



SERVING THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF CONVERSE

THE MAYOR'S VOICE

APRIL 2008

YEAR IN REVIEW

CITY STREET INITIATIVES & IMPROVEMENTS

Today is a new day to embrace new challenges and new possibilities. This article will highlight many of the accomplishments made over the last year. It is because of you, the citizens of Converse, we have been successful. I am honored to be the Mayor of one of the fastest growing cities in the Metrocom. It is my hope that this publication will provide some insight of our city's past accomplishments, present activities, and future ambitions. The past year we've been very busy establishing a proactive communication link between the citizens, employees, and business leaders. As a way of reaching out to the community and providing a forum for that exchange, I created "Mayor's Call." This open-door access has been a very effective one-on-one communication tool that has led to the identification of numerous "challenges" within our city and has provided an opportunity for the city staff to effectuate resolutions in a more timely manner. Mayor's Call has been a valuable tool of both listening to the citizens and working through issues and problems together.

In every government, the need for fiscal responsibility is paramount to its success, Converse is no different. We unanimously approved a balanced budget with a 2 1/2 cent **decrease** in the Ad Valorem Property Tax per \$100 valuation. We also approved a significant salary adjustment & increase to upgrade the city employee compensation scale. At the citizens demand, we worked through many challenges to enhance the quality of all our basic services (Police, Fire & EMS, and Water & Sewer). We approved and implemented the Tier II Street Maintenance plan to address our primary streets for maintenance and repair. One of our largest initiatives continue to be the Toepperwein Road Realignment project. In 2007, we budgeted \$400,000 for the old portion of Toepperwein Road. We partnered with Michael Sivage Homes, Inc. to make the repairs of Coppergate road, in Copperfield housing community, a reality. Words can hardly de-

scribe the elation of the community to have this main thoroughfare improved. The long awaited Kitty Hawk Roadway expansion project was approved by this council and the project is currently underway. The Economic Development Corporation continues to be an asset to the city. It was instrumental in securing a Community Development Block Grant [CDBG] from Bexar County for \$90,000 to facilitate street repairs for Placid Park Area. In partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), we're currently working a drainage project on South Seguin Road. As you can see, we're nearly completed with the Town Square Apartments and the vision of having a Town Center is quickly shaping into a reality. Thanks to citizen involvement and encouragement, we endeavor to continue our aggressive approach on street repairs and building a strong infrastructure to sustain our explosive city growth.

-Mayor Al Suarez

CITY OF CONVERSE VISION & GOALS

The **Vision** for the citizens of Converse is to enhance the quality of life in the community by a commitment to excellence in the delivery of public services. Our **Vision** includes: A well planned community; strong local economy; safe living environment; responsible economic growth; quality public services and infra-

structure; and most importantly a responsible city government. Some of the ways we were able to make this **Vision** a reality was by incorporating the following goals: 1. Improve city streets, 2. Facilitate responsible economic and housing development, 3. Provide quality basic

city services, 4. Improve overall compensation strategies for city employees, 5. Seek increase citizen involvement, 6. Comply with environmental initiatives programs; 7. Partner with and develop community youth programs; and 8. Deliver quality customer service.

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WELCOME TEXAS STATE REP. JOE FARIAS

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SAVE THE DATE:

MAYOR'S CALL
2ND & 4TH
SATURDAYS
8AM-10AM
405 S. SEGUIN
CITY HALL
CONFERENCE
ROOM

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

We've assembled a very experienced Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Board. This group of directors is responsible for providing constructive oversight for the economic, housing, and urban development for the City of Converse. With respect to previous members of the EDC, the efforts of attracting and attaining businesses were made easier because of the foundation laid. Over the last year, the EDC was instrumental in hosting its first Regional Business

Expo and partnering with the Randolph Metrocom Chamber of Commerce at ribbon cutting for new businesses in Converse. Some of them were Wendy's, Bush's Chicken, Grady's Barb-Q, Yantis Automotive, and U.S. Martial Arts. We continue to appreciate all of our current businesses and the EDC is planning a business breakfast social this summer.

Our largest undertaking to date is the advent of the Converse Town Square. I'd like to thank all prior

Council members who were instrumental in researching and approving this project. As we continue to increase the retail base for the city, the tax burden to you will decline. To facilitate responsible growth, and oversight of these and other projects, this Council overwhelmingly approved a proposal from the EDC to complete the groundwork for a 3-5 year strategic plan. To date, a steering committee is working feverously to develop strategies for the Council to consider soon.

WELCOME TO CONVERSE
Texas State Representative
Joe Farias, District 118.

For the first time in its history, Converse opened its arms to provide a district office for one of its honorable state elected officials. Representative Joe Farias has always dedicated himself to his constituents living in District 118. Please feel free to contact his office if you have questions or concerns on a statewide level.

601 S. Seguin Road
Converse, TX 78109
210-659-9071

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Elected as Vice-Chairman of the Greater Bexar County Council of Cities (GBCCC) by the local Mayors of Bexar County.
- Achieved support for funding for the FM 1604 Expansion project from U.S. Congressman Henry Cuellar, State Representative Joe Farias, & TXDOT Commissioner Hope Andrade.
- Installed new traffic light at the intersection of FM 1604 & Rocket Lane with support of County Commissioner Tommy Adkisson and TXDOT.
- Facilitated a close community working relationship with the Superintendent, administration, and Board of the Judson Independent School District (JISD).
- Fire/EMS department achieved an **ISO Rating of 2** from a previous rating of 5. The highest rating is ISO of 1. ISO ratings are key for property insurance risks based on an objective measure of the quality of fire protection. This may help homeowners receive a discount on their property insurance.
- Hosted a townhall meeting with Texas State Senator Judith Zaffirini to discuss education and healthcare related issues.
- Had successful meeting with San Antonio Councilwoman Sheila McNeil regarding North Hampton Subdivision and San Antonio City Park.
- Hosted semi-annual Texas Municipal League meeting that represents over 10 local South Texas cities.
- Developed inter-municipal relationships with Bexar County Commissioner Nelson Wolff, Bexar County Commissioner Tommy Adkisson, Windcrest Mayor Jack Leonhardt, Universal City Mayor Joe Medinger, Live Oak Mayor Henry O. Edwards, 12 F.T.W. Wing Commander Richard Clark, and local religious leaders.
- Unanimously selected Honorable Judge Robert Ramirez to serve our Municipal Court in lieu of the late Judge Ed Minarich.
- Maintained membership in the Northeast Partnership, Randolph Metrocom Chamber of Commerce (RMCC), and the Greater Bexar County Council of Cities (GBCCC).

BEAUTIFICATION/ENVIRONMENT & PARKS/RECREATION COMMISSIONS

One of the answers to addressing local, state, and federal environment and regulatory issues was the establishment of the Beautification & Environmental [B&E] Commission. B&E is an answer to help beautify our city and assist the elderly and disabled with minor residential repairs. B&E significance is felt all over

the city. In addition, this Council unanimously approved the Smart Code to help protect commercial areas while maintaining building facades and landscaping.

The Parks & Recreation Commission hosted the North Park Lake dedication, planted trees, re-

leased schools of fish into the lake, and purchased new playground equipment. It worked with the Council to approve plans for relocating the Red Schumman Pavilion to North Park to serve as a meeting place for the community and social gatherings.

Al Suárez

Al Suárez

Mayor of Converse

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