



No portion of this article may be reproduced without
express written permission of Style Publishing Group, LLC.
©2007 • All rights reserved.



Style Publishing Group
P.O. Box 1676
Frisco, Texas 75034
Phone: 972.335.1181
Toll Free: 877.781.7067
Fax: 214.722.2313

E-mail: info@friscostyle.com
Web: www.friscostyle.com

Ad Sales: (972) 335-1306



2006 Great Steak of Texas at City Hall Plaza
photo by Chris Fritchie

Mayor Simpson's Top Ten List

By DeAnn Daley Holcomb

THE NEW FRISCO CITY HALL and Library opened its doors this past fall; the new Police Station opened in December; and, a ribbon cutting is set in February for the new Central Fire Station. While those are just a few of the major accomplishments for city leaders this last year, Frisco Mayor Mike Simpson is already looking ahead to what he wants completed before his tenure as mayor ends, due to term limitations, in seventeen months.

Although the topics are more serious – Mayor Simpson has taken the talk show host, David Letterman, approach by prioritizing a top ten list of projects he wants to accomplish before May 2008. Mayor Simpson started his list at the top with his first priority being an issue,

which affects everyone.

1

TRAVELING THE ROADS, ANY ROAD

As the bulldozers and concrete trucks move up and down State Highway 121 and the Dallas North Tollway (DNT), Mayor Simpson has set his sight on making sure the feeder roads and streets are completed.

Under the guidance of the Regional Transportation Council and Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the funding and construction of several roads and highways are underway. S.H. 121 will be a toll road that will include six main lanes and six lanes of frontage roads from just east of the DFW Airport to US

Highway 75. While the portion through Denton County up to Hillcrest in Frisco will be completed by 2008, the section to US75 will not be finished until 2010.

“As part of our decision to toll S.H.121 in Denton County, there were some important roads like FM423, Eldorado Parkway and FM3537 that were all part of a memo of understanding that those roads will be constructed as six lane divided roads,” Mayor Simpson said. “One of the fastest growing parts of Frisco is our west side. FM423 handles traffic from The Colony, Little Elm and Frisco with thousands of cars coming north and south and has to be completed as soon as possible.”

“Eldorado Parkway is just as important because it ties into the toll bridge planned over Lake Lewisville which ties into Interstate Highway 35 and will go to McKinney and US75,” Mayor Simpson continued.

With the funding in place and construction moving quickly, the extension of the DNT to State Highway 380 is expected to be completed in September 2007.

“My personal goal is to try and get the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) to at least open it up to Eldorado earlier than September 2007 because it would help tremendously with soccer games and concerts,” Mayor Simpson said.

Another major road construction project, Preston Road, involves constructing the six-lane divided roadway from S.H.380 to Main Street, which will replace the existing two-lane roadway. TxDOT will fund four lanes while the city of Frisco will add more than \$4 million for the two additional lanes. The city also paid for the fifth and sixth lanes for the previous construction of Preston Road south of Main Street to S.H.121.

2

REVITALIZATION AND BEAUTIFICATION OF DOWNTOWN

As the Downtown Advisory Committee works toward finding businesses to move

into buildings vacated when the new City Hall and Library opened, Mayor Simpson stands firm on his commitment to one day see the hustle and bustle in full swing in downtown Frisco.

“Downtown is part of the heritage of the city of Frisco,” Mayor Simpson said. “I want to make sure we have the right kind of businesses like unique shops and restaurants that will create traffic day and night.”

Mayor Simpson envisions more efforts on the beautification of downtown.

“We are already doing a great job with trees and landscaping our medians,” Mayor Simpson said. “One goal I have always had for downtown is that up and down Main Street we have big pots of flowers with color that is changed with the seasons to make it more attractive.”

3

PRESERVING FRISCO'S HISTORY

Frisco's Heritage Center is an addition to the downtown area bridging Frisco Square with historic downtown. Heritage Center will preserve Frisco's past and includes a museum, the old Lebanon Baptist Church building and the Crozier/Covington Sickles house as well as other historic buildings.

City leaders envision the village as a living, working village with buildings, housing, shops and restaurants, making it a landmark and destination area.

“I want to make sure the first phase is completed before I leave office which would include the church as a working church hosting weddings or services and events,” Mayor Simpson said. “Our plans have always included turning the old, two-story house into a bed and breakfast and I want to make sure the museum will be completed showing how Frisco was over 100-years ago. We already have Babe's Family Style restaurant coming.”

4

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Frisco voters approved over \$22 million in bond money in May 2006 as a commitment to the preservation of parkland within the city of Frisco. The project is called “Grand Park” and will be up to 350-acres of parkland in the heart of the city.



Heritage Center Groundbreaking Ceremony

photo by Chris Fritchie

“We have \$9 million dedicated to the land we have already purchased in conjunction with our Community Development Corporation (CDC) and \$12 million which will start phase-one of the development that will include creeks, lakes and hike and bike trails,” Mayor Simpson said. “I want to make sure the first phase is moving.”

Mayor Simpson adds, “We will look back on our decision to develop Grand Park as one of the most monumental elements that will make Frisco unique from other cities.”

5

CITY HALL PLAZA

The City Hall Plaza is located in front of the George A. Purefoy Municipal Center and city leaders are hoping it will be a center of activity for Frisco. Already special events were held on the Plaza like The Great Steak of Texas that included a cattle drive, concerts, art displays and a steak cook-off. In the fall the Frisco Public Library Foundation and the Frisco Public Library hosted the successful Story Telling Festival. And over the holidays, the Merry Main Street celebration and light show brought thousands to the Plaza area.

