

MAYOR CITY CNCL CITY ATTN CRIM HENNIG MCKAMIE RIDGWAY(2) BOYETT BROWN
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DATE DISTRIBUTED 5/18/07 DATE OF ARTICLE 5/10/07 NEWSPAPER Steelers.com

A move that changed his future



Thursday, May 10, 2007

By Teresa Varley
Steelers.com

The road to the NFL varies for every player, but when you look at the Steelers draft picks, fourth-round selection Ryan McBean has traveled the toughest path.

McBean was born in Jamaica where he was forced to grow up fast. His parents separated when he was young and in an attempt to make a better life for her family, his mother headed to the United States, where she lived in Brooklyn, New York, close to family.

When she left, money was tight, and she couldn't take McBean and his brother with her. So they were left behind, living in foster care for several years.

"Just like everybody else, I had a hard time growing up," said McBean. "I had to grow up and be a man at a real young age. It's okay though. I've overcome all of that, and here I am now. So, I'm good."

After a few years, his mother became settled in the United States and made enough money to fly her boys to Brooklyn to live with her.

And it seemed like all was going to be fine. But, it wasn't.

"I wasn't running with the right crowd, and my brother wasn't running with the right crowd at the time," said McBean, who was 14 when he arrived in Brooklyn. "He got into some little trouble."

And it was then his grandmother stepped in and encouraged them to move and make a fresh start. So they hopped aboard a Greyhound bus and headed for Texas, a place they knew nothing about and where they would be on their own.

It was the best move they could have made for McBean as that's when football entered his world. And it helped mold his future.

He attended Trinity High School in Euless, Texas where football was a right of passage for young men and that helped put him on the right path.

"I had some real good coaches and real good teachers that cared about me," said McBean. "People in Euless—in the Fort Worth area—they really care about the players, and they looked after me as soon as I came into the district—the coaches and the teachers and everything else. I had a chance to cope with my surroundings. At Trinity they helped out a whole lot. They fit me into the system a whole lot."

Playing at Trinity was McBean's introduction to football, and even though he had an outstanding career at Oklahoma State, he still is growing and developing.

"I'm still learning. Put me with a coach; I'm just like a kid," said McBean. "I'm still learning, and I want to learn. I want to keep learning. I'm good right now, but I know that I could be better. I could be great at anything that I could do. That's my position; I'm very young at the game. I'm with Coach Mitchell now, and he's going to teach me everything that he can."

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DATE DISTRIBUTED 5/18/07 DATE OF ARTICLE 5/10/07 NEWSPAPER marketwire.com

DGSE Companies, Inc. Announces Acquisition of All of the Assets of Euless Gold & Silver

DALLAS, TX – (MARKET WIRE) – 05/10/2007 – DGSE Companies, Inc. (NASDAQ: DGSE), which wholesales, retails and auctions fine watches, jewelry, diamonds, precious metal and rare coin products via traditional and Internet channels, today announced that it has completed the acquisition of all of the tangible and intangible assets of Euless Gold & Silver. The business will operate under the Dallas Gold & Silver Exchange name immediately. The transaction was completed for cash and a note and is expected to be immediately accretive to earnings. DGSE did not assume any liabilities of Euless Gold & Silver in the transaction. To facilitate the transaction DGSE's primary lender modified its current credit facility and increased the company's lines of credit.

"We are very pleased to have an opportunity to acquire the assets of a business with a 28-year history that did approximately \$ 3.2 million in profitable revenue in fiscal 2006," noted William H. Oyster, President and Chief Operating Officer of DGSE Companies, Inc. Mr. Oyster continued, "We had previously announced our intention to enter the Fort Worth, Texas market and the acquisition of a profitable existing business in the area allows us to immediately integrate these activities with our existing operations. The acquisition of the Euless operations along with the anticipated closing of our acquisition of Superior Galleries, Inc. in Beverly Hills, California in late May will provide DGSE with a more diversified platform for future growth. We will continue to explore other opportunities to buy or build to extend both our revenue and earnings."

DGSE Companies, Inc. wholesales and retails jewelry, diamonds, fine watches and precious metal bullion products and rare coins to domestic and international customers through its Dallas Gold and Silver Exchange and Charleston Gold and Diamond Exchange subsidiaries and as well as through the internet. DGSE also owns Fairchild International, Inc., one of the largest vintage watch wholesalers in the country. In addition to its retail facilities, the Company operates live Internet auctions which can be accessed at www.dgse.com. Real-time price quotations and real-time order execution in precious metals are provided on another DGSE web site at www.USBullionExchange.com. Wholesale customers can access our full vintage watch inventory through the restricted site at www.FairchildWatches.com.

