

MAYOR CITY CNCL CITY ATTN Y CRIM MCKAMIE RIDGWAY(2) DECK BROWN
 YOUNG McDONALD COLLINS C. BARKER GETCHELL LIBRARY ADMIN LIBRARY REF ANIMAL CNTR

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Walter A. "Dub" Elliott Jr.



 **EULESS** — Walter A. "Dub" Elliott Jr., went to be with the Lord on Thursday, May 8, 2008.

MEMORIAL SERVICE: 10 a.m. Saturday at First United Methodist Church of Euless, 106 N. Main, Eu-

less. Visitation: The family will receive friends afterward.

Dub was born April 13, 1928, to Allen and Maggie Hill Elliott in Turkey, Texas. He graduated from Arp High School in 1946 and then joined and proudly served his country in the Navy. He then graduated from Kilgore Junior College and later from Texas A&M with a degree in civil engineering. In 1950 he married Iris Spear, and in 1957 they moved to Euless, where he opened his engineering firm of Elliott and Hughes Inc. Dub was named engineer of the year in 1975 and was a past president of the HEB Chamber of Commerce and was a very active and faithful member of his church, First United Methodist Church of Euless.

SURVIVORS: Wife, Iris; son, Steve Elliott and his wife, Nancy; daughter, Sheryl Elliott Laws and her husband, Steve; grandsons, Marcus, Mitchell, Bryce and Barrett; brothers, Kelly and Lindley Elliott; and many nephews, nieces, cousins and friends.

Lucas Funeral Home

Hurst, 817-284-7271

View and sign guestbook at

www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

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MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Saleh is elected to her 6th term as mayor

EULESS — Mayor Mary Lib Saleh will serve her sixth term after winning re-election with no opposition.

City Councilman Leon Hogg, 72, won 63.9 percent of the vote to 36.1 percent for security officer Lorren Britton, 58, for Place 2, according to complete but unofficial results.

For the Place 4 seat, Donna Mickan, 64, a retired educator, defeated registered accessibility specialist Jay Heilman, 57.6 percent to 42.4 percent.

About 3.8 percent of the city's 26,788 registered voters cast ballots in the election.

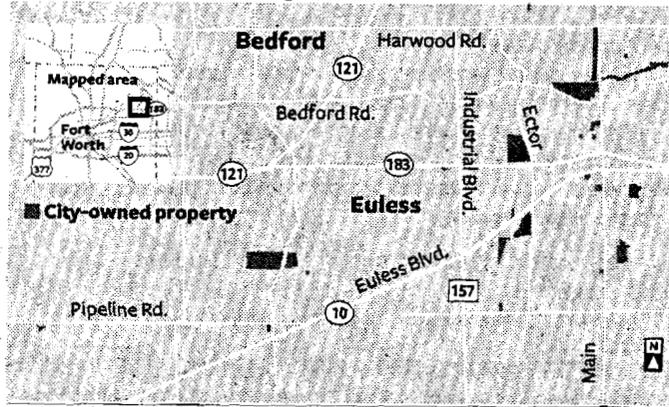
— Jessica DeLeon

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EULESS

City-owned property



Eules owns 120 acres south of Harwood Road that it may lease for gas wells.

STAR-TELEGRAM/TIM BEDISON

Drilling bids sought for city land

By JESSICA DeLEÓN
jdeleon@star-telegram.com

EULESS — Horizontal gas drilling may soon take place under city parks and other city-owned land.

The council unanimously approved the measure Tuesday night,

The city wants to take competitive bids for drilling under 120 acres of city property south of Harwood Road.

The first notice seeking bids has already been sent out, and the bids are to be opened May 26. The council is expected to award the contract June 10.

Drilling would have to be done within two years of the awarding of the contract, said Mike Collins, director of planning and development.

The minimum bids are a \$19,000-per-acre bonus and 26.5 percent royalty.

The property includes Midway, Blessing Branch, Heritage, South Eules, J.A. Carr, Kiddie Carr, West Park and Wilshire parks, as well as other city property, such as the law enforcement building and fire stations.

JESSICA DeLEÓN, 817-685-3932

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TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Texas among few states that are enlightened about signals

It and six other states are finding ways to move traffic at intersections.

