

Office of the City Manager

City of Richland Hills, Texas

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Bill Agan and members of the Richland Hills City Council
From: Eric Strong, Assistant City Manager
Date: January 21, 2014
Subject: 2013 Annual Report

Council Action Requested:

No action required – Presentation only

Background Information:

Going forward we are going to present an annual “Year in Review” report. This is a good way to communicate to the community a summary of some of the major accomplishments of the past year, as well as to communicate some of the items that are going to be worked on in the year to come. The first annual version is for the year that was just completed, 2013.

We have engaged a Public Relations and Marketing professional, Ms. Tracy Southers, to assist us in compiling the relevant information and putting together the report. We will be presenting the report to you at the Council Meeting. It should be noted that the report is not intended to be an all inclusive report of everything that was accomplished. We needed to make decisions on what topics did the best job of telling the story of Richland Hills in 2013, and we feel the items in the report appropriately reflect the numerous successes of the year.

This report will also be used in various marketing and advertising efforts. As we continue to work on the development and redevelopment of Richland Hills, the report will assist us in recruiting development opportunities.

The report is formatted so that it can be easily printed into a booklet on standard size paper. However, it's primary method of distribution and display will be digitally on our website. We will display it prominently so that it is visible and accessible on the home page.

Board/Citizen Input: N/A

Financial Impact: \$1,450 from Type B fund Promotions Line Item

Staff Contacts:

Eric Strong
Assistant City Manager
estrong@richlandhills.com

Attachments: Report will be distributed at meeting



Welcome to
RICHLAND HILLS
Texas

2013 ANNUAL REPORT



Welcome to RICHLAND HILLS Texas

Quick Facts

Population: 8,209
(2013 estimate)
Square Miles: 3.2
Tax Rate: 0.528094
Median Age: 39.8
Average Household
Income: \$53,220
School District:
Birdville ISD

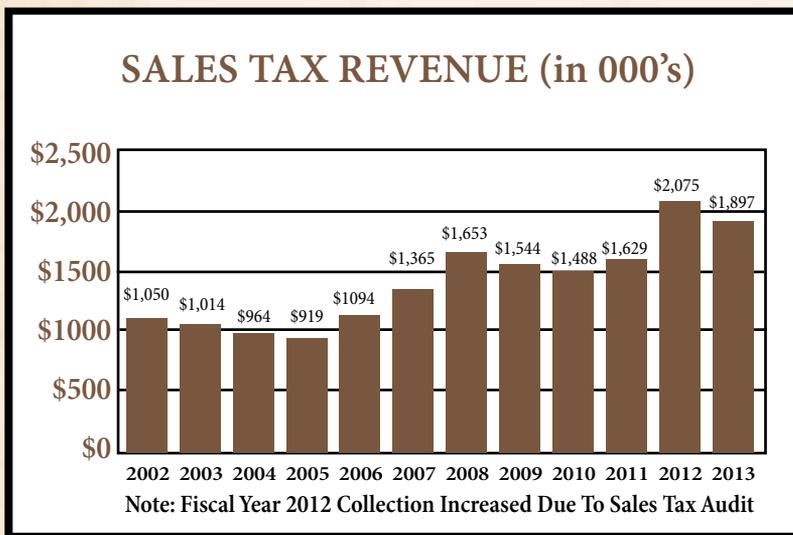
Nearby Attractions:

Northeast Mall
Hurst Convention Center
NRH2O Family Water Park
AT&T Stadium
Texas Motor Speedway

Transportation:

Direct access to I-35W, I-30, I-20, Loop 820,
SH 121, SH 183, and SH26
Home to TRE commuter rail station
18 minutes to DFW Airport
22 minutes to Alliance Airport

Sales Tax Collections, October to September



Dear Richland Hill Residents and Business Owners,

2013 was remarkable in many ways for Richland Hills. For the past several years, the city has faced several challenges and struggled to gain momentum. A renewed energy and positive outlook from the City Council and staff resulted in many accomplishments last year that have put us on the right track. Most notably is the addition of several new businesses in the city limits, including a Walmart Neighborhood Market that will open in 2014 and fill an important need for a nearby grocery store. The city welcomed other new retailers in 2013 that resulted in an increase in sales tax revenue, and this is projected to increase dramatically in future years.