The Company is headquartered in Dallas, Texas and its common stock trades on The Nasdaq Stock Market® under the symbol "DGSE."

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DATE DISTRIBUTED 5/18/07 DATE OF ARTICLE 5/10/07 NEWSPAPER, pegasusnews.com

Note to bilingual wannabes: Euless Public Library will let you learn a foreign language for free

BY CHAD JONES

The Euless Library has partnered with RosettaStone language learning software—a program you might have used/abhorred in 10th grade—to provide free online classes for Euless library card holders.

Thus, you can learn a language online, for free, whenever you want. Languages include Spanish (Latin America & Spain), French, German, Greek, Italian, Russian, and English, which you would actually need to know to read this message.

Registration is free. Just create a user name, password and have your Euless Library card number. Bon voyage.

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NORTHEAST & AREA BRIEFS

23-month-old hit by car in driveway

EULESS — A 23-month-old was struck by a car that was backing out of a driveway about 9 p.m. Friday at a home in the 700 block of Ranger Drive, police said. The toddler was taken to Harris Methodist H.E.B. Hospital in Bedford and later flown to Cook Children's Medical Center in Fort Worth. The child's condition was unknown late Friday, and police did not release the child's name because all relatives hadn't been notified yet.

— Melissa Vargas

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AREA BRIEFS

FORT WORTH

Acme Brick receives environmental award

Acme Brick of Fort Worth has received the Environmental Stewardship Award from the Brick Industry Association for its Perla Plant Recycling Initiative. The project has resulted in a 93 percent reduction in waste by recycling unfired brick into a new product that now accounts for 10 percent of the plant's sales.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Monday

EULESS — Euless Master-
Works Concert Series: Mexican
Folklorico, 7-8 p.m., Euless Public
Library, 201 N. Ector Drive
www.artsnetc.org

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EULESS

Two council battles head toward runoff

By JESSICA DeLEÓN
 jdeleon@star-telegram.com

EULESS — Councilwoman Linda Martin easily won re-election, but two other council races are headed for a June 16 runoff because no candidate won a majority of the votes.



Tyson

Incumbent Carl Tyson, who voted against employee benefits last year as a way to cut taxes, will face shopping center manager Tim Stinneford in a runoff.

Perry Bynum, a Haltom City firefighter, will face former Councilwoman Veva Lou Massey.

How the vote went

Place 1: Stinneford had 49.4 percent of the vote, followed by Tyson, a certified public accountant, with 44.6 percent. Steve Symonds, who dropped out of the race but whose name

remained on the ballot, received 6 percent.

Place 6: Bynum won 45.5 percent of the vote to 35.4 percent for Massey and 19.1 percent for Warren Wilson, an equine chiropractor.



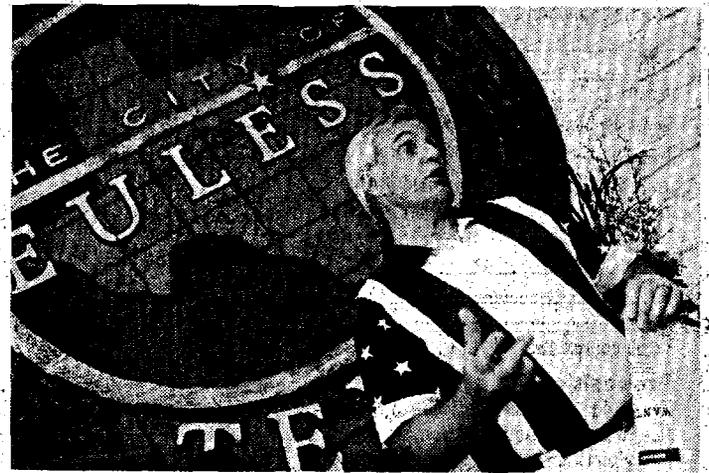
Martin

What was at stake

Stinneford and Bynum said they ran for office because of last year's controversy in which three council members voted against employee benefits. The council later unanimously approved healthcare and retirement benefits after an outcry by city employees and their supporters.

Tyson was the only council member who voted against the benefits to face re-election this year. Martin voted for the

Place 3: Martin won 80.9 percent to 19.1 percent for retiree George Moore.



Place 1 candidate Tim Stinneford at City Hall on Saturday night. Stinneford ran nine votes short of winning a City Council seat outright; he faces a June 16 runoff.

SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM/BRANDON WADE



Bynum

benefits. Stinneford was nine votes short of winning the election outright.

