

# Quality of Life

*Delivering high quality services to our residents*

At the heart of every great city are its residents. The City of San Antonio continues to look for ways to create services that strengthens the fabric of our neighborhoods and improves the quality of life for the residents who call San Antonio home.

- The master plan for Voelcker Park was completed and approved by City Council in May 2008. Through implementation of the master plan, the park will provide for the development of outdoor recreational facilities to meet regional outdoor recreational needs while, at the same time, providing for the preservation of ecological, cultural, and historical aspects of the land. The first phase of the 311-acre park is underway and is scheduled for completion in 2009.

- Through the City's partnership with the San Antonio Parks Foundation, Fiscal Year 2008 saw the restoration and reopening of the historic Japanese Tea Garden in Brackenridge Park. The project involved more than \$1.6 million in improvements secured by the Parks Foundation and Friends of the Parks in collaboration with the City of San Antonio.

- San Antonio children benefited from six new playgrounds constructed in City parks thanks to a \$600,000 grant awarded to the Parks Foundation by the Kronkosky Charitable Foundation. The Parks Foundation contributed an additional \$5,000 for benches at the playgrounds.

- In Fiscal Year 2008, the City's Animal Care Services opened the doors to a new, 15-acre, \$12 million dollar shelter to include expanded adoption space for dogs and cats, a state of the art veterinary clinic and surgical suite, live-stock areas, training annex and an overall more-welcoming atmosphere.



- The City's Solid Waste Management Department continued its three-and-a-half-year conversion to automated garbage and recycling collection in 2008, completing the conversion of an additional 100,000 homes. Since its inception in 2006, 175,000 homes in San Antonio have been converted to the automated program. Conversion for all 344,000 customers will be completed in 2010.

- The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District moved a few heartbeats closer to improving community health as it partnered with University Health System (UHS) to transfer clinical preventive health services to UHS. This transition also led to the transfer of 125 Metro Health positions to the UHS team and involved the reallocation of \$6 million in grant and City general funds.

- In Fiscal Year 2008, more than 4.3 million individuals visited their San Antonio Public Library locations. In addition, more than 84,000 new library cards were issued.

- The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program continued to reach an even greater number of the city's low to moderate income tax payers resulting in more than 43,000 tax returns completed during the 2007 tax filing season, which returned \$61 million in refunds, including \$23 million in Earned Income Tax Credits.

- Animal Care Services significantly reduced the number of animals euthanized from 32,210 in Fiscal Year 2007 to 26,481 in Fiscal Year 2008.

- The City opened two new Community Link Customer Service Centers. In FY 2008, Community Link staff assisted customers with over a 190,000 transactions, collecting approximately \$7 million dollars in City revenue.



# Green Initiatives

*Building an environmental sustainable community for the next generation*

- The Council Action Team, a group of five individuals who assist council members and residents to provide resolution to service delivery issues, proactively identified and addressed 11,714 issues or concerns in San Antonio neighborhoods.

- The 2008 After School Challenge Program provided extended school day activities to more than 13,000 youth in a safe and enriching environment.

- Through its homeless prevention assistance program, the City of San Antonio supported emergency shelters that provided over 131,692 shelter nights for individuals and families in crisis. More than 634 homeless individuals transitioned into permanent housing through the combined efforts of the Department of Community Initiatives and its delegate agencies.

- In FY 2008, San Antonio International Airport welcomed AirTran Airways with four daily nonstop flights to Atlanta and Spirit Airlines offering nonstop service to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

- For the first time, the City initiated a community survey. The overall purpose of the survey was to identify residents' satisfaction with City services. The information will be used to identify areas for improvement. The survey was conducted in both English and Spanish by telephone.

**Going green gets to the heart of the matter. Creating new and innovative ways to incorporate environmentally-friendly initiatives is shaping the way the City of San Antonio does business. From greening our fleets to encouraging environmental stewardship, here are some examples of how the City is moving toward the goal of a sustainable future.**

- Through the City's 2-Cart automated collection system, recyclable collections increased by 40 percent providing not only a 103 percent increase in recycling revenue, but also diverting garbage from area landfills and conserving that valuable resource.

- In 2008, the City's Fleet and Maintenance Operations acquired 40 new hybrid vehicles bringing the City's total hybrid fleet to 129. In addition, the City built a new Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fueling facility. Thirty CNG refuse trucks were ordered and 10 new heavy duty propane vehicles were acquired with the assistance from an \$85,000 grant from the Railroad Commission of Texas.

- A shift to hybrid vehicles by the San Antonio Metropolitan Health Department's Food Safety and Environmental Health Division helped cut down on air pollution, a contributor to poor heart health and other illnesses. The fleet of fuel-efficient and environment-friendly cars is one of two major improvements to support the performance and efficiency of sanitarians as they conduct daily inspections of restaurants, pools, mobile living parks and other facilities.

- The City received an \$118,000 grant to enhance the Convention, Sports and Entertainment Facilities' existing recycling program. Enhancements include a solar showcase project and performance contracting for Utility Use Reduction.

- To pursue environmentally-friendly goals, the Downtown Operations Department replaced 40 percent of its gas-powered utility vehicles with hybrid electric vehicles and plans to replace the remaining fleet over the next two years. The significant reduction in fuel costs for the department and reduced vehicle emissions is a positive step towards making downtown San Antonio more environmentally friendly.

- The City of San Antonio was designated a "Solar America City" by the Department of Energy. This grant will be administered by the Office of Environmental Policy (OEP), a division within the City Manager's Office established to spearhead reductions and policy in energy and water while enhancing pollution prevention programs.

