

# DALLAS CITIZENS COUNCIL

R • E • P • O • R • T

FALL  
2007

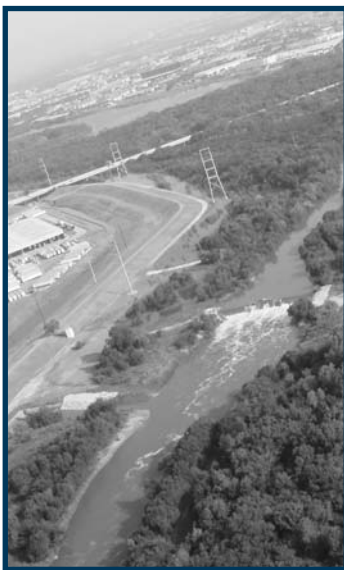
## DCC supports Vote "No" to save the Trinity on November 6

### \$1 million raised for public information campaign

For the upcoming Trinity vote, Dallas Citizens Council (DCC) Vote "No" Point Person **Ron Kirk** and DCC

President **Donna Halstead** are working with Save the Trinity supporters to mobilize voters to oppose the referendum on Tuesday, November 6.

This summer, opponents of the toll road inside the Trinity River levees, led by Dallas City Council Member **Angela Hunt**, turned in the required number of signatures to force the referendum. Dallas voters



Aerial view of the Trinity River.

will be asked to decide whether or not to kill the highway, a key component of the Trinity River Corridor Project that has already passed voter approval.

As November approaches, TrinityVote is trying to convince voters that the toll road should be removed from the Trinity plan and replaced by a slow-traffic road in the park or be moved to Industrial Boulevard.

Kirk and Halstead are joined in the Vote "No" effort by U.S. Senator **Kay Bailey Hutchison**, U.S. Representatives **Pete Sessions** and **Eddie Bernice Johnson**, Dallas Mayor **Tom Leppert**, former Mayor **Laura Miller**, and state Senator **John Carona** and plan to spend \$1 million, a large portion of which is funded by DCC, on the campaign to get their message to voters and get voters to the polls in a nonelection year.

The toll road is a key component of

the massive Trinity public-works initiative, which also includes a downtown river park, wetlands, improved

flood control, and other recreational amenities. Mayor Leppert and all Dallas City Council members, except Hunt, oppose the referendum. The DCC has supported and actively participated in the development of the Trinity plan and also strongly opposes the referendum, maintaining that passage of the ballot proposition will threaten the entire Trinity project.

"Each element of the Trinity plan – flood control, transportation and recreation – is of equal importance and financially interdependent," Halstead says. "Current financial commitments of over \$50 million are jeopardized by this referendum."

Halstead says that any redesign of the toll road would require several additional years and that relocation of the toll road to another alignment could increase right-of-way acquisition costs by as much as \$300 million. For these and other concerns, the DCC is working to defeat this proposition, and Halstead urges all DCC members to provide information on this important issue to their employees. For more information, please visit

[www.votenosavethetrinity.com](http://www.votenosavethetrinity.com).

## NTBCA embarks on new era

A new era is at hand at North Texas Business for Culture and the Arts (NTBCA), a voice for the region's creative economy. Building on the legacy of its beloved founder, the late **Ray Nasher**, three individuals have stepped forward to provide leadership in areas that will be crucial to the future of the organization.

**Nancy Nasher**, president of NorthPark Development Company, and **Gabriel Barbier-Mueller**, CEO of Harwood International, have accepted the roles of Founder's Chair and Legacy Chair, respectively, of the NTBCA Board of Directors. Assuming a two-year term as President of the Board is **David Russell**, regional vice president of Verizon Communications.

In 1988, the Dallas Citizens Council accurately forecast that this region couldn't be a great international business center without a corresponding cultural infrastructure that would draw the best and brightest minds in the world to work here. The DCC selected Ray Nasher to head the initiative, and he founded the Dallas Business Committee for the Arts to encourage business support for world-class arts and cultural amenities that would guarantee a successful business center.

The global nature of DCC member companies, suburban corporate headquarters development, and involvement in

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"Current financial commitments of over \$50 million are jeopardized by this referendum."

— Donna Halstead, President, Dallas Citizens Council

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# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

by Tom M. Dunning



Recently I sat down with Mayor **Tom Leppert** to ask him about his view of our city after sixty days as Dallas' 60th mayor. In listening to his thoughtful responses, what struck me was how his approach to problem solving is so

noticeably shaped by his experience as a CEO of a large company. Whether dealing with a community's mistrust of police officers or the DISD dropout rate, clearly our new mayor is a man accustomed to breaking issues down, analyzing their origins, aligning objectives and setting measurable goals. I walked away with the belief that we are in extremely capable hands.

**Tom Dunning:** You have laid out a number of priority issues to tackle. How do you hope to enlist the help of the community's CEO's?

**Mayor Leppert:** People need to be asked to contribute in ways that are less general and more specific; less open-ended and more with an end point in mind. I know I was always willing to help, but I wanted to know exactly what I needed to do – and when I would be done.