However, this is just the beginning of a lot of exciting things in Richland Hills. 2013 was a year of revitalization and redevelopment in all aspects of the city – from bringing new businesses to town and renovating the library to street improvements and hosting new community events. Our priority is always to provide the best services to the citizens and businesses in Richland Hills.

On behalf of the City Council, I want to thank you for entrusting us to lead Richland Hills into this new era. I encourage all citizens to get involved and take pride in our city.

**Best Regards,
Mayor Bill Agan**



Back Row L-R: City Council members Edward Lopez, Beverly Williams, Robert DeSoto, Mayor Bill Agan, Toya Norton, Roland Goveas. Front Row L-R: Linda Cantu, City Secretary; Curtis Hawk, City Manager.



COMMUNITY THAT CARES

Serving the citizens of Richland Hills is our most important job. From providing vital services and public safety to hosting community events and educational programs. Great strides were made in 2013 to improve communication with citizens and offer new opportunities to learn and play.

New Website

As one of the City's primary communications tool, City Council directed staff to develop a new website that was more useful, visually appealing and a good representation of the community. The new site was launched December 2013 and has received rave reviews.



Senior Lunch Bunch

Recognizing the large senior population in the area, the City of Richland Hills began hosting a monthly luncheon for local seniors at the Community Center. A time for food and fellowship for this active group, the luncheons have become very popular with approximately 80 attendees each month.



Citizen Fire Academy

Encouraging citizens to get more involved and learn about City services, the Fire Department hosted its first Citizen Fire Academy in 2013. The six week program included nine participants who met weekly at the Fire Station for educational programs, training exercises and first-hand experience using equipment.



Library Grants & Improvements

During 2013, the library received a total of \$88,000 in grants that were used for interior improvements including painting of public spaces, two wall murals, constructing a puppet stage and reading tree, putting in a coffee bar, and adding more computer workstations and replacing old computer with laptops.

Tarrant County College GED & Computer Classes

Working with TCC, the Richland Hills Library held GED classes in the library meeting room. The first GED class had 12 students, six of whom were residents of Richland Hills. In October, computer classes for senior citizens were added to the Continuing Education curriculum, which had been requested by the senior population for many years. Additional classes are being prepared for non-seniors.

NextDoor.com

The City of Richland Hills enrolled in the private social network www.nextdoor.com, designed to allow neighbors to communicate online about events, recommend local businesses, sell or donate products, report crime and emergency alerts, and ask questions. The best way to keep your neighborhood safe is to be aware of what's going on and lend a helping hand.



OPEN FOR BUSINESS



WalMart Neighborhood Market

The site at the southwest corner of Rufe Snow and Grapevine Highway had previously been zoned to attract a grocery store, but sat vacant for several years. City Council directed the city manager to work directly with Walmart to initiate the project. Approved in December 2013, Walmart will build a Neighborhood Store of approximately 43,000 square feet, which will add substantially to sales tax revenues and approximately 100 new jobs. Construction is scheduled to start mid-2014.

Sam's Building

Vacant since 1999, City Council recognized the need to reinvigorate the Baker Boulevard corridor, and the former Sam's Club building was the gateway. The City worked with the developer to rezone the property to make it more feasible for certain types of tax revenue generating uses. The developer divided the 125,000 square foot facility into five spaces, estimated to increase sales tax collections substantially, and additional pad sites are anticipated for future retail purposes. Several new tenants moving in early 2014 and approximately 150 new jobs will be created.



Family Dollar

Formerly an abandoned building on Highway 26, it was purchased by a developer with an agreement that the City of Richland Hills would assist in demolition and lot clearing. Once the building was removed, it created an opportunity for two retail developments. Family Dollar opened early 2013 and one site is available for future development.



2013 was a banner year for economic development projects in Richland Hills. The city welcomed 52 new businesses and is now home to more than 405 businesses of all sizes and industries, including industrial, retail, restaurants, office parks and services. A directory, along with other information about doing business in Richland Hills, can be found at www.richlandhills.com – remember to shop local!

Revitalization took center stage with several new businesses moving into existing structures and making significant improvements or demolishing and constructing new buildings. Because there is very little undeveloped land in Richland Hills, City Council has made revitalization a top priority to provide more services to residents, create new jobs, attract new businesses and increase sales tax revenue.

