SPRING 2022

FERGUSON ROAD INITIATIVE **SERVING FAR EAST DALLAS**



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The mission of FRI is to engage and empower a community of advocates to advance a safe, beautiful, prosperous and proud community in Far East Dallas.

Calming Initiative to Address Traffic Safety

Recent pedestrian and traffic fatalities in Far East Dallas have spurred the Dallas Police and the Transportation Departments to address the issues of speed racing and unsafe streetlights along Ferguson Road. By categorizing their activities to address these concerns, Vision Zero, a citywide plan, seeks to eliminate traffic fatalities and cut severe injuries in half by 2030.

A newly created Calming Initiative conducts studies to determine how traffic can be safely slowed enough and to reduce fatalities and injuries along high-speed corridors.

In August 2021 an earlier Calming Initiative study in Oak Cliff explored ways to slow and control speed racing. Due to its success a new Calming Initiative study has been initiated along Ferguson Road from I-635 to I-30.

Vision Zero utilizes a multi-prong approach to solve the issue of speeding called the "3-E's": Enforcement, Engineering, and Education. To successfully address speeding, all three of these components must be in place. The engineering prong looks for immediate ways to address this issue by installing raised lane markers and considers lane reductions in some locations.

Consultants will conduct further traffic corridor safety studies, then recommend ways to promote safer movement along the corridor. Residents will have opportunities to provide feedback. The plan includes upgrades to traffic signals along Ferguson Road.

Improving streetlights that are owned and operated by Oncor is part of the solution. The City and Oncor plan to work together to upgrade the concrete foundations located in the center medians that have caused two fatalities over the past year.

The Dallas Police Department is committed to the enforcement prong of Vision Zero. Since the program began, they have made over 3,000 traffic stops and issued more than 1,700 citations - 200 of which were given to speed racing spectators which was made a misdemeanor under the initiative. While responding to 2,500 phone calls the police task force made 65 felony and 400 misdemeanor arrests, impounded more than 300 vehicles, confiscated guns and illegal drugs, and seized 9 stolen cars.

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FRIdays

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ON THE COVER

Ferguson Road Initiative celebrates a long-time vision to bring recreation opportunities to Far East Dallas. Pictured: Images from the November 6, 2021

Grand Opening for CreekSide/ White Rock Hills Park,

CreekSide Update CreekSide – White Rock Hills Park Officially Opens



by Vikki J. Martin, Executive Director

Last fall our community celebrated a milestone in the life of the Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI), the grand opening of CreekSide/ White Rock Hills Park. CreekSide is the brand name for the amenities coming online along the Ash Creek Greenbelt that runs parallel to Ferguson Road from Samuell Boulevard to

St. Francis Park. The establishment of a park on Highland Road is a win for this community, as this location at one time was a former crime-magnet apartment, then an illegal dump, and now represents the first phase of the future White Rock Hills Recreation Center.

Reconstruction of Highland Road continues and includes sidewalks, bike paths, enhanced lighting, and a safe connection to the Trinity Forest Spine and future Ash Creek Trails. Desert willows and beautiful light fixtures have been installed and plans include a stop sign, rumble strips, and flashing crosswalk to slow traffic. The road and trail are raised so that when the Highland Bridge is reconstructed the trail and road will be in alignment.

The Trinity Forest Spine Trail (TFST) will connect the community to the citywide trail system known as The Loop. The Loop will connect residents with places like Oak Cliff, Katy Trail, and the Design District. The first phase of this project connects from the Santa Fe Trail to Highland Road to Samuell Boulevard and is on track for completion by summer. From Samuell, the TFST will extend to the Lawnview DART station south to the Trinity Audubon Center. It is arguably the most interesting leg of The Loop and certainly its most natural and scenic.

FRI assembled a task force of neighborhood representatives who are working with Public Works to determine the design of neighborhood markers planned at the intersections of Highland at Ferguson and Lakeland at Ferguson. Gateway markers will create a sense of place and pride for the neighborhoods that make up the White Rock Hills community of Far East Dallas. Intersection construction is set to begin in 2023.

Addressing the recreation gap along the lower Ferguson Road corridor is a goal of FRI. The building of our new park and trails partially solves this problem. However, there is still a recreation need that can only be resolved with the building of a recreation center.

