

RICHARDSON TODAY

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What's Inside



Network of Community Ministries Needs Volunteers

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The Network of Community Ministries has a great need for volunteers and offers a variety of ways to assist.



Miss Belle's Place to be Relocated

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Plans are underway to relocate the historic Miss Belle's Place.



Tornado Recovery Highlighted in SOTC

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During the annual State of the City Address, neighborhood residents shared their stories of recovery.

“The Richardson Way” theme is highlighted by Mayor in the annual State of the City Address

The City of Richardson’s annual State of the City Address was presented last month in a way unlike any had been presented before. The address is typically presented live before an audience at the Eisemann Center. But this year, because of the ongoing threat of COVID-19 and the need to take safety precautions, Richardson Mayor Paul Voelker and City Council Members recorded the annual message.

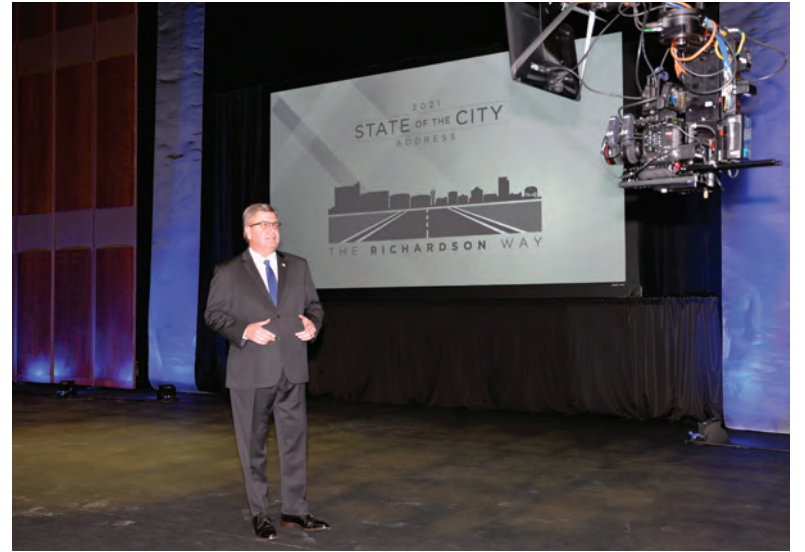
“Our amenities, access to education, sustainable neighborhoods, dependable transportation, and strong local economy makes us one of the most sought-after places to live in the DFW Metroplex,” Mayor Paul Voelker said. “Which is why I can stand before you and feel proud to report, the state of this city is strong!”

The theme of this year’s State of the City was “The Richardson Way,” and during the 45-minute video, the Mayor and Council Members talked about the high-

lights and accomplishments in the past year and what the goals are for the upcoming year.

“An example of the Richardson Way was our ability to innovate when needed in order to continue vital services,” Mayor Voelker said. “At no other time in our history has that need been put more to the test than now, with the spread of the coronavirus. We had other challenges last year, with hurricane evacuations and our own tornado recovery. But none compare to the economic and social impacts created by the spread of COVID-19, and that is why we have found new methods to be able to connect with our community.”

Mayor Voelker stressed in his address that the COVID-19 crisis heavily influenced the development of this year’s budget. The approved 2020-21 fiscal budget included a decrease of almost \$1.6 million, with cuts made in every department to prepare for long-term economic impacts. Resources



Richardson Mayor Paul Voelker recorded the 2021 State of the City Address at the Eisemann Center.

were focused on maintaining core essential services, continuing work on infrastructure projects and protecting the City’s financial position.

The Mayor also spoke of other community challenges, including the expansion of digital out-

reach on neighborhood projects, and work on crisis events that included tornado recovery in south Richardson, evacuations from last year’s hurricanes and community response to the killing of George Floyd.

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City celebrates diversity, honors Dr. King’s legacy



Richardson Mayor Paul Voelker and Librarian Julie Flandorfer are pictured with the MLK proclamation.

The City of Richardson has kicked off 2021 by actively celebrating diversity and honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Many opportunities for young people to express themselves through words and art are in progress, and residents were encouraged last month to commit to serving others through an MLK, Jr. Day proclamation issued by Mayor Paul Voelker. The initiatives are an outgrowth of the Council’s Statement of Equality and its 2019-21 Goals.

