and a warning tag for trash containers not moved within the 24-hour window.

The numbers he presented spoke for themselves, reflecting a dramatic increase in compliance since the program was put in place. Thirty-day compliance rates improved from 66.18% in 2002 to 89.91% year-to-date in 2005, a gain of almost 24%.

Based on the staff recommendation to repeal the ordinance set to go into effect January 1, 2006, and the additional savings in administrative costs that would have been required, Council members agreed that the new steps initiated by Code Enforcement would remedy the problem and save money.

A rental registration program was recommended by the 28-member Neighborhood Ad Hoc Task Force in May 2004 as a way to improve response to code violations and emergencies. A study of programs in other university towns produced a program that would have developed a database of rental property owners in College Station. No fee would have been required, but expenses related to administering and developing a database would have cost approximately \$50,000.



Safety is the word...

Top RED Awards earned by Parks, CSU...

Competition for the Second Annual RED (*Responsible Employees Deliver*) Award from Risk Management ended with Parks and Recreation taking top honors in the Workers Compensation division and College Station Utilities finishing in first place in the Fleet Safety category.

"Awards are based upon departmental improvement over results in prior years," explained Bill Cody, Risk Manager for the City of College Station. He said measurements are based on frequency (*number of claims*) and severity (*cost of claims*) for the workmen's comp claims; benchmark and cost of collisions in fleet safety.

"Although there is always room for improvement, the strong finish of our departments in 2005 clearly illustrates that our Departmental safety committees, ABR's and other program activities are having a positive effect on reducing injuries and costs," said Cody.

Pictured with First Place awards for Workers Compensation and Second Place in Fleet Safety are Parks and Recreation employees: (top, from left) David Gerling, Director Steve Beachy, Pam Springfield, Ric Ploeger, Curtis Bingham, Ross Albrecht and Pete Lamont. In the workers comp category, Parks was down 36.3% in frequency and 59.1% in severity.



College Station Utilities representataives with the First Place Award in Fleet Safety are (from left) Joe Mike Garcia, Butch Willis, Joe Dudenhoeffer, Artis Lawson, Chris Gonzales (front), Ben Accurso, Ed Savage and Doug Wallace. Their benchmark was 11, with only 6 actual incidents.



Inside College Station...

◆ The 2005 Annual Awards Banquet for Keep Brazos Beautiful has a College Station touch as four employees were recognized with awards and **Katie Elrod** coordinated the first Trash N' Fashion Style Show at the December dinner.



With the help of a College Station fire truck, Santa arrived in style for breakfast with the families, with an opportunity for each of the kids to visit with Santa.



The breakfast is part of the Organized Neighborhood Enhancement (ONE) project initiated by CSPD. Officers met with residents of Southgate Village to identify specific ways that the police department could work with them and the management to address their problems.

Supporting the holiday project were College Station Wal-Mart, Kroger's and Shipley's Donuts.

◆ Among the goals for 2006 is selection of a new city manager, a process that has attracted more than 50 applications for the position with time still remaining before the January 16 application deadline.

Jim Mercer, President of The Mercer Group, is leading the nationwide search and expects to have finalists identified this Spring for interviews with the City Council.

Capturing awards from the City of College Station were **Joyce Duda**, OTIS Meter Services, the Litter "Watchdog" Award; **Katie Elrod**, Neighborhood Services, Litter "Watchdog" Sustained Excellence Award; **Vicky Williams** and College Station Sanitation Department, "Keepers of the Kingdom" Award; and **Don Fazzino**, President's 2005 Board Member of the Year.

◆ It may be January, but children in the **Southgate Village Apartments** still have fond memories of the day Santa paid a visit, courtesy of the College Station Police Department.

Pictured are Katie Elrod (top), College Station Neighborhood Services, as she emceed the Keep Brazos Beautiful Trash N' Fashion Show during the annual banquet. Shown with Executive Director Laura Tankersley-Glenn (left) and KBB President Rebecca Von Gonten is Don Fazzino, who was recognized as the 2005 Board Member of the Year.



Speaking of success...

★ **College Station's Purchasing Division** has been named a recipient of the 10th Annual Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award, designed to recognize organizational excellence in government procurement.

One of only seven cities nationally to receive this award at least nine times, College Station received the second highest score of all cities for total points achieved.

The award is presented to organizations that demonstrate excellence in procurement by obtaining a high score on a rating of standardized criteria. The program measures innovation, professionalism, e-procurement, productivity, and leadership attributes of the procurement function.