McClatchy Newspapers and Star-Telegram staff

Texas and parts of Tarrant County appear to have gotten the message that fine-tuning traffic signals reduces traffic congestion and air pollution.

Texas, a U.S. leader in traffic signal efficiency since the mid-1990s, adjusts its state-operated signals every two or three years to reflect changes in traffic volume, according to the National Transportation Operations Coalition, a transportation engineers group. Once in three years is a national goal unmet in many states.

In Tarrant County, Fort Worth, Arlington and several other cities report that they synchronize traffic lights and use cameras and sensors, especially along major thoroughfares.

Nationally, fine-tuning controls on the nation's traffic signals would reduce U.S. road congestion by as much as 10 percent, cut air pollution from vehicles by as much as a fifth, reduce accidents at intersections and save about five tanks of gas annually per household, according to the coalition.

"People who say we can't do anything about congestion are wrong. We can do lots," said Joel Marcuson, a specialist in urban intersections with the Jacobs Engineering Group in Phoenix.

Right now, however, three-quarters of the nation's 300,000 traffic signals need replacement or timing adjustments for optimum performance, according to the U.S. Transportation Department.

Among the obstacles are a nationwide shortage of skilled traffic engineers, unfocused local political leaders with tight budgets and stodgy local traffic departments. Federal aid that could ease congestion goes mainly to building and maintaining roads.

Nonetheless, lots of cities and at least seven states — California, Florida, Washington, Minnesota, Maryland, Georgia and Texas — are finding ways to move traffic through intersections faster, the coalition reports. Below is a sample of what local communities are doing.

■ **Fort Worth:** Lights are synchronized on major arterial streets during peak traffic periods. Sensor loops in the pavement control signals when traffic is lighter. Downtown lights are synchronized based on times and days.

■ **Arlington:** Voters approved \$400,000 in a 2003 bond election for software, equipment and cameras that now monitor the city's major roadways and intersections. Traffic engineers can identify trouble spots through a lens perched about 40 feet above a roadway and adjust traffic signals to compensate for wrecks or bottlenecks.

■ **Colleyville:** The city operates traffic signals at two intersections. The signals at Brown Trail and Cheek-Sparger Road have a camera that tells computers when to change the lights. The signals at Heritage Avenue and Cheek-Sparger have a detection system in the pavement to tell those lights when to change. The state-operated traffic lights on Texas 26 are also synchronized.

■ **Eules:** The city has synchronized lights on Farm Road 157 from South Pipeline Road to Mid-Cities Boulevard. It will soon synchronize lights on Mid-Cities, Harwood Road and North Main Street.

■ **Grapevine:** Lights are synchronized on Northwest Highway, Main Street, Texas 121, Glade Road and Texas 114. The city also has some motion-detection systems.

■ **Haltom City:** The city synchronizes traffic signals at Western Center Boulevard and Silver Sage Drive and at Western Center Boulevard and Haltom Road.

■ **North Richland Hills:** The City Council awarded an \$80,000 contract in April to Dallas-based Lee Engineering to synchronize traffic lights on Boulevard 26 and Mid-Cities Boulevard. Lee is expected to analyze 23 intersections along the two roads. Work is scheduled to be completed in August.

Frank Greve of McClatchy Newspapers and Star-Telegram staff writers Bill Teeter, Jessica DeLeón, Noor Elashi, John Kirsch and Sally Claunch contributed to this report.

Bright lights?

Engineers say traffic light coordination in your city could need improvement if you answer no to any of these questions:

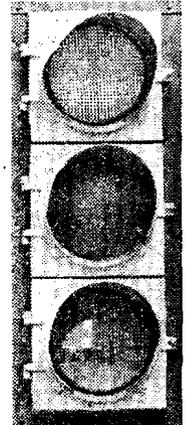
■ Can you sometimes make it through six to eight consecutive intersections on green lights?

■ Is there useful traffic information on the radio and on roadside message signs?

■ Is it rare that there's no cross traffic when you're stopped at a light?

■ Can you drive into the next jurisdiction without encountering congestion at the border?

■ Are predictable traffic jams, such as the postgame exits from stadium parking lots, handled adroitly?



Several North-east Tarrant cities take steps.