Buyers Barricades

One of the largest distributors of barricades in the nation relocated from Fort Worth to a new, attractive facility on Baker Boulevard near the city's entrance. Opened November 2013 and added approximately 80 new jobs.



Advanced Glass

The business has been in Richland Hills for more than 20 years and wanted to expand its facility, but remain in the city. The owner worked with City Council to relocate on Baker Boulevard near the city's entrance. Construction of the new 24,000 square foot facility is scheduled to begin mid-2014 and will more than double its size.



Smith Lawn and Tree

The landscape and irrigation company relocated to Richland Hills from Fort Worth, renovating an existing 11,000 square foot facility on Handley Ederville Road. It opened in December 2013 and added 80 employees.

GETTING AROUND TOWN

We know that getting around town easily and safely – whether by car, bicycle, on foot, or public transportation – is important to residents, visitors and business owners. During 2013, the City of Richland Hills implemented or initiated several infrastructure projects to improve mobility and enhance the overall community.

Baker Boulevard Intersection

One of the busiest locations in the city, improvements will be made to the intersections of Rufe Snow Drive, Vance/Ash Park and Handley Ederville Road with Baker Boulevard. The project will include reconstruction of most of the median curb, gutter and sidewalk on both sides of Baker Boulevard from Rufe Snow Drive to Handley Ederville Road. The existing offset intersection of Ash Park and Vance will be realigned as a standard four way intersection. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$3.5 million of which the state and federal government contribute approximately 95%. Tarrant County Precinct 3 will share the remaining cost equally with the City of Richland Hills. The project is under design and construction is anticipated to begin late 2015 or early 2016.

Green Ribbon Project

The City of Richland Hills received a \$250,000 grant from TxDOT to enhance the looks of Baker Boulevard with grass, trees, shrubs and irrigation. The design is complete and installation is scheduled spring 2014.

Pine Park

In a joint venture with Tarrant County road crews, new curb and gutter for all of Pine Park (3,750 linear feet) was installed and Tarrant County stabilized the subgrade and overlaid the street with 2" of asphalt.

Sidewalks & Trails

As part of the Safe Routes To School program, more than 16,000 linear feet of sidewalks were installed at Richland Elementary, Binion Elementary and Richland Middle School to enhance safety for children walking to school and make for a more “walkable” community. The cost of the project is approximately \$2.2 million, all of which was provided by the federal government.

The City received notification of a grant award from the North Central Texas Council of Governments for planning assistance to evaluate trail options to connect to other cities as well as the TRE train station in town.

Drainage

This is the second phase of the City’s master drainage plan for Stream BFC-5. Intended to greatly reduce flooding in the lower central part of Richland Hills, the project is in the construction phase and includes 1190 linear feet of 6'x 6' concrete box culvert, 822 linear feet of 8'x 8' concrete box culvert, and 390 LF of 5' diameter concrete drainage pipe.

BFC Main Sewer Line & Lift Station

Currently, the cities of Richland Hills and North Richland Hills share the use of an old Tarrant County 36” sewer line and this project will allow more accurate measurement of Richland Hills sewer flows. This project includes approx. 4,500 linear feet of 6" to 18" PVC sewer pipe, approx 600 linear feet of 36" bore, and a lift station.



FULL SPEED AHEAD

2013 brought new exciting projects and much needed improvements to Richland Hills. But, it doesn't stop there. While keeping things running efficiently and focusing on today is important, the City Council realizes planning for the future is an equal priority. From transportation and commercial development to community amenities and infrastructure, many more good things are coming to town as part of the long-term revitalization and redevelopment initiative. Together, we can ensure Richland Hills continues to be a great place to live and work.

Comprehensive Plan & Zoning Ordinance

In 2012, the City Council recognized the need to update the zoning ordinance and prepare a new comprehensive plan to help redevelopment efforts. The 2014 Comprehensive Plan, once adopted, will become the official policy of the City. It will help guide zoning and development decisions and it will serve as a basis for future capital expenditures. It is intended to be flexible and to provide latitude for more detailed analyses that are commonly part of zoning and development decisions. However, these decisions should be consistent with policies established within the 2014 Comprehensive Plan. In addition, it is not intended to be a static document, but a dynamic, adaptable guide to help citizens and officials shape the future of Richland Hills.