The Richardson City Council, RISD, PISD and UT Dallas are collaborating for two student contests that began accepting entries in early January: a Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay Contest and a “Black History Month: Celebrating Diversity and Inclusion” Art Contest. Each contest has been available to students who reside within the City of Richardson or attend a RISD/PISD school within the City of Richardson. The essay contest, which is now in the judging phase,

asked students in grades 4-12 to write an essay explaining how they can use the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. “to contribute to our diverse community and help promote inclusion.” The art contest ends Feb. 26 and asks students in grades Pre-K-12 to create a visual image that displays “how their unique beliefs and values contribute to our diverse community and help promote inclusion.” More details may be found at www.cor.net/ArtandEssayContest.

The Richardson Public Library has provided ways for children and teens to learn about Dr. King, explore topics such as freedom, equality and racial justice and to express themselves. A bookmark art contest for ages 3-18 was held in January, and the winning art will be displayed on free bookmarks available at the library this month. A “DREAM Display” began in January and continues through the end of February, where Library

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COVID-19 vaccine information

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) advises that COVID-19 vaccinations will not be readily available for most Texans until late spring or early summer 2021. Texas continues to receive doses of the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines, and is distributing statewide to hospitals, pharmacies, local health departments, freestanding ERs and other clinics.

Right now, front-line health-care workers and residents at long-term care facilities (called Phase 1A) plus people over 65 or with a chronic medical condition that puts them at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 (called Phase 1B) are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Phase 1B recipients include:

- People 65 years of age and older
- People 16 years of age and older with at least one chronic medical condition that puts

them at increased risk for severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19, such as but not limited to:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Down syndrome
- Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease or cardiomyopathies
- Solid organ transplantation
- Obesity and severe obesity (body mass index of 30 kg/m² or higher)
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

If you are in Phase 1A or 1B, you have two options to get the vaccine: you can get vaccinated at a large vaccine hub or a local vaccine provider. Visit the City’s website at www.cor.net/coronavirus for more information.

Vaccine registration websites

Dallas County vaccine registration site:

www.dallascounty.org/covid-19/covid-19-vaccination.php or call 469-749-9900

Collin County vaccine registration site:

www.collincountytx.gov/healthcare_services/Pages/COVID19vaccines.aspx

Denton County vaccine registration site:

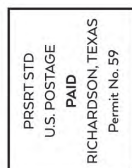
www.dentoncounty.gov/vaccine or call 940-349-2585

Tarrant County vaccine registration site:

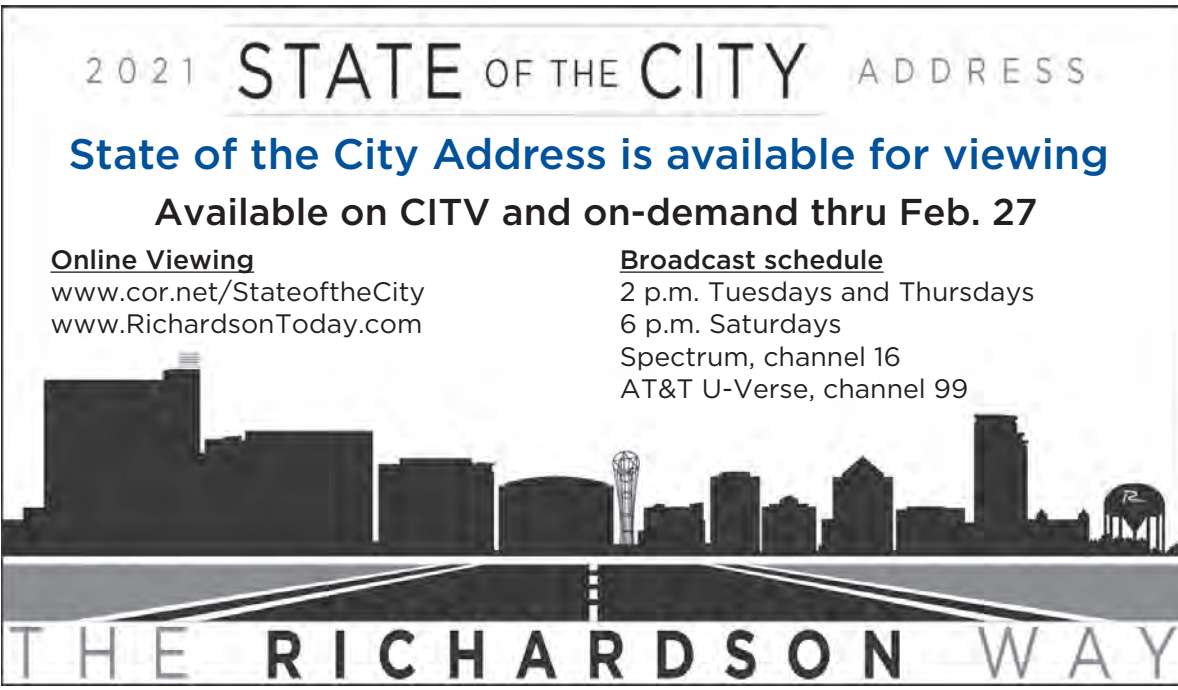
www.tarrantcounty.com/en/public-health/disease-control---prevention/COVID-19/COVID-19-Vaccine.html or call 817-248-6299 and press option 7