The award is achieved by those organizations that demonstrate excellence in procurement by obtaining a high score on a rating of standardized criteria. The program is designed to measure innovation, professionalism, e-procurement, productivity and leadership attributes of the procurement function.



Pictured above are Purchasing Department employees who received the City's national procurement award presented at a national conference in Florida. From left: Cynthia Sciulli, buyer; Julie Allen, purchasing assistant; Cheryl Turney, purchasing manager; and Alan Degelman, buyer.

★ **November sales tax receipts** (October sales) have been received from the State Comptroller's Office. The City collected \$1,261,178 for the month of November, representing a 13.66% increase in revenue from the same month a year earlier.

Tax revenues were projected to grow at or around the 5% trend. The Budget Office will continue to monitor sales tax revenue projections and report accordingly should there be any changes from the forecasted amount.

November FY06 Receipts

\$1,261,178
Actual Difference
Percent Difference

November FY05 Receipts

\$1,109,562
\$151,616
13.66%

FY06 YTD Receipts

\$2,818,410
Actual Difference
Percent Difference

FY05 YTD Receipts

\$2,586,779
\$231,632
8.95%

CITY OF COLLEGE STATION
Heart of the
Research Valley

1101 Texas Avenue
College Station, TX 77842
www.cstx.gov

COUNCIL CALENDAR

Wednesday, January 11

Fire/Police Appreciation Night,
Lady Aggies vs. Kansas State,
7 pm, Reed Arena

Thursday, January 12

City Council Workshop, 3 pm
Regular Meeting, 7 pm

Monday, January 16

MLK Holiday,
City Offices Closed

Tuesday, January 17

-Chamber of Commerce,
8:30 am
-Open Records Training
(elected and appointed offi-
cials), 6 pm, Council Chambers

Wednesday, January 18

-Research Valley Partnership,
3 pm
-Transportation Committee,
Administrative Conference
Room, 5:30 pm

Thursday, January 26

City Council Workshop, 3 pm
Regular Meeting, 7 pm

Monday, January 30

Leadership Summit Luncheon
and Overview for Community
of Respect, Memorial Student
Center



Shining moments...

★ Letter complimenting **College Station Police Department**: *"I want to compliment and thank the CSPD. I am a private citizen of Fort Worth and an Aggie. I was standing on the street late yesterday watching the funeral procession of our fallen FWPD Officer Nava. The procession was very long and certainly sad. But my heart was brightened a bit when I saw a College Station squad car in the procession. Thank you again for sending a representative from the city I spent four years of my life in while attending Texas A&M. I was proud to see you there during our time of sadness. God bless you!" -- Mary Beth Niver, Fort Worth.*

★ Letter recognizing **College Station community**: *"My wife and I fled from our home in Kenner, Louisiana to College Station to avoid Hurricane Katrina. During our extended stay there, your town made us feel right at home. The people were wonderful. The Visitor Center staff was friendly and anxious to provide assistance to us. We would also like to thank the many businesses which went out of their way to make our stay enjoyable. Among the many were the Hampton Inn on Texas Avenue, Olive Garden restaurant, IHOP, the little Italian restaurant on Texas (Frittella's), as well as the Sonic. It was hard to be away from our home, but College Station welcomed us with open arms, for which we will always be grateful." -- Benedict Stanonis, Kenner, Louisiana*

★ Letter in newspaper commending work of Sanitation Route Managers **Steve Mike Alaniz** and **Keathen Ford**: *"While I agree about the problem of trash in the Twin Cities (I am always picking up beer cans and fast food debris on the street.), I would like to commend College Station city employees for the fine job they do on trash collection. On the Monday after Christmas, we were clearing a lot of yard trash and leaves but had not yet moved it all to the street, assuming the normal Monday pick-up would be delayed by the holiday. The crew working the trash pick-up were friendly and helpful, moving brush from our fence line out to their truck. Thank you College Station employees." -- Peter Hugill and Judy Warren*

★ Letter congratulating **Wanda Lapham** at Municipal Court: *"I recently received a letter from the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center letting me know you have completed Level 2 of the Municipal Clerks Certification Program. First, I would like to congratulate you on this accomplishment, and the dedication and hard work it took to obtain this certification. Secondly, I would offer my encouragement as you continue with the third and final level of the program. We are all very proud of you. You have brought honor not only to yourself, but to the entire City of College Station organization." -- Glenn Brown, Interim City Manager*