The 2014 Comprehensive Plan gives significant attention to our major corridors in town, which include Baker Boulevard, Highway 121 and Grapevine Highway. It also highlights one of our biggest assets, the Trinity Railway Express (TRE) stop, with commuter access to downtown Fort Worth and downtown Dallas. This will be a key economic driver in our future as the city continues to redevelop.

Community Center

The City purchased property on Baker Boulevard and Diana Drive with the intention to demolish existing facilities and build a new community recreation/ multipurpose facility. Phase one of the planning for the facility is underway and should be completed in 2014.

Parks Plan

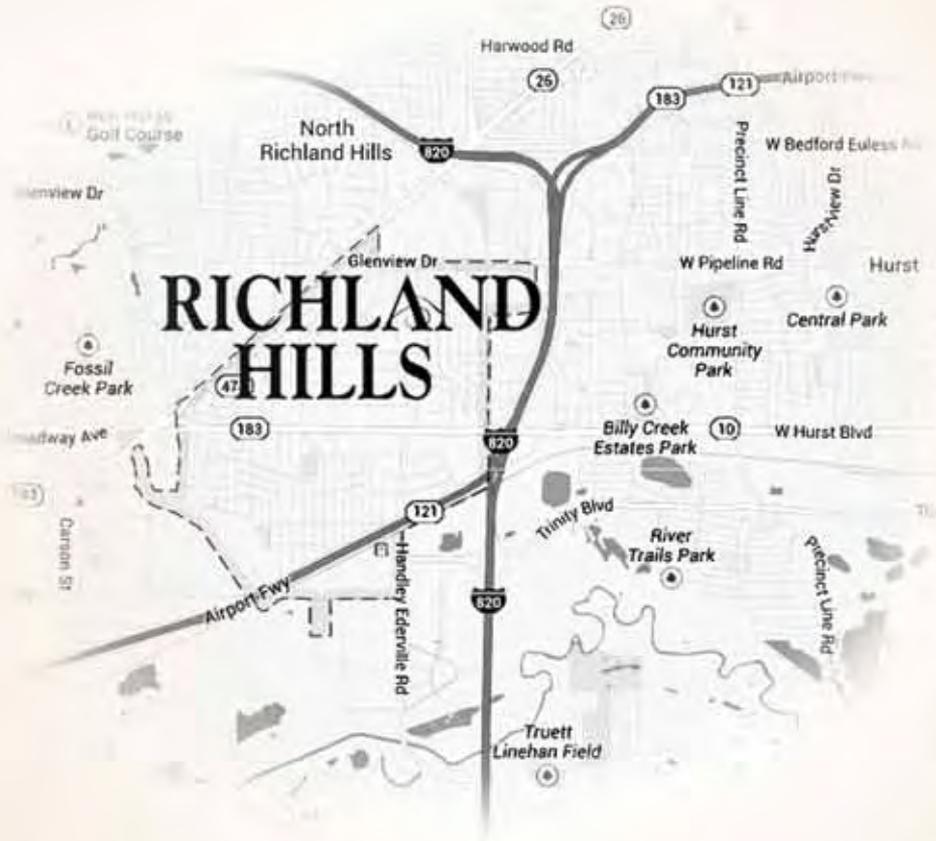
Revitalization is also being considered for the city's parks and a study is underway to evaluate the current condition of our parks. The objective is to put together a plan to renovate the parks and add amenities that will make them more attractive and a place for residents to gather and community events.



Water/Wastewater Study

In 2014, the City of Richland Hills anticipates conducting a study that will take a comprehensive look at water and wastewater rates. As a first ring suburb of Fort Worth, much of the Richland Hills infrastructure is some of the oldest in the area. Improvements to the infrastructure are ongoing and more are needed. A comprehensive study of utility rates will guide decisions that are made about when infrastructure is replaced and how our rates compare to neighboring communities.





Richland Hills City Hall Address:

3200 Diana Drive
Richland Hills, Texas 76118

City Manager's Office 817.616.3806
Economic Development Department 817-616-3745
Public Works Department 817-616-3830

www.richlandhills.com