"I feel very good, and, I appreciate all the support everyone's given me," Stinneford said. "I feel strongly we'll be able to turn out the vote on

June 16." The winner of the Place 6 runoff will serve a two-year unexpired term.

"There's a runoff, so the work continues on," Bynum said.

Massey served on the council from 2000 to 2006 before health issues sidelined her.

"Well, we fought a good fight," she said. "We've got another one ahead of us."

About 6.5 percent of the city's 25,563 registered voters participated in the election.



Massey

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ELECTIONS | NORTHEAST TARRANT COUNTY

Not really close

In the heat of the campaign, it may have looked as if loyalties in Northeast Tarrant County were divided. But the results show something quite different.

Now that the dust has settled from Saturday's Northeast Tarrant County elections, it's evident that what looked like contentious races in many cases weren't really that close at all — at least not to voters.

In elections, a real contest is when the winning candidate comes out with 50.1 percent of the vote. Sixty percent is more like a landslide, and that's what happened in many Northeast races this time around.

Keller was the biggest battleground during the campaign season, both for school board races and City Hall contests. One school board seat remains to be decided in a runoff. But even that won't change the outcome in terms of what much of the pre-election shouting was all about: the future of Superintendent James Veitenheimer.

What had been a 4-3 board in favor of getting rid of Veitenheimer now has at least four Veitenheimer supporters. After the June 16 runoff, there may very well be five.

And look at the margins of victory for those who won board seats. Jason Wylie took 61.1 percent of the vote against two opponents. Cindy Lotton got 65.7 percent of the votes in her race, and Lara Lee Hogg took 66.6 percent.

In the Place 2 race, Kevin Stevenson took 49.4 percent of the vote and narrowly missed winning outright. Incumbent Randy Pugh had just 23.8 percent, and he can hardly be happy going into the runoff.

In Keller's municipal races, Pat McGrail got 59.6 percent of the vote in his race against four-year incumbent Mayor Julie Tandy. Ray Brown won a City Council seat in his race against incumbent Steve Trine, taking 60 percent of the vote. Clearly, Keller voters want a new direction at City Hall.

In Haltom City, a slate of challengers failed miserably in their effort to unseat the mayor and three City Council members. Mayor Bill Lanford (79 percent of the vote) and incumbent council members Jim Sutton (64.1 percent), Christopher J. Holcomb (51.7 percent) and Diane Bransom (61.9 percent) won easily.

Perhaps the closest contests were in Euless, where there will be two runoffs for City Council seats.

For the most part, Northeast Tarrant voters were of a clear mind. In the heat of the campaign, it may have looked as if their loyalties were divided, but the election results show something quite different.

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PROPERTY VALUES

Northeast Tarrant tax appraisals on the rise

Property values are up across the county, thanks to new construction and underground gas reserves.

By ANNA M. TINSLEY and JOHN KIRSCH
 tinsley@star-telegram.com
 kirsch@star-telegram.com

Underground gas reserves and new construction fueled an 8.5 percent increase in Tarrant County property values, helping boost this year's tax rolls by \$9 billion from last year, according to preliminary numbers released Tuesday by the Tarrant Appraisal District.

Property values in Haslet, Southlake and the Carroll school district helped lead the way.

In Haslet, mineral rights helped fuel an 18.2 percent

The increase in property values could mean higher tax payments for some residents if their home values increased. But for local governments,

Top gainers
 Here are the Top 10 gainers in net taxable values this year.

Taxing entity	Percent gain in net taxable value
1. Westworth Village	68.4
2. Haslet	18.2
3. Azle ISD	16.3
4. Lake Worth ISD	16.1
5. Everman ISD	14.6
6. Crowley	14.3
7. Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD	13.7
8. Southlake	13.4
9. Carroll ISD	13.1
10. Mansfield ISD	12.9

Source: Tarrant Appraisal District

higher values mean more money in the hopper to provide services and a chance to hold the line on property tax rates.

"We had another good year," said John Marshall, chief appraiser for the Tarrant Appraisal District.

Property values county-wide rose to \$115 billion, including a \$485 million increase in mineral values. No Tarrant County community saw a drop in taxable values this year.

Westworth Village saw the biggest growth — 68.4 percent — largely because of the opening of a Wal-Mart and Sam's Club last year and a housing development. Pelican Bay in northwest Tarrant County saw the smallest growth, at 1.6 percent. Fort Worth property values increased 10.1 percent, including a \$228 million increase in mineral values.