Visit www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/immunize/vaccine-hubs.aspx for more information on the operation of statewide vaccination sites and hubs.

NOTE: The City of Richardson is not currently serving as a vaccination hub, but will assist by providing resources that may be needed to distribute the vaccinations.



Postal Customer Richardson, TX



State of the City Address is presented

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Mayor Voelker explained that he and the City Council met with Police Chief Jim Spivey to talk about community concerns.

"It was evident to us that our police department values equality and inclusion as a guiding principle as it continues its long history of community policing," Mayor Voelker said. "We also discussed the proper use of force policies and the department's commitment to continuous improvement."

Some improvements the department has made include changes to its Academy Advisory Board, and the creation of a Mental Health Crisis Team. These modifications enhance community oversight and help officers better respond to incidents.

"We are committed to the principles of justice, peace, kindness and understanding," he said. "We also hold dear the position that the City of Richardson municipal government is here to serve everyone, no matter who they are, because that is the Richardson way."

Noted as one of the biggest projects underway in the community right now, Mayor Voelker highlighted the development of the Richardson Innovation Quarter, or Richardson IQ®. It is a 1,200-acre urban hub with over 19,000 workers and more than 1,000 businesses.

"Several big name companies call this area home," he said. "We are very excited about our potential to make the Richardson IQ® a well-known hub of innovation and collaboration, the likes of which could be

world-renowned. To leverage this potential, we have eased zoning restrictions and made investments in improvements such as bike lanes, green spaces and trails. We are putting the pieces in place to create a live, work and invent environment."

More information about the Richardson IQ® can be found on page 3 of this publication and at www.RichardsonIQ.com.

As part of his concluding remarks, Mayor Voelker mentioned the joint agreement signed with other North Texas Municipal Water District cities last October.

"The agreement settles more than five years of negotiations to amend the contract that sets how much cities pay for water," he said. "Amending the contract required unanimous support across all 13 member cities and concessions were made with our partner cities to gradually implement the new contract. Though it will take time, I am happy to say that by 2033 water rates for us, and all our partner cities, will be based on a method so we pay for only the water that we use."

Looking to the future, Mayor Voelker highlighted Dallas Area Rapid Transit's Silver Line Project. He noted that quarter-mile-long rail segments have been delivered for Richardson's portion of the 26-mile commuter rail line that will include new stations at City-Line and UT Dallas and a new overpass for the trains to cross US 75.

To view the 2021 State of the City Address, visit www.cor.net/StateoftheCity.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Each January, I have the privilege of presenting the State of the City Address. This year was no exception, although things were certainly different. Due to the pandemic, the Address was presented by pre-recorded video rather than in person. While I missed getting to see so many friends and colleagues, we were still able to celebrate our 2020 accomplishments and look at what is on the horizon.

