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Mayor Mike Simpson  
photo from Frisco STYLE archives

cabin. There are many more big plans for this village that will begin to unfold in 2006.

The completion of the Embassy Suites complex and the Frisco Conference Center and parking garage in June has been a great addition to the city's objective of being a "destination location." The Dr Pepper/Seven Up Ballpark, home of the Frisco RoughRiders, opened in April of 2003 and has been hailed as one of the finest ballparks in the country and, in August of 2003, the Dr Pepper StarCenter opened as home of the Dallas Stars and the Texas Tornado. Adding to the city's reputation as an excellent sports and entertainment city, Pizza Hut Park opened in August and we all welcomed FC Dallas to their new home. This complex also provided 17 additional soccer fields for Frisco's youth soccer programs.

From an infrastructure standpoint, more than \$118 million has been invested in local roads and another \$34 million has been spent on new roads in the past three years. This \$152 million in road projects is providing critical north/south flow of traffic with streets like Legacy, Teel, Preston, Ohio and Coit. Frisco also secured \$80 million in commitments from the Texas Department of Transportation for FM423, El Dorado and FM3537 (old Main) as a result of agreeing to one toll exit in Denton County for the S.H.121 project. I am very proud of the way we make our roads aesthetically pleasing by including the medians, irrigation, lights and landscaping.

I am also very pleased with the additional means of communication with the citizens of Frisco. To complement the *Focal Point Newsletter* and our award-winning website, *Frisco Today* was added as a regular part of the city's cable broadcast, including a *Mayor's Corner* featuring interviews with key city leaders and city employees on new projects and programs. A program called "City Hall House Calls" provides updates on the city to homeowners associations and neighborhood leaders

## The Legacy of Leadership in Frisco

By Mike Simpson

**AS I REFLECT ON MY TIME AS MAYOR** of Frisco, I cannot imagine a better time in the history of Frisco to be mayor. I am very thankful for the privilege to serve during this period of phenomenal growth.

### A PATTERN OF PROGRESS

There is no way to recap the many accomplishments without first acknowledging the many years of dedication and leadership of Mayors Bob Warren and Kathy Seei who led us through the important growth years of the late 80s and throughout the 90s. We will complete 2005 with more than 82,000 residents on our way to becoming a city of 240,000 people in the next 20 years. Probably my single biggest accomplishment will be the continuation of the vision and planning the city has had from the mayors, council members, and our City Manager George Purefoy and his excellent staff.

The past three and a half years have boasted many milestone accomplishments. To begin, the Bond Election of September 2002 in which Frisco citizens approved a \$197.5 million bond issue has fueled the building of the infrastructure and facilities that will be the heart of this city. Development is very evident, as we move closer to completion on a new City Hall and Library, the new Police Station, Central Fire Station and Safety Town, Fire Station #5 and a new Recreation and Aquatic Center.

In addition, the Frisco Senior Center opened in January of 2004 and is now planning for expansion. In March, 2005 the new Public Works facility opened and was the first building to reflect the city's public art program. At the same time the plans for the Heritage Village moved forward with the relocation of three historic buildings and the addition of an old locomotive, bridge and log



*IKEA Grand Opening  
photo by Andy Johnson*

right in their own neighborhood. We also added a quarterly Home Owners Association Presidents Meeting to further enhance communication and we meet quarterly with key Frisco businesses in an Executive Briefing session on what is happening in Frisco. The annual council priorities and strategic focus areas are published on a pocket folder and business cards and are distributed to citizens at various meetings.

A legacy I hope to leave is my passion for making our historic downtown area a major destination location. More than \$26 million has been spent on Main Street and downtown connecting streets, including wider lanes, left turn lanes, brick paving, medians with landscaping, new decorative light poles and trash receptacles. A new partnering program with the downtown merchants will add flowers and plants to downtown and help revitalize and bring new businesses and residents to historic Main Street.

In three and a half years Frisco has experienced tremendous growth in the number of new companies locating in Frisco. The Frisco Economic Development Corporation and City Council have been business-friendly and understand the value of bringing major corporations to the city--companies like Fujitsu Transaction Solutions, IntegraSys,

Thyssen Krupp, GE Capital, IKEA, Embassy Suites Hotel, Tenet Texas, DebtXS and recently T-Mobile, that alone will add over 1,200 jobs to Frisco. The Frisco Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) has been established to bring major business conferences and sporting events to Frisco.

**A MAYOR'S VISION**

Looking forward there is much to be accomplished during my final two and a half years in office. The Grand Park concept started in January, 2005 when the Urban Land Institute visited Frisco is a major goal. We are capturing approximately 400 acres of parkland along the Dallas North Toll Road. The way this land is developed may very well set us apart from other cities. Approving the Comprehensive Plan Update that will be presented in early 2006 will be a major stepping-stone in outlining the future look of Frisco as we finish the build-out of the final 60 percent of our city.

I want to be able to make a decision to move forward with a solution to provide commuter rail service up the Burlington Northern corridor. We have attended meetings with city and state elected officials to come up with a plan that will allow us to bring rail to

Frisco without taking away all the funds that are currently being used by our Economic and Community Development Corporations. Just building more roads will not solve our traffic congestion and air quality issues.

I want to create a new logo and branding for Frisco reflecting the dynamic growth and forward thinking of the city yet captures our desire to be a family-oriented community that provides an excellent quality of life for our citizens. Now is the time to put this program in place and tie it to our Convention Visitors Bureau, Economic Development Corporation and Chamber of Commerce so that Frisco has a cohesive look, feel, and image that is recognizable and easy to promote.

Over the next few years I would like to see Frisco Square expanded to be a vibrant "center of the city" with restaurants, shops, residences and businesses circling the new City Hall and Library. A beautiful plaza in front of City Hall will be full of activity with everything from art shows, to summer concerts, a Taste of Frisco and just a place for families to relax and enjoy the beauty of the downtown area. I want to get our youth more involved in the city by establishing a Youth Council that will meet with and present ideas to our city council. I want to see the Heritage Village be almost complete and serve as a link between historical downtown and Frisco Square.

I want us to continue to develop the finest parks and trails in the state along with residential developments that provide a wide diversity of housing types, styles and prices. Each will feature more amenities, open spaces, trails and architecture so that each community will have its own look.

There is much to do over the next two and a half years, but we have the greatest people to work with that can help us accomplish these goals. I hope to create another stepping-stone for Frisco's future.

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*Mike Simpson is the Mayor of Frisco.*