Richland Hills' property tax base rose 2.6 percent, the smallest increase in Northeast Tarrant County for the second consecutive year. But Mayor Dave Ragan said the city of 8,200 is poised for growth. A developer is proposing to build two hotels on Northeast Loop 820, which, Ragan said, could pump \$200,000 in new tax money into the city's coffers.

ANNA TINSLEY, 817-390-7610
 JOHN KIRSCH, 817-685-3805

For more information
Questions about appraisals: 817-284-3925
Questions about exemptions: 817-284-4063
 Online: www.tad.org

Mineral rights
 ■ Mineral rights played a big factor in the year's preliminary estimates, with mineral values up nearly 35 percent over last year to \$1.8 billion, TAD records show.
 ■ The amounts are based on estimates of gas reserves that remain underground once a well is drilled. That estimate is multiplied by last year's average gas price to get the mineral values. If a well is not drilled, mineral rights are not taxed, Marshall said.
 ■ Some taxing entities saw increases of several hundred percent, including the Birdville school district at 530 percent and Kennedale schools at 455 percent. The Fort Worth school district saw a 261 percent increase.
 ■ The Mansfield school district and the cities of Keller and Saginaw saw their mineral values drop from last year.

What do you think?
 To post a comment about this report, go to www.star-telegram.com

increase in the city's tax base the largest increase among 17 cities and school districts in Northeast Tarrant County and the second largest increase in Tarrant County after Westworth Village. Haslet City Secretary Diane Rasor said the city of 1,500 has an estimated 50 gas wells. The value of Haslet's mineral rights rose 26 percent. Southlake's tax base grew 13.4 percent. New businesses in and around the Southlake Town Square shopping and office development drove the increase, city Finance Director Sharen Jackson said. Most of the Carroll school district is in Southlake.

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Average home values

■ The average home value in Tarrant County is now \$142,647, up from \$136,683 last year. "The economy is still strong here," Marshall said.

■ In Fort Worth, the average home value is \$114,603, up from \$108,631 last year.

Arlington's average value is \$135,703, up from \$132,563 last year, and Southlake's value is \$448,718, up from \$418,967, TAD records show.

What it means

■ The figures are based on the value of land, buildings, business inventories and mineral values as of Jan. 1. The growth is calculated on net taxable value, which reflects deductions for homestead exemptions, abatements and freeport exemptions for businesses.

■ The numbers are preliminary and could fall, depending on protests. Certified numbers, which mean that less than 5 percent of the total value is still under protest by property owners, are set to be released July 25.

To protest

To protest a valuation, property owners may file a complaint with the Tarrant Appraisal Review Board. A form, printed on the back of appraisal notices mailed out this month, is available but not required.

A protest must

- Be in writing.
- Identify the protesting property owner.
- Identify the property that is the subject of the protest.
- Indicate disagreement with some determination by the appraisal.

■ Be postmarked or delivered to the review board by May 31 or the deadline date printed on the appraisal notice, whichever is later.

Where to send protests

By mail: Tarrant Appraisal Review Board, P.O. Box 185519, Fort Worth TX, 76181-0519.

In person: The Tarrant Appraisal District is at 2500 Handley-Ederville Road in Fort Worth.