This year's theme was "The Richardson Way." The Richardson Way means so many things, but this year we highlighted our innovative spirit and quality service. These attributes have never been more necessary than right now, while we have continuing impacts from the global COVID-19 pandemic, and heightened needs on our core community services that you depend on our municipal government to provide every day.

In this year's Address, the City Council and I also had the opportunity to speak about long-term plans for continued community investments, specifically on our work in the newly named Richardson Innovation Quarter, or Richardson IQ®. I see The IQ® as the biggest thing going on in the community today because it is a place where we are changing our economic development approach to attract hundreds of small startups that will hopefully grow and stay here. I see this as a place where we are planting seeds that will bear fruit for future generations.



Mayor Paul Voelker paul.voelker@cor.gov

Finally, I also had the opportunity to explain how The Richardson Way also means our municipal government is here to serve everyone, no matter who they are, following our adopted Statement on Equality that says, in part, that "we stand together in our commitment to justice, peace, kindness and understanding, in order to be the best possible civil servants we can be."

This type of long-term thinking and investing is not only what makes Richardson great, it is The Richardson Way.

Sincerely,

Paul Voelker
Mayor

City Council election packets available

The City of Richardson City Council election is held every two years. The next election will be May 1, 2021. Election packets for prospective candidates for Mayor and Places 1 through 6 are available at the City Secretary's Office. The first day to file an application for a place on the ballot was Jan. 13 and the last day is Friday, Feb. 12 by 5 p.m.

Election packets are available to pick up in person—anyone wishing to obtain a candidate packet must contact the City Secretary's Office in advance to schedule a pick up time. You may schedule by calling 972-744-4290 or by e-mail to aimee.nemer@cor.gov. Alternatively, pack-

ets will be available electronically upon e-mail request to the City Secretary. There is not a formal candidate orientation, but candidates may schedule an appointment with the City Secretary to review the packet and election procedures.

For further information, go to www.cor.net/elections.

Important dates for voters

Last day to register to vote	Thursday, April 1
First day of early voting	Monday, April 19
Last day of early voting	Tuesday, April 27
City Council election	Saturday, May 1

City Social Media

Several City departments are active on Facebook and Twitter, including Richardson Today, the Animal Shelter, the Eisemann Center, the Library, Parks and Police departments and Richardson's Community Events. You can also view

City videos on Vimeo. Visit www.cor.net/SocialMedia for a full listing.



Richardson Today Staff

Richardson Today is a monthly publication of the City of Richardson. It is free for Richardson residents. The publication is designed to keep citizens of Richardson informed of activities and news that may be of interest to them. If you have any comments or suggestions concerning this or future issues, please send them to:

Editor. Rick McGarry
Writers. Bill Conrad
Patricia Allbee
Graphic Design. . Heidi Herboldsheimer

Citizens Information Services
City Hall/Civic Center
411 W. Arapaho Rd., Suite 204
Richardson, Texas 75080
972-744-4104
richardsontoday@cor.gov

Receive City news updates by e-mail

Sign up to receive the City's "Week In Review" e-mail, which is sent each Friday, as well as to receive important notifications concerning City events, projects, services and information about weather-related activities and the West Nile virus. Visit www.cor.net/ENews, and select the options you would like to subscribe to.