FRI is actively advocating for the White Rock Hills Recreation Center to be placed on the next city bond program. We are also exploring the possibility of establishing a senior activity center at the Claremont Village Shopping Center. In addition to senior services, the area continues to be a food and medical desert. We know there is a great need for a grocery store and continue to work to address the problem of food insecurity.





The Artist Outreach



by Susan Hopper

The executive director of The Artist Outreach (TAO) marches to a different drum. Joseph Vincelli is a passionate musician whose focus is to employ creative arts to inspire children in low-income environments to excel in academics. Students embody content through drumming, singing, and movement to develop a

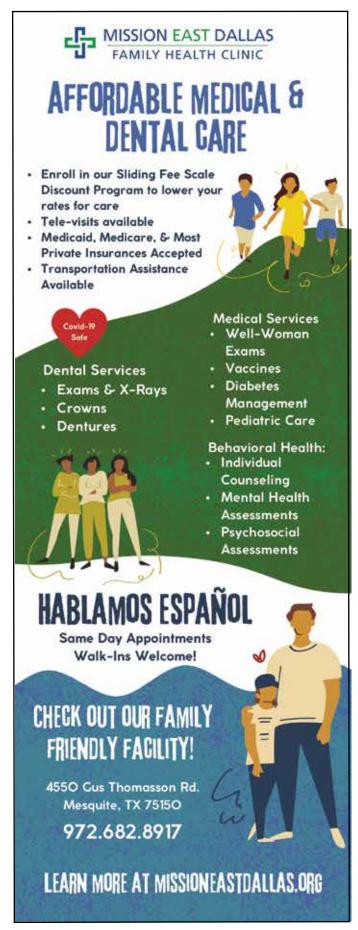
deeper understanding of reading and STEM concepts. TAO partners with schools to teach interventions that help students build word and number fluency and reading proficiency. The classroom teacher benefits by adding new tools to teach their students in creative and artistic ways.

One example of a program for PK - 2nd grade is the drum circle. Drum circles are used to learn how syllables are broken down and how words are spoken and spelled. When students speak better, they read better, and when they read better, they comprehend more information. The words are reinforced as students repeat drum patterns modeled by the teacher. Drumming is a whole-brain process that requires oral and auditory attention which helps students develop muscle memory. Best of all, drumming is fun, and students look forward to the classes.

Currently, The Artist Outreach is partnering with three schools in the FRI community: Bayles Elementary, Uplift White Rock Hills Uplift White Rock Hills Preparatory, and the Owenwood Farm and Neighbor Space after-school programs that supports Conner Preporatory. Bayles has partnered with TAO since the Fall of 2020 working with PK and 1st grade classes. One teacher from Bayles commented that, "I love how the music aligns with everything we teach. The TAO staff is fun, and the students love their TAO teacher." Both Uplift and Owenwood are pilot locations this year. Joseph Vincelli hopes to grow the partnerships, "We are at three campuses now in the FRI area. Because of the engagement level from staff and students we see this partnership growing immensely over time and serving many more students."

Pictured below; Local school children experiencing The Artist Outreach program.





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Casa View Center...Hang On to Your Dreams



by Mari Madison, editor FRIdays

Casa View Shopping Center (CVSC) upgrades are becoming reality. SHOP Development, specialists in commercial retail properties, has acquired the center with exciting plans and many new tenants are open or under construction. FRIdays sat down with developer Buck Wheeler, vice

presdent at SHOP, to find out what has been done and what is to come. Get ready, the historic Casa View gathering place is making a comeback.

Casa View Shopping Center was originally deemed the downtown of Far East Dallas. The addition of office spaces surrounded by single family homes fit SHOP's mission statement, and they recognized the potential. SHOP's local expertise and long-term vision, combined with a public-private partnership with the city of Dallas, create a rare and unique alignment for the property and the community.

SHOP developed a renovation plan designed to restore CVSC to its historic role as the town center of Casa View.

The center is charming and historic, and SHOP's goal has been to embrace and emphasize that charm.