Preliminary Tarrant County property values

Taxing authority	*Previous net taxable	**Current net taxable	Percent gain
Arlington	\$16.9 billion	\$17.7 billion	5.3
Arlington ISD	\$19.4 billion	\$20.4 billion	5.2
Azle	\$567 million	\$626 million	10.5
Azle ISD	\$1.7 billion	\$2 billion	16.3
Bedford	\$2.9 billion	\$3 billion	3.8
Benbrook	\$1.2 billion	\$1.3 billion	6.4
Birdville ISD	\$6.8 billion	\$7.2 billion	5.5
Blue Mound	\$72.9 million	\$74.8 million	2.7
Carroll ISD	\$4.4 billion	\$5 billion	13.1
Castleberry ISD	\$461 million	\$497 million	7.8
Colleyville	\$3.1 billion	\$3.4 billion	10.4
Crowley	\$550 million	\$628 million	14.3
Crowley ISD	\$4 billion	\$4.4 billion	10.0
Dalworthington Gardens	\$274 million	\$293 million	7.2
Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD	\$5 billion	\$5.7 billion	13.7
Edgecliff Village	\$157 million	\$174 million	10.7
Eules	\$2.5 billion	\$2.6 billion	6.1
Everman	\$143 million	\$150 million	5.2
Everman ISD	\$838 million	\$960 million	14.6
Forest Hill	\$368 million	\$401 million	9.1
Fort Worth	\$34.4 billion	\$37.9 billion	10.1
Fort Worth ISD	\$22.5 billion	\$24.3 billion	7.9
Grapevine	\$5.4 billion	\$5.8 billion	6.3
Grapevine-Colleyville ISD	\$9.3 billion	\$10 billion	7.3
Haltom City	\$1.5 billion	\$1.6 billion	4.4
Hasiel	\$440 million	\$520 million	18.2
Hurst-Eules-Bedford ISD	\$8 billion	\$8.4 billion	5.1
Hurst	\$2.2 billion	\$2.3 billion	4.8
Keller	\$3.2 billion	\$3.6 billion	10.9
Keller ISD	\$8.5 billion	\$9.6 billion	12.6
Kennedale	\$391 million	\$435 million	11.2
Kennedale ISD	\$850 million	\$931 million	9.5
Lakeside	\$86 million	\$96 million	12.3
Lake Worth	\$358 million	\$403 million	12.6
Lake Worth ISD	\$637 million	\$740 million	16.1
Mansfield	\$3.5 billion	\$3.8 billion	10.3
Mansfield ISD	\$7 billion	\$7.9 billion	12.9
North Richland Hills	\$3.4 billion	\$3.7 billion	6.8
Pantego	\$233 million	\$250 million	7.0
Pelican Bay	\$25 million	\$25.4 million	1.6
Richland Hills	\$422 million	\$433 million	2.6
River Oaks	\$218 million	\$228 million	4.9
Saginaw	\$1.04 billion	\$1.07 billion	2.1
Sansom Park	\$98 million	\$105 million	7.5
Southlake	\$4.4 billion	\$5 billion	13.4
Watauga	\$1 billion	\$1.04 billion	3.2
Westover Hills	\$332 million	\$353 million	6.1
Westworth Village	\$88 million	\$148 million	68.4
White Settlement	\$536 million	\$561 million	4.6
White Settlement ISD	\$1.2 billion	\$1.3 billion	10.5
Tarrant County	\$106 billion	\$115 billion	8.5

Source: Tarrant Appraisal District. *September 2006 final tax roll. **May 15, 2007, preliminary tax roll.

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TRINITY UPTOWN

District buys first land in project's path

A sweet deal? The Tarrant Regional Water District is buying its first piece of Trinity Uptown property.

By MAX B. BAKER
maxbaker@star-telegram.com

FORT WORTH — In another step toward making Trinity Uptown a reality, the Tarrant Regional Water District agreed Tuesday to pay \$4.2 million for the first piece of land in the path of the sweeping and controversial downtown riverfront development project.

Owned by an investment group, the 5.3 acres — now home to the Sweet Shop, a candy manufacturer — is where the Trinity Uptown's proposed bypass channel will cut a swath across the city's near north side.

District officials were elated to take their first concrete steps toward building the \$435 million flood-control and redevelopment project. They hope to buy about a half-dozen other properties by the end of the year, putting the so-called Trinity River Vision plan ahead of schedule.

"Someone was saying that if we reduced the process to an advertising slogan, it would be 'We pay cash, and we pay fast,'" said Steve Christian, the district's property director. He said the district started talking to the landowners about a year ago and spent about six months negotiating the deal.

Lee Nicol, general partner of 2000 White Settlement L.P., which owns the property, said the group is satisfied and eager to close the deal.