Contact the City Council

Richardson City Council
411 W. Arapaho Rd.
Richardson, TX 75080

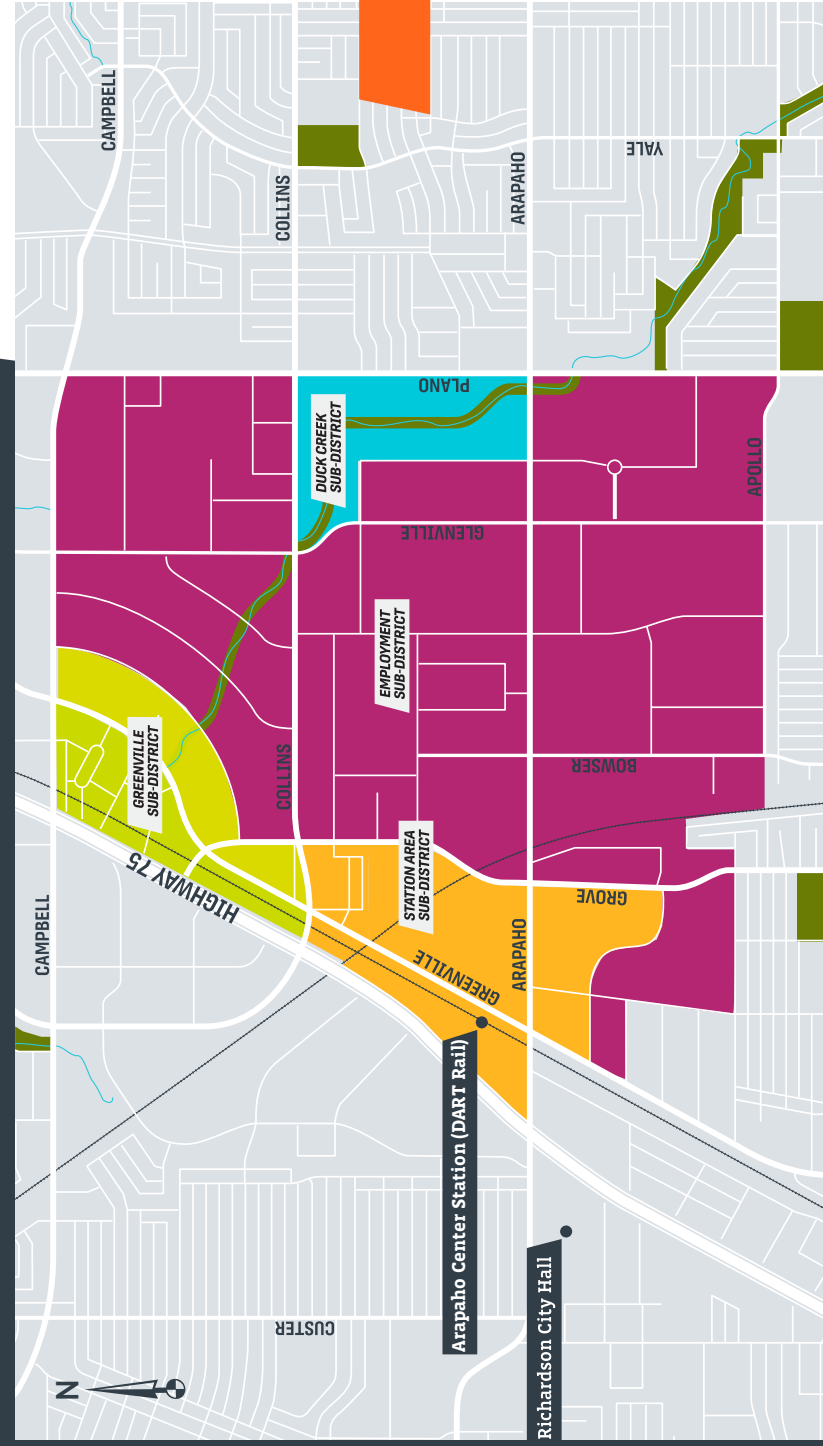
972-744-4203
www.cor.net/council

About City Council Meetings

The City Council typically holds business meetings on the second and fourth Monday of each month in the Council Chambers, and work sessions are typically held every Monday. Meeting times and locations are subject to change and are posted at www.cor.net/citycouncil. The meetings are open to the public, and citizens are welcome to attend. Each meeting's agenda is posted at City Hall on a bulletin board at the west end of the building and can be found on the City website, www.cor.net.

The agenda is posted on Friday evening prior to the Monday night meeting. You may request a copy of the agenda or more information by calling the City Secretary's Office at 972-744-4292.

City Council meetings and work sessions are broadcast live on the City's website at www.cor.net and on the City's cable TV channel on Spectrum (channel 16) and AT&T U-Verse (channel 99). Taped replays of the meetings are also available on the website within 24 hours.