"The center was originally developed by a gentleman who owned a demolition company, with a lot of his demolition projects at the time being old church buildings," Wheeler explained. "He used much of the reclaimed materials from these demolition projects to construct CVSC which is why you see so many different brick and stone storefronts."

The new tenants at CVSC include Ace Hardware, Pet Supplies Plus, Workout Anytime, Hibbett Sports, WSS, Little Spurs Pediatric Urgent Care, Oak Street Health, 7-Eleven, Papa Johns, U.S. Army Recruiting, La Super Grocery Store, House of Liv Boutique, Grand Nail Salon, Rodeo Dental and Orthodontics, DeLeon Provisions and Lubella's Patisserie.

These retailers join Ray Raual's Casa View Barber Shop, an original tenant, Sandy's Shoes, Casa View Thrift Store, Walmart Neighborhood Market, Shipley Do-Nuts and Los Rancheros Mexican Restaurant.

SHOP's targeted tenant-mix strategy will continue to attract retailers, restaurants and service users that cater to the surrounding neighborhood. The Starbucks Community Store will be opening soon

Renovations Completed

- Historic canopy restoration, along with all new lighting, wood soffit, decorative metal detailing, signage and paint
- Parking lot resurfacing, realignment of parking stalls and installation of parking lot landscaping
- Landscape upgrades, including the installation of over 55 mature trees in the parking lot and flower planters
- Installation of new benches, trash receptacles
- Installation of new pylon signage and tenant storefront signage
- Replacement of office windows and storefronts
- Redeveloped courtyard for future tenants and customers to use as a patio and gathering space

where the former Payless Shoes used to be. The renovation will mirror the current architectural theme of CVSC. It will be much larger than the typical Starbucks at 3,600 square feet and is designed for people to hang out, study and work on their laptops. The storefront will be recessed to create a covered patio. Of course, it will also have a drive-through. All employees will be hired locally.

Wheeler lives in the neighborhood and is committed to the long-term success of the Casa View neighborhood. The reimagining of CVSC would not be possible without the voices and support from the community, city of Dallas council members, the city of Dallas and SHOP Development.

Pictured right; a new mural on the side of Shipley Do-Nuts and a retro donut over the drive-through.







Pictured left; CVSC main courtyard; and above; the new upgraded, mature specimen trees.

White Rock Hills Park Grand Opening Celebration































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Spotlight on Uplift White Rock Hills Preparatory



by Robert Brown

FRIdays recently sat down with Loren Colman, Academic Director of Uplift White Rock Hills Preparatory (UWRHP), near the intersection of Ferguson Road and I-30, now in its fifth year. The school's 42 teachers teach 650 Pre-K through fifth grade student/scholars, most of whom live in Far East Dallas.

Uplift Education (Uplift) is the largest free public charter school network in North Texas, opened 25 years with one school in Irving, Texas. They serve 22,000 students in 45 schools in six cities throughout the metroplex. Uplift provides free education at no charge and prepares students for college in communities that have limited options for high-quality public education. These schools have received national recognition, and 100% of their graduates have been accepted to a college or university.

Spotlight on Uplift White Rock Hills Preparatory

FRIdays – What is the difference between a charter school compared to a traditional school?

Loren Colman – Vision is a huge piece of it. When I was in a much bigger traditional school district, with no particular school in mind, there were teachers that may have applied to the district or were placed randomly at a school. Whereas at Uplift, they are here because they want to serve this community. They want to make a difference.

This applies to the families of the scholars as well as the teachers. People that you have coming here are choosing, "Hey, I want this school for my child because it is making better academic gains; it is doing innovative things."

FRIdays - Does UWRHP offer extracurricular activities? Loren Colman – We do. That is one of the things that we are most passionate about. We have a robust clubs program. It's after school, 4-5 P.M. Kids can choose as many clubs as they want. Most of the clubs meet once a week. We have soccer, lacrosse, cheerleading, and we partner with the Lake Highland School of Music and a flamenco dance program. There's a Boys and Girls Leadership Club, photography, art, sign language and many other activities.

FRIdays - How does Uplift get 100% of its students accepted to college? That is impressive.

Loren Colman – The key is our International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum. IB is an international curriculum created for children of families that might have to move around to different countries, for example, the children of missionaries or business executives. The curriculum was standardized regardless of which country they happened to be living in.

