

City of Plano Employee Suggestion Box Responses May/June 2018

The Employee Suggestion Box is a tool for suggesting improvements to City procedures, processes and practices. I value this tool as one of the ways you can communicate directly with me and encourage you to come up with new and better ways of doing things. Please email your suggestions to empsugbox@plano.gov.

My goal is to respond to your suggestions within 30 to 60 days. If you don't want to use the suggestion box, please share your ideas for improvement with your supervisor. Some departments have their own suggestion programs which can also be used and might be a better outlet for department-specific suggestions.

Below are responses to suggestions I recently received.



The restrooms located in the lobby outside the Hardy room at the Joint Use Facility have no doors. Sometimes community meetings/trainings are held in the Hardy room and the doors are left open to make people more comfortable with coming and going. The problem is that when someone is handling their business it can be heard by every person in Hardy room. Is there any way we can look into dampening the sound that comes from the restrooms?

RESPONSE:

Thank you for bringing attention to this situation.

Facilities Services looked at various options in this area a few years ago and the possible modifications at that time were too disruptive and costly to implement. However, please be assured Facilities Services is continuing to research other solutions that will reduce the undesirable noise that wafts into the Hardy Room.

Several months ago I realized I was unable to access PeopleSoft from my phone or non-city computer. At first I assumed it was a glitch, however, after multiple attempts over the next few months, the problem persisted. I called the IT help desk to see if the issue could be resolved. I was informed at that time that the ability to access PeopleSoft remotely had been removed with no foreseeable time that it would be turned back on. I understand the need to keep information safe in the cyber world, and assume this is the reason for the decision to remove remote access. I'm sure there are other employees with different reasons for desiring to access PeopleSoft outside of work. My reasoning lies in the ability to access my paycheck information. As someone who works a 24 hr. shift every third day, there are many times of not being at work the span of days previous to or following a payday. And taking into account vacation leave or sick a day, that span increases. I am thankful that our city is environmentally conscious and therefore chooses to disperse pay stubs electronically instead of sending out paper copies. However, it would be helpful to be able to access that information when a city computer is not accessible. PeopleSoft has many other great benefits, such as accessing W-2/W-4 forms, requesting training opportunities, reviewing benefit details, or changing direct deposit allocations. All of which could be helpful to access while an employee is out of their office or away from a city computer. Therefore I am requesting that the remote access to PeopleSoft be reviewed to see if there is a way to reinstate this function while retaining the safety of information distributed online. Thank you for your consideration.

RESPONSE:

Thank you for your suggestion. In February 2018, we came under a phishing attack where cybercriminals sent legitimate looking emails to City employees directing them to click on links and provide log-in credentials. Unfortunately, some employees were tricked by the emails and were exploited. The cybercriminals gained remote access to employee's PeopleSoft accounts and subsequently changed payroll information in hopes of having employee pay checks deposited in cybercriminal bank accounts. Fortunately, the problem was caught in time and we were able to make repairs before any real harm came to us. A by-product of that initial repair was to stop all remote access to PeopleSoft until a solution could be put in place.

Technology Services is working towards a solution and is currently auditioning an application that looks promising. Clearly, allowing employee remote access to PeopleSoft greatly increases our overall efficiency but should not come at the cost of being vulnerable to cybercriminals.

In addition to working towards a PeopleSoft specific solution, we have implemented Microsoft's Advanced Threat Protection on all City emails. You may notice when you receive an email with an attachment, that the attachment may be replaced with "ATP Scan In Progress." This is a normal part of the ATP process and may take a few minutes to complete the scan. Once the attachment is cleared, your email is delivered with the attachment as usual. The delay in this process is not adjustable by Technology Services and has to do with how many attachments are queued for scan globally on Microsoft's cloud. The ATP solution also protects employees whether they are within the confines of the City network, at home, or on their mobile devices by replacing all hyperlinks in emails with Microsoft SafeLink addresses. This conducts a "time of click" scan of any link in your email to verify it isn't a malicious or phishing site.

As a reminder, all employees are required to annually complete Security Awareness Training. You should have received an invitation email with instructions of how to complete the training.