RICHARDSON INNOVATION QUARTER

The Richardson Innovation Quarter, also known as simply "Richardson IQ®" or "The IQ®," is a 1,200-acre urban hub with a rich heritage of innovation and entrepreneurship. The IQ® is a living laboratory for big ideas and groundbreaking technology. It is home to technology-related start-ups, corporate research and development, manufacturers, education institutions, nonprofit organizations, restaurants, entrepreneurs, designers, researchers, inventors, educators and more students. With over 19,000 workers and more than 1,000 businesses, The IQ® spurs the creativity and collaboration that drives innovation and growth.

WWW.RICHARDSONIQ.COM

AMENITIES

The Richardson IQ® offers a range of amenities and activities for the 19,000 district workers.



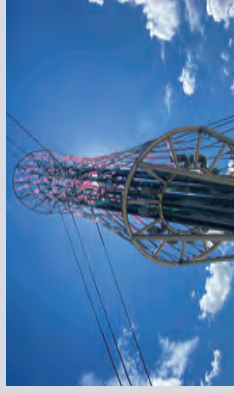
Arapaho Center Station



Bike Facilities



Open Space and Trails



Public Art



Shops at Eastside



Restaurants

COMPANIES IN THE IQ®

Just some of the innovative companies that already call The IQ® home:

- Argo Data
- Ericsson
- Honeywell
- Id Software
- Lintec
- Mavenir
- Polytronics
- Raytheon
- Zyvex



The District will be the premier tech hub in Texas. To achieve this, the District will...

RICHARDSON
IQ® VISION

Be a center for innovation and entrepreneurship

Be lively and active

Be walkable and bikeable

Be visually unique and green

WITH THE DART STATION AREA SERVING AS THE PRINCIPAL GATEWAY TO THE DISTRICT

Infrastructure remains a top priority during pandemic



The 2021 State of the City Address featured a heavy focus on infrastructure, highlighting projects that were completed in 2020, ones that are currently underway and what the future may hold as the City prepares for a possible 2021 bond package.

Even with the global pandemic resulting in less available revenue, infrastructure improvements remained a top priority for the City Council when it approved the 2020-21 budget in August. By focusing on the core services and essential services, the infrastructure projects highlighted in the State of the City Address were able to continue with little to no interruptions.

One of the most visible projects constructed in 2020 was a 1 million-gallon water tower near the University of Texas at Dallas' Northside Development. Towering 146 feet over the campus, the tank adds to the City's water storage supply and will help meet the water needs of UT Dallas' ever-growing community and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Work also continued on Richardson's streets, bike lanes and trails. Improvements were made along Renner Road and Campbell Road, as well as on more than 50 miles of other smaller streets and alleys. An additional 3.5 miles of new bike lanes were added, and new trails were added along Duck Creek in the Richardson IQ®, in Breckinridge Park and the Spring Creek Nature Area.

Work also continues on the reconstruction of Main Street in downtown Richardson. The \$21 million project includes a tree-lined boulevard, new pathways for pedestrians, drainage improvements and public art and park space. Work is scheduled to be complete in the next few months. Adjacent to Main Street is the new Public Safety Campus, which is in the final stages of construction with work currently underway on the parking lot expansion, detention center improvements and new green space.

City celebrates diversity, honors Dr. King's legacy

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patrons, particularly children, are encouraged to think about Dr. King's dream and their own dreams for the future, write them on dove and cloud-shaped die-cuts and tape them to windows in the Youth Services department.

Other activities have included:

- Books related to Black history have been displayed throughout the Library, and a reading list of related books is available for children.
- Free take-home craft kits, such as paper peace doves and a "build-a-bridge" kit, have been available on a limited basis.
- A book about Dr. King was featured in the Library's outdoor Darbey's StoryWalk® in January.

In the Mayor's proclamation, Mayor Voelker officially declared Jan. 18 as Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in the City of Richardson and acknowledged the positive impact Dr. King continues to have on our nation. The Mayor urged citizens to honor his memory and keep his dream of equality for all people alive through service to those in need.

The City will continue to support local events throughout the year that celebrate diversity through its Cultural Partnership Initiative, www.cor.net/cpi.

network
OF COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

NEED VOLUNTEER HOURS?
We Could Use the Help!