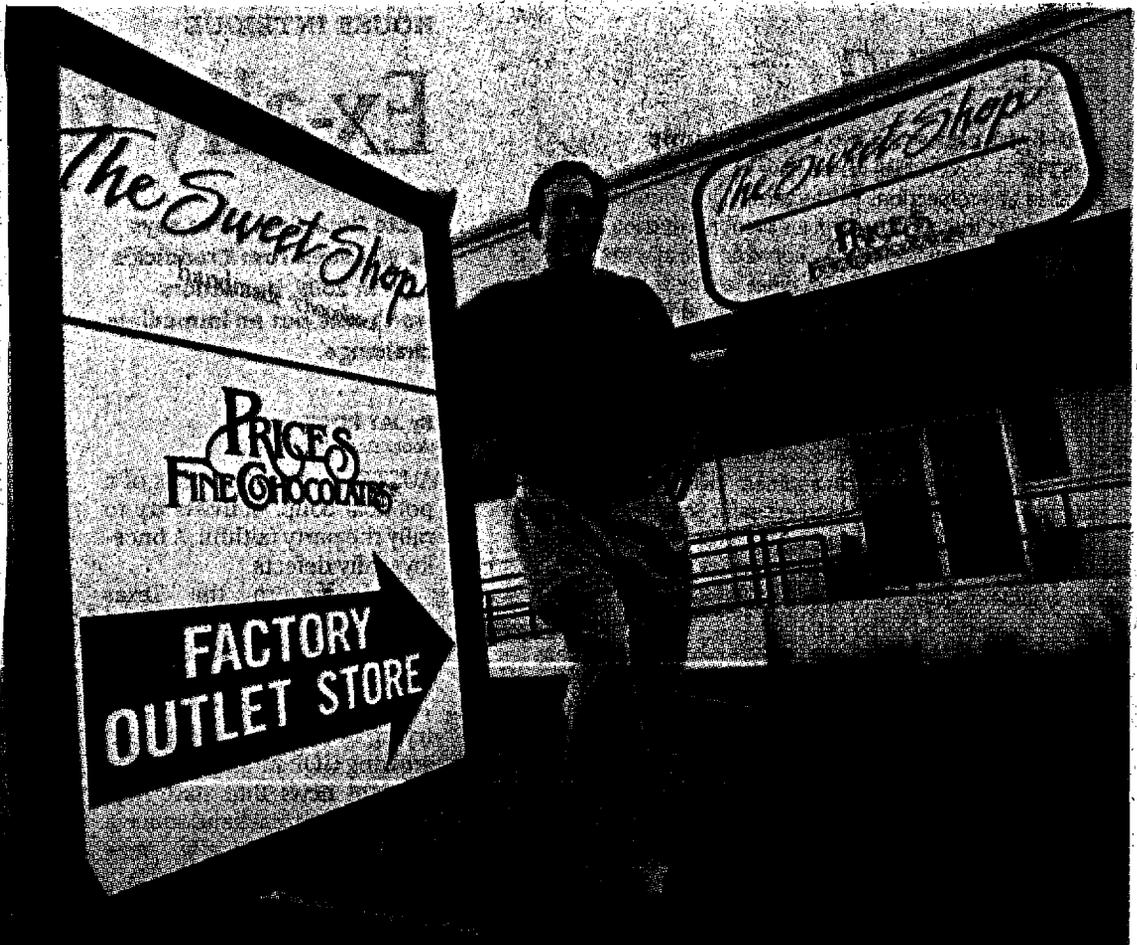
"We wish the River Vision well and look forward to its fruition," Nicol said. "Let's get this going; it will be good for the city."

Negotiating the deal
North-side property owners have been watching negotiations closely to see whether project managers will pay fair prices.

Water district officials said they have tried to make the Sweet Shop deal as smooth as possible.

"People can see that we are doing our best to reach a fair, negotiated price and to keep their businesses in our area," said J.D. Granger, executive director of the Trinity River Vision Authority, which oversees the project.

Fort Worth broker Rodger Chieffalo, who represented Nicol's group when it bought the property in 2003, said the



Matt Kelley, the Sweet Shop's controller, doesn't know when the shop at 2000 White Settlement Road will move. The Tarrant Regional Water District has agreed to buy the property for \$4.2 million.

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Moving day

The Sweet Shop is one step closer to moving day.

Again.

The Fort Worth candy manufacturing and distribution business moved to the old Pangburn Candy Co. plant at 2000 White Settlement Road in September 2000 after the March 2000 tornado destroyed its home off West Seventh Street. The company leases about 70,000 square feet.

Now, the company stands in the way of the Trinity Uptown project, which calls for residential and commercial development just north of downtown.

Matt Kelley, the Sweet Shop's controller, said Tuesday that the company has already looked at several buildings that are either too old or too big. The business has special requirements, among them that the warehouse be air-conditioned.

Company officials hope to stay near downtown, but Kelley said they've also considered a building in Euless. The Trinity River Vision Authority is responsible for helping businesses find and move to new locations.

"They've been helpful," Kelley said. "We would like a little more help, but we're not dissatisfied."

— Max B. Baker

\$4.2 million is a fair price based on warehouse property in that section of the city. The property includes three buildings that cover about 123,000 square feet.

Chieffalo said that land in that area shouldn't be discounted just because it is in the path of a public works project, but that the water district shouldn't have to pay a premium for land because of the potential value of a town lake and other development.

"There are a lot of people out there who want to make a lot of money off their buildings; they have that 'win the lottery' mentality that just because they are there they should be paid a fortune to go away," Chieffalo said.

Looking ahead

Since the project seems to be moving so quickly, the water district voted Tuesday to transfer an additional \$4.3 million into the Trinity River Vision Authority's coffers for the rest of the fiscal year to pay for relocating businesses, environmental clean-

What is Trinity Uptown?