“I want to make sure this project is completed including the City Hall

fountain and the planting of additional trees,” Mayor Simpson said.

Mayor Simpson said he wants City Hall Plaza to become the focal point for city activities and family events.

6

MOVING ALONG

The tracks of the DART rail system end at the Plano city limits and Mayor Simpson believes that a city like Frisco must support some type of rail system to keep the city moving into the future. Whether it is light rail or commuter rail, Mayor Simpson has made this a personal goal to see this type of transportation become a part of the city.

“I think our best opportunity is going to be for commuter rail coming up the Burlington Northern track,” Mayor Simpson said. “Commuter rail is less expensive and our Comprehensive Plan shows us having stations in the north, the southern part of the city and one right in the heart of Frisco in the Frisco Square area.”

As a member of the regional rail committee, Mayor Simpson said there are plans to ask state lawmakers to approve a half-a-cent increase on the sales tax to be used to fund the rail system for Frisco and other cities who do not have rail.

“The rail system will be important,

not only for people to use to get to work, but so people can come to Frisco to go to concerts, sports venues, shopping or to our Heritage Center.”

He said having a rail system will aid in furthering Frisco’s economic development, improve air quality and relieve congestion.

7 DESIGNATION: ALL AMERICA

Seeking designation as an “All America City” for Frisco is an important goal to Mayor Simpson. Each year the National Civic League designates approximately 10 cities as “All America.” This brings national attention to a city and energizes the community’s civic pride. The national recognition is a proven boost regarding the recruitment of industry, jobs and investment.

It is a long process that Mayor Simpson said would involve the city, the Frisco Chamber of Commerce, the Frisco Economic Development Corporation, Frisco Convention and Visitors Bureau and other individuals.

“It speaks to the city’s quality of life, being able to solve problems and provides reasons to live in that city,” Mayor Simpson said. “From police and fire protection, housing, education and the business climate, it is all a part of the designation.”

Since the All-America City program started in 1949, 4,000 cities have applied, but only 500 have received the award.

“Plano has it and last year DeSoto and Phaar, Texas received their designation,” Mayor Simpson said. “With all we have going in Frisco, I believe we can win this award. It usually takes more than one try so I want to get the process started.”



8 CAPTURING THE ARTS

The proposed Arts of Collin County project is a tri-city commitment from Frisco, Allen and Plano to build an arts hall, park and complex. All three cities have donated \$19 million each toward the arts center along with private donations. The Arts complex will be located just south of S.H.121, about 1,000 yards east of Custer Road at an intersection where the borders of Frisco, Plano, Allen and McKinney meet.

“We have all worked so hard on this and I want to see us breaking ground and getting started on construction because I think this is vital to our community,” Mayor Simpson said. “This project has built true partnerships with Plano, Allen and Frisco and now the cities of Fairview and Melissa have joined as member cities.”

Groundbreaking plans are expected in May or June 2007 for the park section. The 124-acre site will ultimately include

a 650-seat theatre, a 2,100-seat multi-purpose performance hall, classrooms and an outdoor gathering place with a completion date of 2010.

“I won’t be mayor when it is completed, but I can’t wait for the ground breaking so everyone can see that we are on our way to building a world-class venue,” Mayor Simpson said.

9 CALLING ALL MAYORS

Could it be possible for all of the mayors in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex to get together? Mayor Simpson thinks that not only can it happen but he is offering Frisco as the first meeting place.

Already a member of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, where city leaders from across the country meet and share successes and failures, Mayor Simpson would like to see a local version to benefit all of the North Texas communities.

“We have so much going on in so



Frisco STYLE Comic, August 2006

from Frisco STYLE archives

many of our DFW cities and every city has something they are really proud of," Mayor Simpson said. "I think a regional organization and meeting would be beneficial because it never hurts to find out new ways things are accomplished."

Mayor Simpson would like to host the event at the Frisco Conference Center.

10

BETTER POSTAL SERVICE

Have you found it hard to mail your bills, letters or

Office, the federal government and the Post Master General, supplying figures, population, demographics, school and business growth in an attempt to bring in another post office.

"Our population has almost doubled since I became Mayor and we still have only one post office and a city the size of Frisco must have another post office," Mayor Simpson said. "Last year they told me that because of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita most of their resources were being used there, but I'm not giving up."

Christmas packages? In a city the size of Frisco with 92,000-plus residents, it might be surprising to find out there is only one major U.S. Post Office with a couple of contract postal units serving the city. Mayor Simpson has been hard at work writing and contacting everyone from the U.S. Post

THE SIMPSON TOP TEN CONTINUES

As Mayor Simpson packs up his brief case to move on to the next meeting or appearance, inside there is information on two more special projects he is personally working on. One involves the relocation of the gravel operation that is located in central downtown.

"We continue to look at options and hopefully we can come up with a solution because I think it is important to the overall growth of Frisco," Mayor Simpson said.

Last but not least, Mayor Simpson would like to see Frisco classified in *Money Magazine* as one of "America's Best Cities."

"They are all great cities but we need to be included for what we are," Mayor Simpson adds. "My last 17 months in office, will be filled with activity and goals to achieve. We have a great city council and city staff and I know we will be able to achieve these things that are important to our citizens."

DeAnn Daley Holcomb is a freelance writer living in Plano.



frisco
STYLE
MAGAZINE

Style Publishing Group
P.O. Box 1676
Frisco, Texas 75034
Phone: 972.335.1181
Toll Free: 877.781.7067
Fax: 214.722.2313

E-mail: info@friscostyle.com
Web: www.friscostyle.com

Ad Sales: (972) 335-1306