Making a Difference www.thenetwork.org/volunteer

Public Services Director named



Eric Robison

Richardson City Manager Dan Johnson appointed Eric Robison to serve as the director of the Public Services Department. Robison is a lifelong Richardson resident who previously served as assistant director of the Public Services Department and has more than 19 years of experience in the department.

"Eric has been a valuable City of Richardson employee, and we are happy to have the opportunity to name him as the next director of public services," Johnson said. "Since he was hired, Eric has worked in or oversaw nearly every division in the Public Services Department. His experience and proven abilities make him a natural fit for this position."

Robison started working at the City of Richardson in 2001. He progressed over the years serving as supervisor over SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) and technical operations, where he managed water production, water quality and plant maintenance. Later, Robison was promoted to Street Maintenance Superintendent, a position he filled until he was promoted to Assistant Director of Public Services. As an assistant director, he oversaw street maintenance, utilities, solid waste and custodial services. He also serves

as a representative on the North Central Texas Council of Government's Water Resource Council.

"I'm honored to be named the next director of the Public Services Department," Robison said. "I have worked with some incredible people in this department since joining the City. It is exciting to be able to continue our positive momentum and help lead the department into the future as we continue to improve and expand our public services infrastructure."

Robison graduated from Richardson High School and cum laude from the University of Texas at Dallas with a bachelor's degree in public affairs. He resides in Richardson with his wife and two children. Robison began his new duties as director Feb. 1. He succeeds former Public Services Director Darryl Fourte, who retired Jan. 31.

Tornado recovery highlighted in the annual State of the City Address

Fifteen months ago, a tornado swept through Richardson, leaving a more than four-mile path of destruction across the southern portion of the city. The recovery process started immediately, and while work remains, more than 90 percent of repair work has either been completed or is currently underway.

During this year's State of the City Address, residents from the most heavily impacted area shared their stories of recovery via video. They spoke about overcoming adversity and how they can continue to have a positive attitude.

"You see tornadoes on the news, and a year later you think they are all back to normal," said D'Nelle Lyons. "It is amazing how long it takes to get some normality back in a neighborhood after something like this."

Nicole Marshall said while things are going well, as with everything else in people's lives, the recovery has been impacted by COVID-19.

"It started to feel normal every day dealing with the things that are not normal," she said. "It started to feel normal seeing all the con-



tractors and having all the traffic come through. And then the world shut down with coronavirus and quarantine kept everyone in their house, so there was a lot more time to reflect. It was kind of more in your face since you had to see it every day. We were kind of forced to confront it."

The City's relationship with Network of Community Ministries was also highlighted in the Address. Much of the tornado recovery efforts were funneled through Network, which began providing services in the impacted area as soon as the roads were clear of

debris and it was safe to do so. Network assisted more than 1,000 people, including more than 300 families, providing clothing, housing, tens of thousands of meals and helping the community come together.

"It is really exciting to see the progress, watching everything come back and getting to see it from the ground up and kind of feeling like you are a part of it has been really inspiring," Marshall said. "Getting to watch the trees grow back and the houses grow back. [You get to] see life keep going."

Moving plans underway for Miss Belle's Place

Moving plans are underway to relocate the historic Miss Belle's Place from its current location near Plano Road and East Lookout Drive. The owner of the property is requiring the move as plans are underway to develop the land. Options are currently being reviewed with plans to move the entire house to a new location, preserving the structure.

Miss Belle's Place was built in about 1887 by A. H. Hill at 206 Sherman St. on a lot that Hill bought from William Wheeler, the founder of the City. In 1902, Margaret A. Robberson bought the house for her daughter, Virginia Belle Robberson, who lived in the house and taught school in the front room for nearly 40 years. After Virginia died, the house was sold in 1941 to Billye and Lester Meyer. In 1979, the house was donated to the City of Richardson by Jean Lowe in memory of her parents Bernice and Sterling Couch and was moved to its current location.

Originally, the house was built on bois d'arc posts without beams or piers, fireplace or bathroom. It is a good example of the architecture typical to the Richardson area in the late 1800s. The house was designated as a Texas historic landmark in 1982.

The Junior League of Richardson maintains the house and has provided tours to visitors over the years.

