

February 2010

District I Announcements



On behalf of Council Member James G. Rodriguez

Your District I Staff:

Graciana "Graci" Garces
Chief of Staff

Jose Soto
Senior Council Aide

Jeanette De Los Santos
Council Aide

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Council Aide/Scheduler



Join us to discuss District I's
Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

****Department Representatives
will be present for Q&A****

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*Wednesday, February 24, 2010
6:00 p.m.*

*E.B. Cape Training Center
4501 Leeland Street*

For more information contact: 832-393-3011

Council Member Rodriguez remains committed to our historical Gus Wortham Golf Course



HOUSTON, TEXAS
1908 - 2008

Master Plan Community Meeting

Join us for a presentation on the
Gus Wortham Golf Course Master Plan

Wednesday, March 3, 2010
6:00pm
Magnolia Multi Service Center
7037 Capitol, 77011

2nd Annual

Register Now!!!

2nd Annual

East End Golf Classic

hosted by

Council Member James Rodriguez

Honorary Co-Chairs

Harris County Judge Ed Emmett &

Houston Mayor Annise Parker

to benefit the renovation and beautification of historic Gus Wortham Golf Course

May 21, 2010
8:30am Tee Time

To register online, please visit

<http://www.houstonparksboard.org/root/golf-east-end.php>

On August 12, Council Member Rodriguez presented Houston Fire Department Station 18 with a new life-saving piece of equipment— a new hydraulic cutting tool to assist in rescue operations. The \$4,800 piece of equipment went into service immediately after Rodriguez presented it to the station.

Houston City Council passed the 2010 budget on Wednesday, June 17th. Public safety remains the top priority with approximately 70% of the General Fund committed to police, fire and EMS services. Although every other department – including City Council - was asked to cut its budget, I was able to pass budget amendments that will resolve concerns expressed by District I residents.

Deed Restriction Violations

Deed restrictions are intended to preserve and protect the quality of life for homeowners. Unfortunately, these restrictions are often times ignored or overlooked. In an attempt to prevent these violations, I passed a budget amendment last year that required the Administration to “develop a plan to fine building permit applicants who lie on their application, indicating there are no deed restrictions in the neighborhood (in which they are building), when indeed there are.” Since the passage of this amendment, City Council has created an affidavit that must be completed by applicants and established a fine for perjury. Sadly, some applicants continue to falsify these affidavits without legal penalty. Therefore, I passed a budget amendment this year requiring the Legal Department to “identify and allocate revenue to fund legal action against (these) violators.”

Water Bill Overcharges

In the last year we have experienced an increased number of water bill overcharge cases. It is completely unacceptable for the City of Houston to estimate water use charges when meters are damaged. What is more appalling to me is learning that a Senior Citizen had received a bill estimating her usage and charging her almost \$1000, since the meter was damaged and could not be read accurately.

I shared my disappointment with Mayor White and the Public Works and Engineering (PWE) Department's Utilities Division immediately after receiving this information, and urged for prompt attention. I further offered and successfully passed a budget amendment requiring the Administration to "assist PWE in identifying and allocating funds (by September 30, 2009) to repair current backlog of damaged water meters 2" and smaller city wide (by May 31, 2010)."

Shortage of Inspectors

The City of Houston employs inspectors for various issues. Some inspect building code violations; some inspect deed restriction violations and some inspect neighborhood protection violations. In an effort to be more cost effective, I offered a budget amendment requiring the Administration to "create a plan to cross train city inspectors on matters including, but not limited to building inspections, deed restriction inspections, and Neighborhood Protection inspections." The Administration will be conducting a further analysis as to the cost of this initiative.

Tree Maintenance Backlog

It pleases me to see the planting of new trees throughout the district, trees are essential to our environment. However, the maintenance of our trees is just as important. Currently, the turn around time to maintain trees is two months. I offered an amendment requiring the Administration to "identify and allocate funding for a Tree Trimming Contract to assist our Parks and Recreation Department's Forestry Division in reducing this turn around time." I am currently working with Mayor White on identifying a revenue source for this contract.