It is a flood-control and development project that would build a river bypass channel and a town lake, creating an 800-acre island for residential and commercial development on the near north side of Fort Worth. Besides locks, dams and levees, three bridges will be built. Property owners in the area have expressed concerns about the project, and many are fearful that they will not be paid enough for their land. Project opponents have described Trinity Uptown as a boondoggle and a waste of taxpayers' money.

up and demolition.

The district expects to spend about \$140 million for land, business relocations, environmental cleanup and demolition.

MAX B. BAKER, 817-390-7714

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AREA BRIEFS

Two injured in shooting at Burger King

EULESS — Police were investigating a shooting at a fast-food restaurant that sent two people to a hospital Tuesday night. The conditions of the victims were not available after the 9 p.m. incident in the parking lot of Burger King, 101 W. Euless Blvd., a dispatcher said. Police did not release information about suspects.

— Mark Agee

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Tarrant property values rise 8.5%

Fort Worth building boom drives \$9 billion countywide increase

By **JEFF MOSIER**
 Staff Writer
 jmosier@dallasnews.com

Tarrant County's property tax base is still posting strong increases, but the growth has slowed slightly from a year ago, according to preliminary figures released Tuesday.

The taxable value of all property countywide jumped by more than \$9 billion — an increase greater than the entire value of Ellis County. But that 8½ percent growth rate is lower than last year's 9.2 percent increase and about on par with the growth Dallas County recorded in 2006.

Fort Worth and its building boom around downtown and on the outskirts of the city accounted for nearly one-third of the county's growth, according to numbers from the Tarrant Appraisal District.

Tarrant County budget officer Debbie Schneider said the numbers are on pace with her expectations, although she had not had time to thoroughly review the documents.

"They are fairly consistent," she said. "The new construction has been strong, and that has been a big indicator."

The figures released Tuesday are preliminary and could be lower after property owners challenge the valuations. The certified numbers are typically released in July.

Tarrant County property owners have until May 31 or the date printed on their appraisal notices to protest their values and request a lower market value.

The increase in the county's mineral values wasn't available. Those appraisals are conducted by an outside firm and have not been completed.

The mineral rights values, mainly for gas from the Barnett Shale, have nearly doubled in each of the last two years. The Barnett Shale is one of the nation's largest natural gas fields.

Fort Worth city officials were not immediately available for comment Tuesday. The city has seen dramatic growth in businesses and new homes along Interstate 35W north of downtown and on the western edge of the city near Loop 820.

Also, condos and lofts in and near downtown have been selling quickly as part of the continued revitalization of the central city.

The increased value in Fort Worth's tax base is split evenly between new construction and higher values for existing properties.

While Fort Worth continued its rapid growth, property values

soared throughout Tarrant County. Of the 50 cities and school districts on the appraisal district's list, 22 had double-digit growth rates. Those included areas all along the edges of the county from Mansfield to Crowley to Azle to Haslet to Southlake.

Westworth Village, a town of 2,300 adjacent to the former Carswell Field, posted the largest gain, a 68 percent increase. This is the town's second consecutive year to top the Tarrant County list.

Pelican Bay, an even smaller town on Eagle Mountain Lake, had a growth rate of 1.6 percent, the lowest in Tarrant County.

Gary Robinson, city administrator for Westworth Village, said the nearly 50 percent increase last year and 68 percent this year are great, but increases of that size will soon stop. He said much of the rise came from a partial value of a Wal-Mart Supercenter and Sam's Club that were under construction in 2005 and the full value after the stores opened last year.

Mr. Robinson said those additions, as well as other commercial development and an upscale subdivision, have provided most of the boost to Westworth Village's tax base. And because it's a small bedroom community, these few big projects can make the growth percentages outrageous.

"We've really not had commer-

cial development until just now really, so the numbers are almost misleading," Mr. Robinson said.

He said it's more likely that the growth rate would be around 20 percent next year. That's a dra-

matic drop-off, but that would have been enough to still put his city at No. 1 this year.

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PROPERTY VALUE: EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

The process:

To determine value, county appraisal districts consider the size of the property, its condition, location, any income it may produce and comparable sales in the surrounding area. Appraisers may drive by the property and inspect the exterior, but they don't go inside the structure. They spend most of their day in the field taking notes. Information is fed into a computer program and an appraisal is created. All properties on the tax roll must be reappraised every three years, although counties may reassess values more often if the market changes.

Key times

Late April Reappraisal notices are mailed.