Finally, if you receive any unsolicited email directing you to click on links or provide log-on information, PINs or passwords you should be suspicious that it is a phishing attempt. Please forward any suspicious emails to spam@plano.gov for review.

We received two similar suggestions:

I noticed that vehicles parked in the employee parking areas of the Municipal Center lot are sometimes "off center". This sometimes results in vehicles taking up two (2) parking spaces. I also noticed it was extremely difficult to see the white lines in these areas. Can the parking lot be re-striped to help everyone stay inside the lines?

...and...

I was walking across the parking lot the other day and stepped on one of the plastic curb blocks only to have it slide out from under my feet. Fortunately, I am amazing on my feet and did not fall☺. When I looked at the parking block, I saw it was no longer attached, but more importantly, realized that the whole parking lot was in shambles. The parking space lines are barely there in places, the visitor space markings are both inconsistent (2 versions) and faded, the fire lanes are light pink at best and the cross walks and handicapped markings are all but falling apart. A quality looking parking lot would do wonders for first impressions when someone visits the City of Plano.

RESPONSE:

Thank you for your suggestions. A project is being proposed in the Capital Maintenance Fund to address the parking lots, sidewalks and walkways around the Municipal Center. Design will start in FY2018-19 with construction the following year. The striping and wheel stops will be redone at this time as well.

Please allow me to share a few wellness/safety tips that pertain to any parking lot: When walking in a parking lot, stay alert, off your devices and be aware of your surroundings. Cars have blind spots so do not assume drivers can see you. Always look both ways before crossing aisles. Practice walking in the appropriate pathways - not between cars or through medians. Walk around objects and not over them. And, lastly, report any unstable areas to Risk Management for evaluation and correction.

Just wanted to know why the evening and weekend personnel for the City of Plano seem to be forgotten. While I know the day shift thoroughly enjoyed the Employee Appreciation week, I feel as though a lot of us who work on the night shift and the weekend shift are and were forgotten. We might have had other obligations to attend to or we were sleeping our "normal" hours but we still receive the city wide emails and reminders from others who were given their opportunities and mention(s) of events. We are also here to SERVE the citizens and employees of Plano.

Although I know it is not a requirement for the City of Plano City of Excellence to celebrate its employees day and night, it would have been nice if there was a portion that us evening and weekend folks could enjoy and attend just as well. Maybe next year there can be events during the evening that employees can attend? (Half of the week) For example a mocktail night? Or a movie night in Haggard park? Or a catered lunch/dinner (depending on your time frame)? Just a couple of ideas.

RESPONSE:

Thank you so much for your suggestions of how we can work to ensure all of Team Plano has an opportunity to be celebrated.

The introduction of employee appreciation efforts in general began with the implementation of three different activities that typically occur at different times of the year (Ice Cream Socials, Annual Employee Picnic, and the return of the Connect4Health Safety Olympics). These activities were planned as such to allow multiple opportunities for Team Plano members to engage and interact with others they have not met before and reunite with those they have not seen in a while.

The intention of Employee Appreciation Week was to demonstrate an appreciation for ALL of Team Plano by providing events that also helped encourage organic/natural interaction. Special effort was given during Employee Appreciation Week to celebrate those employees who are not usually able to participate in "daylight activities" due to operations/shift assignments. This was done (and not publicized to the entire organization) by asking Executive Team to provide an early morning breakfast on the first day of the week to Public Works and Parks field employees. Also, special "midnight breakfasts" occurred during the week where employees from Human Resources/Risk Management cooked pancakes in both the late and early morning hours for the Public Safety Communications and Police/Detention departments. Lastly, fruit trays were delivered to the 13 Fire stations for each of their three shifts. From the beginning of planning this special week, intentional thought and action was given to reach all members of Team Plano.

However, there is definitely room to grow in ensuring Employee Appreciation Week indeed reaches the entirety of Team Plano. As such, please look forward to receiving a survey soon, asking your feedback regarding how Employee Appreciation Week can better meet the goals of providing Fun, Fellowship and Food in the future.

***All employees participate in management of the City and are responsible for ensuring quality service.
Thank you for making Plano the City of Excellence!***