Nowadays, the draw of IB is its expectation of student excellence and approach to learning. It is about forming a globally minded scholar who thinks critically. The curriculum starts in pre-K and continues through 12th grade.

FRIdays - Tell us about your school's culture and family engagement. We've heard that UWRHP is always doing cool things to keep kids and parents engaged.

Loren Colman - We constantly update our parents about activities on Instagram (uplift_whiterockhills) and other social media channels. We have at least one family event each month during the school year.

FRIdays – Talk about social-emotional learning at the school? Loren Colman – It is built into everything we do. Scholars start off their morning with Second Step that teaches wellness strategies like how to calm down if you're mad, how to recognize big feelings and have appropriate reactions such as empathy. Much of this curriculum aligns with our IB curriculum.

FRIdays – Why should families send their children to UWRHP? Loren Colman - We have a group of educators who are going to love their scholars and provide education that is more comprehensive than anywhere else in this area. Uplift White Rock Hills prepares their kids to go and finish college. Another reason is your child can stay with his/ her classmates as they progress through school. You're guaranteeing your kids access to a program from Pre-K all the way through high school, with smaller classes with the focus not only on academics, but also on the complete scholar. Their graduating class will be 200 kids or less, and they can go to school together all the way through high school if they stay in an Uplift school.



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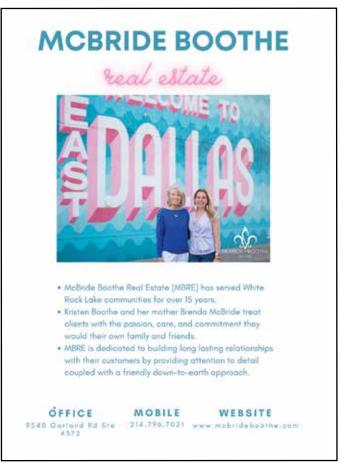


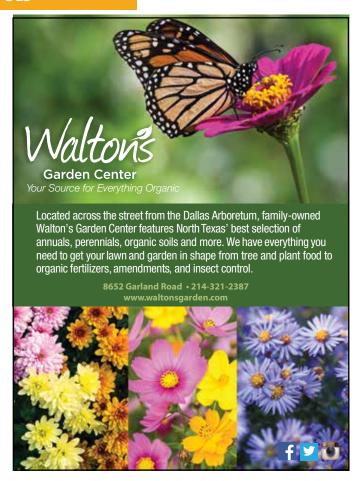


FRIdays - Can any child attend UWRHP? How do they sign up? Loren Colman - Any child can attend. Go to our website and apply. We have a lottery system. If your child's name does not get picked, you go on our waiting list. In past years, we have worked through that waiting list by the first day of school. It just depends on the year and the application. This year, we've been enrolling children all year long. We were able to fill empty spots throughout the year.

Editor's Note: It's FREE to attend an Uplift school. You must fill out an application online, but it only takes 5-10 minutes. Also, there are no admission requirements. Visit www.uplifteducation.org/apply











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Update on DISD School Upgrades



by Dan Micciche, DISD board member District 3-Northeast Dallas trustee

Dallas ISD School Bond Programs were passed thanks to voters. Our students deserve the same quality facilities as the students in the suburbs. And thanks to Dallas voters they will soon have them.

All Dallas schools are getting safety upgrades,

including cameras, card access readers, door contacts, and secure vestibule entries.

Three aging East Dallas elementary schools Kiest, Reilly and Hexter





will be replaced with new energy efficient buildings that are currently in the design stage. It is less costly to replace them than to renovate.

The Bryan Adams High School construction includes: a twolevel classroom and a fine arts addition; a new competition gym and upgrades to the auditorium, library and media center. The project is scheduled for completion in August.

Gill Elementary now has a new gym and storm shelter as well as a new kitchen and renovated cafeteria. Other improvements include mechanical, electrical and plumbing upgrades. Casa View Elementary received a new addition and renovations, including new exterior plazas, a new playground and hardscape court.

Other schools soon to receive mechanical, electrical, plumbing, lighting, safety, and other upgrades are Bayles, Conner and Truett Elementary Schools.



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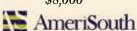
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