Mid-May Hearings begin for property owners to protest their appraisals. A preliminary tax roll is released to cities and school districts for revenue projections.

Appraisal values

Late July Appeal hearings end, and tax rolls are certified as final.

October Taxing jurisdictions mail tax bills to property owners.

Jan. 31 Taxes are due.

Feb. 1 Taxes become delinquent, and penalties and interest begin accruing.

Protest form

Suiting up for battle

The informal protest

■ The first step is to gather evidence for your case and present it to an appraiser, who will meet with you at appraisal district offices.

■ Get photographs or expert statements that document structural defects — foundation or plumbing problems, for example — the appraiser missed.

■ Get "comps." Contact a Realtor familiar with your neighborhood to get recent sales information about properties "comparable" to your own. Check the appraisal district's Web site for information about values in your

neighborhood. Neighbors can provide recent sales info or sworn statements about their own property.

■ An independent appraisal could bolster your case. Show it to the county appraiser and ask her how she arrived at a higher value.

■ Remember, professional standards govern an appraiser's work. It's not personal. Be factual, not emotional.

The formal protest

■ If the appraiser rejects your case, you can request a formal hearing with the Appraisal Review Board by mailing the protest form, attached to your appraisal notice.

■ The deadline for filing an

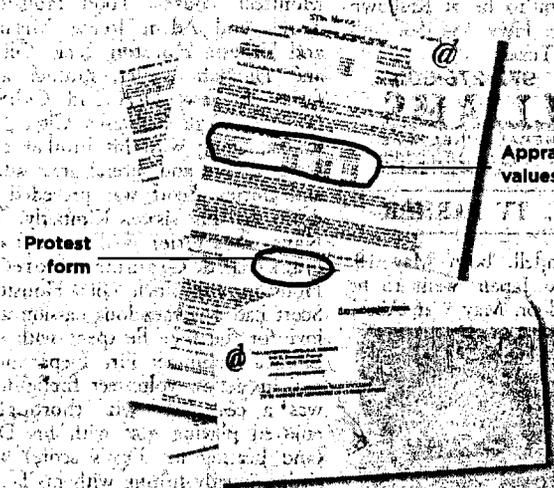
appeal is May 31, or 30 days after you get a new appraisal.

■ Appear in person or send a representative or attorney to plead your case. You have the right to review the appraiser's records before the hearing. An estimated 50-60 percent of protested appraisals get reduced, according to county appraisal chiefs.

■ If you appear in person, don't be hostile or antagonistic.

Judicial appeals

If a formal protest fails, you have 45 days to file an appeal in state district court or ask for binding arbitration. Before taking this step, calculate the cost of an appeal vs. potential tax savings.



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Central Appraisal Districts in North Texas

Dallas Central Appraisal District
2949 N. Stemmons Freeway
Dallas, TX 75247
214-631-0910
Monday through Thursday from
7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
www.dallascad.org

Collin Central Appraisal District
250 W. Eldorado Parkway
McKinney, TX 75069
469-742-9200
Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
www.collincad.org

Denton Central Appraisal District
3911 Morse St.
Denton, TX 76208
940-349-3800
Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
www.dentoncad.com

Tarrant Central Appraisal District
2500 Handley Ederville Road
Fort Worth, TX 76118
817-284-0024
Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
www.tad.org

Rockwall County Appraisal District
841 Justin Road

Rockwall, TX 75087-4842
972-771-2034
Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
www.rockwallcad.com

Ellis Central Appraisal District
400 Ferris Ave.
PO Box 878
Waxahachie, TX 75165
972-937-3552
Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
www.elliscad.org

Kaufman County Appraisal District
3950 S. Houston St.
PO Box 819
Kaufman, TX 75142
972-932-6081
Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
www.kaufman-cad.org

Educational Web sites

Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University
http://recenter.tamu.edu

Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts
www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/proptax/protes
ts.html

Zillow.com
An online real estate service

TARRANT APPRAISALS

Here are the preliminary net taxable values in Tarrant County and selected cities and school districts released Tuesday. Figures are rounded.

Table with 4 columns: Taxing entity, 2007 preliminary taxable value, 2006 certified taxable value, and % change. Rows include Arlington, Arlington ISD, Grapevine, Colleyville, Grapevine-Colleyville ISD, Haltom City, North Richland Hills, Birdville ISD, Hurst, Euless, Bedford, H-E-B ISD, Fort Worth, Fort Worth ISD, Kennedale, Kennedale ISD, Keller, Keller ISD, Mansfield, Mansfield ISD, Southlake, Carroll ISD, and Tarrant County.

SOURCE: Tarrant Appraisal District