

Development Review Update - Summary

City Council Workshop

January 27, 2005

I. City of College Station Development Update for Year-end 2004:

- ***New College Station Population Estimate: 80,219***
Based on certificates of occupancy, household size (2.32), and vacancy rate (.948)
- ***All-Time High for Overall Permit Valuation: \$215 Million***
 - *Up from record set in 2003, which was \$187.9 Million*
 - *Boosted by 1st American Plaza & The Medical Center Bed Tower*
- ***Commercial Growth:***
 - ***Hotel Development:*** *7 hotels currently under construction*
 - ***University Drive Development*** – *University Town Center, Gateway Retail Ctr., 1st American Plaza*
 - ***Wolf Pen Creek*** – *Ice Rink, Cavender's, Law Offices*
 - ***Northgate*** – *Warehouse Apartments, A&M United Methodist Church*
 - ***Commercial Coming Soon:*** *Greens Prairie Road/ SH6 Intersection*
- ***Residential Growth:***
 - ***716 City lots, 259 ETJ lots platted in 2004*** (*6000 lots over past 5 years*)
 - ***Totaling 219 acres of land in 2004***
 - ***Subdivisions along Greens Prairie, Barron, and Graham, Roads.***
 - ***New multifamily development is slower*** (which is good – *86% apt. occ. rate*)

II. Planning & Development Services Department – recent & future changes:

- ***Department restructuring and renaming*** to consolidate planning positions within Long Range Planning and Development Review, under a single work group, designed to equip a greater number of staff to assist customers through the various short- and long-range development processes.
- ***Staffer-on-Call (SOC) Schedule***, a rotation of professional planning staff members available to assist walk-in customers or callers at any time during normal office hours. This is being implemented to ensure that staff availability exists at all times for development customers who need information or advice on any development related issue or project.
- ***Office space changes***, including a new Customer Resource Center in the front receiving area, a new department conference room, and opened entryway area into the main Department office area. A number of additional office changes are being currently being considered, in order to provide a more customer-friendly, professional environment, and to arrange staff within appropriate work groups.
- ***Paul Zucker, FAICP, of Zucker Systems, Inc., was hired to conduct an organizational review of the Department, and to provide additional review and advice regarding development review process improvements. Mr. Zucker visited College Station on December 13-15, 2004, and conducted a series of meetings with city staff, as well as external customer focus group meetings. A final report of Mr. Zucker's visit is anticipated in the next few weeks.***

- **Interdepartmental Communication** – Ongoing internal “Development Briefing” meetings are being held among staff from a number of departments involved in Development issues, to be sure all staff is briefed on organizational changes and current development projects.
- **Website updates and improvements.** Several new features have been added to the P&DS website to facilitate communication with the community about development:
 - Weekly New Development List – detailed info on all submitted projects
 - New Development GIS Map – interactive, by location
 - Planning & Zoning Commission & DRB agendas
 - Unified Development Ordinance Updates
 - Coming Soon: Click2Gov Planning and Zoning module, which will allow direct on-line customer access to development review process information regarding particular projects.
- **Community Forums**, to share information on recent changes within the Department, and receive ongoing input and suggestions from our customers:
 - 1st Quarterly P&DS Department Forum - scheduled for Friday, January 21, 2005, 11:30am to 1:30pm at the College Station Conference Center
 - Director Breakfasts - Bi-weekly small group customer breakfast meetings with the Department Director, currently being scheduled.
- **In the coming months, the overall Department focus will involve:**
 - **Communication Improvements** (internal and external)
 - **Customer service improvements**
 - **development review process changes** (cycle times), and
 - **Training methods** (internal and external)

III. Ordinance Updates:

- **Subdivision Regulations Update.** Director of Public Works Mark Smith has been placed on temporary assignment as Special Project Manager, specifically to oversee the complete overhaul of the Subdivision Regulations. This effort is currently underway, with a series of public input forums and subcommittees scheduled for Spring 2005, and adoption later in Summer 2005.
- **Annual reviews of Unified Development Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan.** On September 9, 2004, staff presented the Annual Review of the UDO and Comprehensive Plan to the City Council. On September 23, 2004, City Council adopted the first annual amendment of the UDO, including a number of ordinance clarifications and improvements.
- **Prepare design standards for big box and large retail developments – “NRA Ordinance”.** On October 21, 2004, City Council adopted an amendment to Section 7.9 of the Unified Development Ordinance, regarding Non-Residential Architectural Standards. This ordinance now applies architectural requirements and additional streetscape standards to all commercial structures not located in the M-1, M-2, NG and R&D zoning districts.
- **Adopted 2003 International Codes – “I-Codes”.** The 2003 International Building and Fire Codes were adopted by City Council on December 21, 2004, and became effective January 1, 2005.