**Tom Dunning:** Public education was a key issue in your campaign. Have you identified ways that you can use your leadership skills to improve our schools?

**Mayor Leppert:** I think that in the last 60 days there has been good communication between me and Superintendent Hinojosa and his senior managers. We have discussed a number of things that need to happen, some general and some specific to the transformation of the Dallas school district. For our part, we are beginning to lay the groundwork for several programs that can be spearheaded by the city – an early reading program that ties in our libraries and our librarians; a nontraditional scholarship program, one that could say, give a freshman real hope that at the end of high school he would be going to college; and a summer jobs program that will give young people a

perspective, a view of a wider world that can potentially change their lives.

**Tom Dunning:** What can business leaders do to support the Trinity River Corridor project?

**Mayor Leppert:** First of all, you can carry the message – to your employees, business and civic organizations with which you are associated. This is not a discussion about a road. It's a discussion about our ability to shape our future with a project that will change the face of Dallas.

**Tom Dunning:** What are your priorities for economic development?

**Mayor Leppert:** I think we have strategic priorities and tactical priorities. I would classify the Trinity River as a strategic priority and the Convention Center as well. From a tactical perspective, we need to be much more business friendly, and we need to do a good job selling our city to businesses looking to come here.

**Tom Dunning:** On the issue of crime, how do your ideas differ from those other Mayors have had?

**Mayor Leppert:** First of all, we have a clear alignment of goals. We are not looking for a couple of new programs or additional activities. Our goal is to get off the list of high-crime rates. Secondly, there are communities where trust and confidence in the police is just not there. We have to go into those neighborhoods, survey the problems and set some goals for improvement. Third, we have to improve response rates and we're coming at that from a variety of ways. We are adding as many new officers as can be reasonably assimilated into the police force. But we're also engaging community organizations, churches, volunteers in communities much more aggressively. We'd like to see the Citizens Council be a part of the solution to our crime issues.

*Tom Dunning*  
Chairman, Dallas Citizens Council

## Dallas Achieves plan begins transformation phase in

Over the summer, the Dallas Achieves education initiative continued to make progress toward its ultimate aspiration of ensuring that every Dallas Independent School District (DISD) student graduates from high school college- and work-force-ready. Following the DISD Board of Trustees' adoption of the Dallas Achieves recommendations in April 2007, the plan is actively being integrated into the operations of the district.

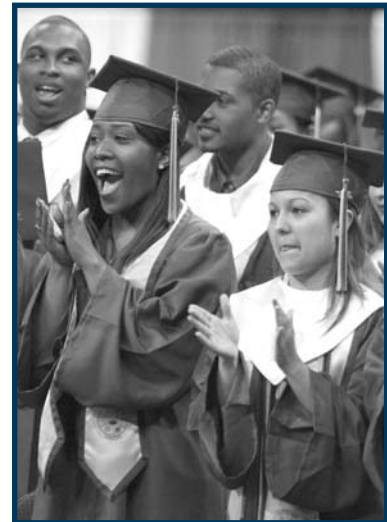
The two major thrusts of work include developing the infrastructure to execute and manage the overall transformation and implementing early wins – changes that will have immediate impact in the coming year.

DISD Technology Chief **Arnold Viramontes** was put in place as chief transformation officer to head the day-to-day implementation of reforms outlined in the Dallas Achieves plan. Viramontes came to DISD in 2005 to run the district's technology department. He is a former executive director of the Texas Telecommunications

Infrastructure Fund Board, which allocated technology grants to state agencies. He is now putting in place a team of high-performing people from throughout the district to lead individual work teams.

**Jamal Powell**, principal at The Boston Consulting Group and strategic consultant for the Dallas Achieves initiative, says one of the first changes adopted by the DISD Board of Trustees and being implemented immediately is the development of an incentive plan to attract and retain effective teachers in high-needs schools. Being piloted this year, the plan provides an additional financial incentive for teachers rated in the top 50 percent of the Classroom Effectiveness Index that teach at schools the district has designated as "high-needs."

Another major activity was to reduce the number of layers between the superintendent and campuses. In some areas, there were up to 11 layers between the superintendent and the front line. After the restructuring, the



Dallas ISD students celebrate graduation.

district has reduced that number to a maximum of seven layers, resulting in an organization that can more effectively serve the campuses.

**Marcia Page**, president and CEO of the Foundation for Community Empowerment, which was instrumental in creating the Dallas Achieves initiative, says the work of the Dallas Achieves Commission is far from over. Even though the DISD Board adopted

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## DCC plays instrumental role in NTTA/SH 121 win

In 2006, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) decided to convert State Highway 121 in Collin and Denton Counties to a toll road, leasing the road for 50 years to the highest bidder. Funds received from the lease would be available to North Texas for new road construction. In February 2007, Cintra Concesiones of Spain was identified as the top bidder.