S-T/PAUL MOSELEY



What do you think?

To post a comment on this report, go to star-telegram.com/comments

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EULESS

Tax breaks for project are OK'd

By JESSICA DeLEÓN
 jdeleon@star-telegram.com

EULESS — The developer of the Glade Parks, the 193-acre planned shopping and residential center on Texas 121 and Glade Road, will receive tax rebates potentially worth millions of dollars.

The council voted unanimously Tuesday to approve the incentives to ensure that

the project goes forward. The panel also created a zoning district for the center. The area has already been cleared of trees and brush.

Glade Parks will be a regional destination, Planning and Development Director Mike Collins said.

"We're real, real excited about their development," he said. "It's got some cool stuff."

The project

Some highlights of the project, developed by Chicago-based Rubloff:

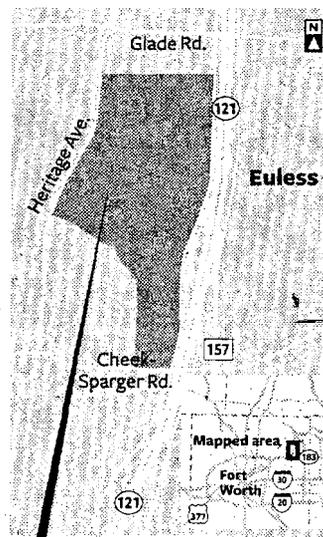
- It will have a bridge over Bear Creek and a promenade with six three-story buildings on the west side, a clock tower in the center and four one-story buildings to the east.
- The three-story buildings will have stores on the ground floors and professional offices on the upper floors. The one-story buildings will house stores. No tenant names have been released.
- Residences, including town homes and high-end residential lofts, will be built.
- About 60 acres of open space with a natural preserve will be set aside.

The center will be built in phases, with construction of the stores and the promenade starting within two years.

The incentives

- The city will rebate one-half of 1 percent of general sales and use taxes for 25 years.
- The rebate cannot exceed \$32 million over the 25 years.
- The agreement starts Jan. 1 and requires the developer to complete all roads, the bridge, drainage and other infrastructure.
- The city struck a similar deal with the Shops at Vineyard Village, a shopping center across Texas 121 from Glade Parks.
- City officials say they will receive much more in tax revenue from Glade Parks than they will rebate. "If we give \$32 million, we get \$96 million," Councilman Tim Stinneford said at the meeting.

Glade Parks



The developer has yet to announce the tenants' names for the stores at Glade Parks.

STAR-TELEGRAM/TIM BEDISON

PoliTex

Find political insights from City Hall to D.C. at star-telegram.com/blogs

Zoning change

The council created a stand-alone zoning district for Glade Parks that will include its own development standards.

JESSICA DeLEÓN, 817-685-3932

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APPRAISAL DISTRICT

Tarrant property values up almost 10% in 2008

The values are preliminary in part because mineral rights are not included.

Star-Telegram

Property values in Tarrant County rose almost 10 percent in 2008, according to the preliminary figures released Thursday by the Tarrant Appraisal District.

The county's overall market value rose 8.7 percent to \$136.1 billion, according to TAD.

Net taxable value — the value on which assessments are based — rose 9.4 percent to \$125.8 billion. Net taxable value is the amount remaining after subtracting the various exemptions and tax freezes available to many property owners.

John Marshall, executive director of the TAD, noted that the values are "very preliminary" for a number of reasons. The first deadline for protesting property values is June 2, and values for mineral rights are not included. Marshall predicted mineral values would add \$2.5 billion to the county's tax rolls, or about 1.5 percent.

Nearly every taxing jurisdiction in the county showed gains in net taxable value. Blue Mound, Roanoke and Everman saw declines of less than 3 percent.

Tarrant County saw a decrease in residential building permits from about 14,200 in 2006 to 9,069 last year, Marshall said. That drop was offset by a 41 percent increase in new commercial construction, he said.

Marshall said the local economy was somewhat insulated from economic problems hitting other parts of the country thanks in part to the booming interest in the Barnett Shale and a relatively robust job market. Other parts of the state, such as El Paso and McAllen, are seeing much larger jumps in appraisals, he said.

