



**DR. ELBA GARCIA**  
DALLAS COUNTY  
COMMISSIONER

# Dr. Elba Garcia, Dallas County Commissioner, District 4

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## Message from Dr. Elba Garcia



**Friends and Neighbors,** As we come to the end of our fiscal year, I am proud of what we have achieved and feel a sense of excitement for the year ahead. One of our biggest accomplishments was the opening of the new Dallas County Government Center in Grand Prairie this past April. This facility will allow the residents of Grand Prairie, Irving and the western half of our county to go to one convenient location for County services and bring new jobs and revitalization to downtown Grand Prairie. I am also very excited that Dallas County will be a partner in the upcoming Horseshoe Project. This partnership with TxDOT, the Regional Transportation Council

and my good friends at the City of Dallas will include construction of the new Margaret McDermott Bridge. I have specifically reallocated \$2 million to provide pedestrian and bike lanes along the bridge which would otherwise not be funded. I am also very proud of Hunter-Ferrell Rd. This important project sat idle for 20 years prior to my taking office. Now, construction will be completed soon with a ribbon cutting planned this fall. It is trust, commitment and a shared vision that makes these projects successful, and our friends in Irving and Grand Prairie are always great partners who share our vision of moving our communities forward. We also happy to be working with our friends in Cockrell Hill and have begun public meetings in the Cockrell Hill Rd. project. This time of year we are making final decisions on the Dallas County budget that begins October 1st. I am very happy to say that for the third year in a row we will NOT have a tax

increase. Our tax rate will hold steady at 24.31 cents per \$100 assessed value – which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest property tax rate in the state. Because our property tax rolls increased 4.03% to \$164.65 billion, we have a very positive budget outlook for FY 2014. This is also great indication that our local economy is really turning around. We have made a lot of progress this year. Our Animal Cruelty Unit and Prostitute Diversion Initiative are both moving ahead and Parkland has passed its CMS inspection. But there are still challenges to be met. Maintaining our progress and making improvements to patient care and safety at Parkland, as well as addressing critical infrastructure needs and other issues with Dallas County will not be easy. But I am looking forward to working with our great team here and with you as we move ahead and meet these challenges together.

*- Dr. Elba Garcia*

## Animal Cruelty Unit Up and Running



**Dallas County  
Joins the Fight  
Against  
Animal Abuse**

After receiving private funding in February 2013, the newly formed Animal Cruelty Unit in the Dallas County District Attorney's Office is up and running. The full time investigator and prosecutor have been busy in their first six months handling a total of 88 cases. There is still much work to do in coordinating the Animal Cruelty Unit with local and regional law enforcement, and animal

service organizations. The 26 municipalities in Dallas County all have a different way of managing animal abuse reports. The Animal Cruelty Unit is hoping to address those issues through collaboration. The District Attorney's Office's Community Prosecution Unit is also supporting the effort by continuing a series of community outreach opportunities that will inform the public about animal cruelty reporting and enforcement. If you witness animal abuse report it to your local law enforcement

and include information about the time, location and any other relevant information that may be needed to prosecute a case. Often this information is not reported to animal services and/or law enforcement and prosecutors don't have the necessary evidence needed to prosecute a case. While a lot has been accomplished thus far, there is a lot of work to be done. The Animal Cruelty Unit positions will now be permanently funded the in the Dallas County Budget.

## Oak Cliff Streetcar



Oak Cliff Streetcar

In December 2012, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), made up of elected and transportation officials from the DFW region voted to reallocate \$30.87 million dollars towards a streetcar line that will link downtown Dallas to the Bishop Arts District in Oak Cliff. Under the original

plans the line began downtown at Union Station and ended at the intersection of Beckley and Colorado near Methodist Hospital. The new funds will extend the line by .7 miles south on Zang Blvd. to Davis St. The extra funds will also pay for an additional streetcar on the line that will travel between the Dallas Convention Center and Davis Street as well as preliminary work on an extension from Union Station to the

Convention Center. Dallas County Commissioner Elba Garcia, who is an alternate on the RTC Board, voted enthusiastically to support the extension. After the vote she commented, "This is a fantastic and exciting project for Dallas. This streetcar line linking Downtown Dallas and the Bishop Arts District will facilitate economic development and also help to fulfill our transportation needs for sustainable growth."

## Pedestrian & Bike Lanes for New Bridge



Approved Design for IH-30 Margaret McDermott Bridge

On Tuesday, March 19, 2013 the Dallas County Commissioners Court approved \$2 million for bicycle and pe-

destrian lanes on the planned IH-30/Margaret McDermott Bridge connection between Riverfront Boulevard and Beckley Avenue. The dollars for this project were specifically allocated by District 4 Commissioner Garcia. Commissioner Garcia stated, "I chose to place a portion of

my District 4 construction dollars towards these bicycle and pedestrian lanes because they will increase connectivity between downtown and Oak Cliff, create more urban livability and sustainable economic development, and allow pedestrian and bicyclist access to this future Dallas landmark."

