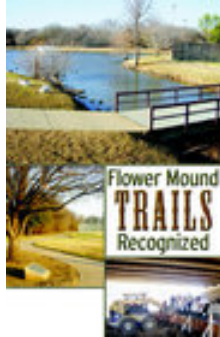


Friday, Jan. 16, 2009

## Flower Mound Trails Recognized

By Adrian McCandless

Staff Writer



Flower Mound has two trail system achievements to celebrate this year — the 20th anniversary of the system and being recognized by the Texas Trails Network (TTN) with two awards.

Former Parks, Art and Library Services [PALS] Chairman Mike McCall received the "Great Texas Trail Boss" Award for his support of trail planning.

"Mike is a tireless proponent of our trail system," Park Development Manager Tony Nielsen said.

"At every opportunity, he took the initiative to organize Park Board tours of prospective trail sites and helped to create enthusiasm about the overall trail system," he said.

McCall served on the Park Board and PALS Board for more than 10 years and is currently a member of the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Commission. McCall said although he is no longer on the PALS Board, he will continue to support the trails system.

He added receiving awards from TTN confirms trail systems are very important to the community.

"The only thing to make us different from other towns in the Dallas and Fort Worth area is to have connectivity," McCall said. "We have a very high trail standard, and it has been that way from the beginning. Our forefathers have planned trails and built them — now we are challenged to create east and west connector trails."

Currently, Flower Mound has about 32 miles of trails, and has plans for almost 100 miles of trails in the future.

Nielsen said the trails of Flower Mound have served the community very well since 1989.

"The trails' master plan connects our neighborhoods to parks, schools, churches, municipal buildings, and retail centers," he said.

He said collaborating with various natural surface trail users has enhanced the development of the equestrian and off-road hike and bike trail plans by creating future trail routes and trailheads.

"As the trails develop, it will foster future connectivities to neighboring cities and will soon become a very prominent component in the overall regional and state pedestrian/bicyclist/equestrian infrastructure system," Nielsen said.

Former Parks and Recreation Director Mel Rapp was also recognized with the "Great Texas Trail Head" Award. Rapp served as Flower Mound's Park and Recreation Director from 1986 through 1998. He designed a multi-use pedestrian infrastructure master plan which was incorporated in Flower Mound's 2001 overall Master Plan.

Rapp said he was proud to have been a part of the initial development of the trail system.

"The first projects showed the Parks Board and residents the benefits of linking neighborhoods to schools, businesses, parks and open spaces," Rapp said. "The Park and Open Space Master Plan required the trails be developed as new subdivisions were constructed. At first the development community did not support this concept, but as the trails proved to aid in the sale of their homes, they embraced the concept."

He added much work and planning has been done since he left in 1998 and he is delighted to see the overwhelming development of the trail system.

"The trail system has become the 'front porch' of the community," he said. "Residents meet, greet, and get to know each other as a result of the linkages which join people together."

[amccandless@alliancenews.net](mailto:amccandless@alliancenews.net) 972-724-3158