He said foreclosures had a small effect, even though they are up 23 percent this year.

"If those had all been in one school district or one neighborhood, that would have affected that market, but they were spread out" around the county," Marshall said.

Plenty of values rose sharply. Marshal Boyd, partner in Williams Trew Real Estate Services, a large residential and rural property agency based in Fort Worth, said his firm has been flooded with calls from local clients interested in protesting their appraisal.

"There's two sides to it," Boyd said. "You could say, 'Oh great, the values of the properties are increasing, and that's good for homeowners,' but it also makes our communities less affordable."

Stronger caps possible

Property values are expected to be a hot-button issue in next year's legislative session in Austin, with lawmakers still smarting from seeing their most recent tax cut effectively wiped out by rising appraisals in many parts of the state.

"It's my impression the citizens are ready to revolt on this," state Rep. Phil King, R-Weatherford, said in a phone interview last week.

King was recently appointed to head an appraisal reform committee to consider ideas like stronger appraisal caps. King said lawmakers should use a projected budget surplus to address the issue.

"I think you need to constitutionally dedicate a percentage of surplus to buy down property taxes," King said. "That way they can't go up like what happened the last time."

King is asking property owners with large appraisal increases to send him copies of their appraisals. Appraisals can be faxed to his local office at 817-596-8375, or a copy can be e-mailed to phil.king@house.state.tx.us or mailed to Rep. Phil King, P.O. Box 2910, Austin, TX 78768.

Schools

School districts saw large increases in net taxable value: Aledo up 10.5 percent, Keller 12.6 percent, Mansfield 11 percent, Northwest 13.4 percent and Southlake Carroll 12.2 percent. The Fort Worth school district saw an 11.5 percent increase in net taxable value, and Arlington's was up 6 percent. But those increases won't mean any more money for school districts, said Steve Brown, associate superintendent of finance for the Arlington school district, because of the school-finance package the Legislature passed in 2006.

Brown said the law means this year's gains "do nothing but help the state. They will reduce the amount of state aid we get dollar for dollar."

The 2006 law required districts to reduce their rates by about one-third over two years. It expanded taxes on businesses, tobacco and the private sales of used cars to compensate for the money that would no longer go directly to the school districts.

North Richland Hills

In North Richland Hills, net taxable value increased by 10.1 percent to \$3.9 billion, which includes \$18.6 million under protest, said Mary Peters, city spokeswoman. Of the \$93.8 million in new construction, \$57.1 million is residential and \$36.7 million is commercial.

"We have seen a lot of construction activity in the Forest Glenn, Thornbridge and Graham Ranch neighborhoods," she said. The commercial construction includes several store and office projects and the Venue at HomeTown, an apartment business development in HomeTown NRH planned development off Boulevard 26.

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Behind the numbers

The figures are based on the value of land, buildings and business inventories as of Jan. 1. The growth is calculated on net taxable value, which reflects deductions for homestead exemptions, abatements and free-port 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.

How 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 June 2 or the deadline date printed on the appraisal notice, whichever is later

The mailing address for the Tarrant Appraisal Review Board is P.O. Box 185519, Fort Worth, 76181-0519. The Tarrant Appraisal District is at 2500 Handley-Ederville Road in Fort Worth.

Homeowners with questions about their appraisals may call 817-284-3925.

Those with questions about exemptions may call 817-284-4063.

Preliminary net taxable property values

These values combine information from the Tarrant, Denton, Johnson and Parker appraisal districts. Some information was not available from the Dallas, Johnson, Wise and Ellis appraisal districts.