## District 4 Road & Bridge 2013 Update



Dr. Garcia with Road & Bridge District 4 Crews

In 2012 the District 4 Road and Bridge Crews were busy repairing and resurfacing roads throughout Dallas County. Most road repair projects are generated through contracts with various municipalities within Dallas County, in-

cluding those outside of District 4. There were a total of 29 streets that were contracted for repair services. 147,015 square yards were repaired and resurfaced outside of the district. District 4 crews had projects in the cities of Irving, Cockrell Hill, Grand Prairie, Highland Park, Carrollton,

Cedar Hill, Duncanville, and Lancaster. The District 4 Crew was also very efficient, generating \$584,000 in savings from under-budget project completions. The 2013 construction season is going well and the crew has been busy in repairing roads in Irving (Northgate Drive and Third Street), Highland Park, and Carrollton.

# Dallas County Government Center in Grand Prairie



On April 26th Dr. Garcia was joined by fellow Dallas County and Grand Prairie officials at the dedication of the new Dallas County Government Center in Grand Prairie. The building is

the first newly constructed Dallas County government center in 40 years and contains 31,500 square feet of space. The building will house a branch of the Tax Assessor/Collector's Office, Justice of the Peace Norris Rideaux's Courtroom, Constable Roy Williams Office and a Truancy Court. The Total cost of the building was \$6.58 million dollars. The land that the

new Government Center was built on was donated by the City of Grand Prairie. This new facility will increase efficiency in government, bring new jobs, and help to revitalize downtown Grand Prairie.



## Major Capitol Improvement Program

Dallas County's Major Capital Improvements Program (MCIP) is an alternative to the traditional bond financing approach to infrastructure improvements. Large infrastructure projects that would normally take five years to complete, from funding approval to construction, undergo a continuous pay-as-you-go process. Since the inception of the program in 1999, the MCIP has put in \$450

million matched by \$850 million in local government and other funds for a total of \$1.3 billion in MCIP projects. There have been several key infrastructure improvement made this past year. There have been various recently funded and on-going projects including Hunter Farrell Road, SH 161, Loop 12/SH-183, Story Rd. and Cockrell Hill Rd. Recent improvements to Hunter Farrell mark the completion of a

project that has been on the shelf for over 20 years. MCIP projects are done in partnership with municipal and state entities. I want to thank the City of Irving, Grand Prairie and Cockrell Hill for being such a great partner on this project and all of the other projects we work on together.



## Program Spotlight - Prostitute Diversion Initiative



The Prostitute Diversion Initiative (PDI)/New Life Program identifies individuals engaged in prostitution, provides them with an alternative to continued involvement in the criminal justice system and further victimization at the hands of promoters and

solicitors of prostitution. PDI holds a monthly operation, in the field. Sex workers who might normally be taken directly to jail are taken to a PDI operation that collocates processing, health monitoring and testing, courts, treatment intake services, and social services. The Prostitution Diversion Initiative is a collaboration between the Commissioners Court represented by Dr. Elba Garcia,

District Attorney's Office, Dallas City Attorney's Office, Dallas County and City of Dallas Courts, Sheriff's Office, Dallas County Health & Human Services, Parkland Hospital and over 60 social service and faith based organizations. Recently, Texas State Senator John Whitmire of Houston sponsored a bill in the Texas State Legislature that would make prostitution diversion programs and a special prostitution court, like Dallas' PDI, mandatory for urban counties above 200,000 in population. The bill was passed by the Texas Legislature and signed by the Governor this past 2013 session.



## Dr. Elba Garcia

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## Dallas County, District 4

Dallas County District 4 is most of western Dallas County and includes parts of the cities of Dallas, Grand Prairie, and Irving, and all of Cockrell Hill. The northern boundary of District 4 is Interstate 635 and the southern boundaries are the Mt. Creek area of Dallas and the city limits of Grand Prairie.



[www.DallasCounty.org/departments/comcrtdistrict4/home.php](http://www.DallasCounty.org/departments/comcrtdistrict4/home.php)

# Dallas County Services Update

## 2013 West Nile Virus Season

While determining the reasons for an outbreak, or lack of one, can be difficult and depends on many factors, Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) has taken several steps this 2013 season to combat the spread of the West Nile Virus:

- Increasing public education and outreach and prevention efforts.
- Expanded area and year-round mosquito trapping and testing.
- Increased focus and coordination on environmental mitigation efforts such as larvicide, adulticide and source reduction of mosquito breeding hab-

itats, such as stagnant water.

- Expanded testing capacity in the Dallas County laboratory
- Updating the Dallas County mosquito control plan in coordination with municipal, state and federal governments.
- Review and respond to the released Center for Disease Control (CDC) analysis of the 2012 outbreak and vector control efforts.

Also, the Texas legislature passed, and governor signed, a new mosquito abatement law that allows municipal inspectors to enter certain uninhabited residential properties for the purpose of applying

larvicide and adulticide to stagnant water.

While this 2013 West Nile Virus season has been mild in comparison to last year it is still important to remember to protect yourself. Remember the 4 Ds: Dress, DEET, Drain standing water (including gutters), and remember to stay inside at Dawn and Dusk when mosquitos are most active.

For more information, please call visit (214) 819-2000, or visit [www.DallasCounty.org/hhs](http://www.DallasCounty.org/hhs)