The North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) was prevented from participating early in the bidding process after TxDOT had received complaints from private bidders. The Dallas Citizens Council saw that excluding the NTTA from bidding would deprive North Texas of billions of dollars of transportation funding

since the NTTA borrows funds at low-cost municipal bond rates and returns cash flow after debt service back to the region for transportation funding, while private entities borrow at higher bank rates and seek equity returns.

The DCC worked diligently during the past legislative session encouraging legislators to allow NTTA to bid. In March 2007, Senator **John Carona**, chairman of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Homeland Security, asked the NTTA what it might have bid, and NTTA's response was billions higher than the winning bid. Under pressure from the Senate, TxDOT gave NTTA permission to submit its proposal.

NTTA's bid came in at \$4.6 billion, with \$3.3 billion up front and another

\$1.3 billion (in today's dollars) over time – almost \$2 billion more than the winning bid of \$2.1 billion up front and \$700 million over 50 years for a total of \$2.8 billion.

"Which would you take?" asks **Jere Thompson, Jr.**, DCC point person for transportation. "An offer almost \$2 billion more from a local agency with an 'A' credit rating and 50 years of regional experience or an offer worth almost \$2 billion less from an unrated foreign company with no prior experience in North Texas? The outcome should have been clear, but it wasn't."

TxDOT gave the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) authority to select the winning bidder,

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The Dallas Citizens Council saw that excluding the North Texas Tollway Authority from bidding would deprive North Texas of billions of dollars of transportation funding.

Even though the DISD Board adopted the Dallas Achieves plan, the commission must continue to support and encourage the DISD Board as it takes the lead in implementation.

## NTBCA *(Continued from front page)*



One of NTBCA's monthly events, at which 75 member-company employees had an opportunity to create pottery, design jewelry and make handmade paper at the Craft Guild of Dallas.

arts support led to the inevitable regional expansion of the organization in 2005 into NTBCA. Today 110 companies are members, partnering with 490 arts agencies in five counties.

Businesses gave \$4.2 million to the arts in the greater Dallas area in 1989. In 2006, business contributions reached \$26.5 million – a clear response to NTBCA's cause-related marketing consultations, employee programs and partner initiatives fostering strategic investments in the community, says NTBCA CEO **Pat Porter**.

"The arts are an economic engine, providing a profound impact on the general economy," Porter said. "In 2006, nonprofit arts and culture brought \$828.6 million into the economy. That indicates an ROI of more than \$30 for every dollar invested in the arts."

NTBCA developed the North Texas Arts Alliance – a coalition of 15 suburban art centers and councils to help businesses determine and address common challenges, opportunities and resources, and to develop partnerships beneficial to the entire region without duplicating efforts.

Current priorities of the NTBCA include building business and arts partnerships for the \$1.3 billion in capital, program and endowment initiatives underway in North Texas and supporting projects that enhance Dallas' urban center. Topping that list is the Woodall Rodgers Deck Park, which the NTBCA sees as critical to completion of the Dallas Arts District as the ceremonial entrance to the city.

DCC members seeking strategic community arts investments with definable returns or looking for arts-related programming and benefits for their employees are encouraged to contact **Pat Porter** at **972-991-8300** or visit **www.ntbca.org**.

## NTTA/SH 121 win *(Continued from page 3)*

but TxDOT, Cintra, RTC staff and an independent advisor, who was later found to be Cintra's financial advisor and auditor, all campaigned to convince the RTC that Cintra's bid was superior to the NTTA's, Thompson says.

Finally in June, the RTC voted 27 to 10 to award the project to the NTTA, and the Texas Transportation Commission accepted the recommendation in July by a vote of 4 to 1.

The NTTA has since completed all negotiations, and contracts will be signed as soon as environmental clearances are received.

"This region will soon deposit a check for \$3.3 billion for new transportation funding," Thompson said. "Because of the efforts of the DCC and so many others, North Texas will receive billions more than it would have."

## Dallas Achieves

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The Dallas Achieves Commission – made up of 64 members representing a diverse cross-section of business, civic and grass roots leaders, philanthropists, students, teachers, parents, the faith communities, city officials and state representatives – is charged with raising \$27 million to support DISD throughout the transformation and implementation process. In October Dallas Achieves Commission Co-Chairs **Don Williams**, **Pettis Norman** and **Arcilia Acosta** are expected to announce the first \$9 million in gifts to the effort.

For more information on Dallas Achieves or to make a contribution, contact **Marcia Page** at **469-221-0717** or **mpage@fcdallas.org** or visit **www.dallasachieves.com**.

### On the RADAR SCREEN

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

DECEMBER 3

DCC Annual Meeting  
Celebrating 70 Years

### WEB LAUNCH

The Dallas Citizens Council is pleased to launch **www.DallasCitizensCouncil.org**, an online repository of issue positions, newsletters and information about our members in the news. We hope you'll visit the site often to keep abreast of DCC developments.

"The arts are an economic engine, providing a profound impact on the general economy. In 2006, nonprofit arts and culture brought \$828.6 million into the economy."

— Pat Porter, CEO, North Texas Business for Culture and the Arts (NTBCA)