Tax unit	2007 final values	2008	
		preliminary values	Pct. chg.
Aledo ISD	\$2.05 billion	\$2.26 billion	10.48%
Arlington	\$17.7 billion	\$18.7 billion	5.83%
Arlington ISD	\$20.3 billion	\$21.5 billion	6.01%
Azle	\$626 million	\$668 million	6.60%
Azle ISD	\$1.98 billion	\$2.17 billion	9.67%
Bedford	\$2.98 billion	\$3.14 billion	5.46%
Benbrook	\$1.29 billion	\$1.43 billion	10.76%
Birdville ISD	\$7.10 billion	\$7.75 billion	9.07%
Blue Mound	\$77.7 million	\$75.9 million	-2.22%
Burleson (Tarrant only)	\$443 million	\$501 million	13.14%
Burleson ISD (Tarrant only)	\$993 million	\$1.11 billion	11.86%
Carroll ISD	\$4.91 billion	\$5.51 billion	12.16%
Castleberry ISD	\$498 million	\$532 million	6.79%
Coileyville	\$3.40 billion	\$3.71 billion	8.94%
County College District	\$116 billion	\$127 billion	9.39%
County Hospital District	\$115 billion	\$126 billion	9.38%
Crowley	n/a	\$696 million	n/a
Crowley ISD	n/a	\$4.78 billion	n/a
Dalworthington Gardens	\$289 million	\$313 million	7.97%
Eagle Mtn-Saginaw ISD	\$5.64 billion	\$6.16 billion	9.21%
Edgecliff Village	\$174 million	\$186 million	7.26%
Emergency Services Dist-1	\$4.55 billion	\$5.03 billion	10.53%
Eules	\$2.61 billion	\$2.79 billion	6.95%
Everman	\$149 million	\$146 million	-2.48%
Everman ISD	\$990 million	\$1.04 billion	4.61%
Flower Mound	\$6.37 billion	\$7.20 billion	12.98%
Forest Hill	\$396 million	\$427 million	7.97%
Fort Worth (Tarrant, Denton)	\$38.0 billion	\$42.9 billion	12.99%
Fort Worth ISD	\$24.4 billion	\$27.2 billion	11.48%
Fresh Water Supply Dist-1	\$121 million	\$141 million	16.34%
Godley ISD	n/a	\$800 million	n/a
Grand Prairie (Tarrant only)	n/a	\$5.25 billion	n/a
Grapevine (Tarrant only)	n/a	\$6.35 billion	n/a
Grapevine-Coileyville ISD	\$10.2 billion	\$10.9 billion	6.55%
Haltom City	\$1.60 billion	\$1.74 billion	8.83%
Haslet	\$475 million	\$541 million	18.20%
Hurst	\$2.31 billion	\$2.46 billion	6.52%
Hurst-Eules-Bedford ISD	\$8.33 billion	\$8.99 billion	7.84%
Keller	\$3.55 billion	\$3.93 billion	10.52%
Keller ISD	\$9.56 billion	\$10.8 billion	12.61%
Kennedale	\$443 million	\$487 million	9.87%
Kennedale ISD	\$923 million	\$993 million	7.54%
Lake Worth	\$410 million	\$437 million	6.80%
Lake Worth ISD	\$744 million	\$812 million	9.21%
Lakeside	\$96.1 million	\$104 million	7.69%
Lewisville ISD	\$20.4 billion	\$24.0 billion	17.55%
(Tarrant, Denton)			
Mansfield (Tarrant, Johnson)	n/a	\$4.15 billion	n/a
Mansfield ISD (Tarrant, Johnson)	n/a	\$8.78 billion	n/a
Northwest ISD	\$12.3 billion	\$14.0 billion	13.36%
(Tarrant, Denton)			
North Richland Hills	\$3.58 billion	\$3.95 billion	10.05%
Pantego	\$246 million	\$269 million	9.48%
Pelican Bay	\$25.2 million	\$25.6 million	1.27%
Regional Water District	\$40.4 billion	\$44.9 billion	11.09%
Reno	\$96.0 million	\$108 million	12.63%
Richland Hills	\$432 million	\$458 million	5.90%
River Oaks	\$228 million	\$240 million	5.38%
Roanoke	\$99.8 million	\$98.8 million	-0.95%
Saginaw	\$1.13 billion	\$1.18 billion	3.93%
Sansom Park	\$105 million	\$117 million	11.43%
Southlake	\$4.93 billion	\$5.52 billion	12.03%
Trophy Club	\$732 million	\$749 million	2.31%
Watauga	\$1.02 billion	\$1.07 billion	4.47%
Westover Hills	\$351 million	\$409 million	16.44%
Westworth Village	\$145 million	\$149 million	2.30%
White Settlement	\$578 million	\$619 million	7.05%
White Settlement ISD	\$1.33 billion	\$1.47 billion	10.54%