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The group behind the \$1-billion Collin Creek Mall redevelopment in Plano broke ground Wednesday on another former retail site, with plans to bring nearly 1,000 single- and multifamily residences to North Richland Hills, D Magazine reported.

Valued at roughly \$300 million, Farmers Branch-based Centurion American's City Point community will also house 60,000 square feet of commercial space. Weitzman Group has been hired to bring in retail partners.

The project will be completed in a single phase by no later than 2027. It will sit on a 52-acre plot that was formerly home to the North Hills Mall, which closed in 2004 and was torn down in 2007.

Centurion American has paired with builders for the residences. New Synergy will build City Point's 46 one- to two-story bungalows and 122 two to three-story urban homes, while CB Jeni will build the 198 townhomes. The NRP Group will build the multifamily residences.

Letter spells out firing of aviation director

BY LUKE RANKER

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FORT WORTH [Fort Worth's city manager fired the aviation director](#) after a hit-and-run in a city-owned vehicle, one of multiple instances involving damage to city property, according to city officials.

In a termination letter, City Manager David Cooke and Assistant City Manager Fernando Costa said Bill Welstead hit another car with a city vehicle and then instructed city employees to make repairs to the car using a city-issued credit card, a violation of procedures. Welstead also operated a private aerospace business that he did not disclose and used airport land for hunting.

“Based on a careful review of what has already been discovered, we no longer have confidence that you can be a trusted member of the City’s Management team and model the ethical and respectful behavior that we expect of our City leaders,” the letter read. “It has become apparent that your decisions are focused on your own self-interest and not the interests of the City or Aviation Department.”

Cooke terminated Bill Welstead as head of the department Sept. 9. The Star-Telegram reported the firing Sept. 22 when [Cooke made public that he had fired Welstead](#) and had asked the police department to investigate. Cooke also requested an audit.

Costa provided a copy to the Star-Telegram.

In an interview, Costa described the hit-and-run as a “fender bender,” but said it led to the uncovering of multiple crashes that Welstead was involved in with city vehicles. Each time he took the vehicle to an unauthorized body shop instead of the city maintenance department.

The deeper city staff looked, the more they uncovered about Welstead, Costa said, expressing disappointment.

“In some instances it was a shock — a city employee had who and been well respected engaged in this kind of behavior and we didn’t know,” he said.

It has become clear that several employees did know, but did not feel they were able to make a complaint, he said.

While Fort Worth Police look into potential criminal wrongdoing, [the city’s auditor](#) has been looking into misspending for about a month, Councilman Cary Moon, chairman of the audit committee, said. Moon said he expects the findings within a month.

“This is disappointing for him personally and for the city,” Moon said, adding that he and other city leaders expect employees to be highly ethical. “In the end these things always get exposed.”

Attempts to reach Welstead were unsuccessful.

According to the letter, Welstead hit the car June 25 and fled. He was later “dismissive when called back to the scene.”

Welstead did not report the crash to the city, but told staffers to make repairs to the car using a city credit card for payment, according to the memo. He also did not report damage to the other vehicle.

The city manager’s officer learned of the hit-and-run when the driver of the other vehicle filed a police report regarding the crash.

While investigating the hit-and-run, city officials learned Welstead operated a private business, NMH Group, but had not disclosed it. The city requires employees to disclose a second source of income in order assess potential conflicts of interest.

NBC 5 reported Wednesday night that state records show [Welstead formed NMH Group in 2013](#). NMH bought property at 4800 North Main St., directly across from Meacham Airport.

A website listed for the company appeared to be deactivated.

In a third finding, the letter states Welstead used city-owned airport property for hunting.

He instructed staff to fence off a large section of airport property, install a deer feeder and purchased hunting equipment for his personal use, according to the letter.

Welstead, 42, made about \$150,000 as aviation director.

The [Fort Worth aviation department oversees three airports](#): Alliance, Spinks and Meacham International. Meacham and Spinks provide regional aviation services for air charter, corporate, business and recreational aircraft. While Alliance Air Services manages Alliance, the city owns the airport.

Roger Venables, the city’s assistant director for property management, will serve as the interim director for the Aviation Department.

Welstead was also involved in a 2017 human resources investigation, according to the letter. That investigation noted that he retaliated against an employee after a complaint. He received a two week unpaid suspension, Costa said.

Welstead had wanted to block an employee from complaining about a time sheet issue and had threatened to fire the employee, Costa said. City leadership kept a close eye on Welstead after that, but felt it was a one time issue, he said.

At the time, leadership admonished Welstead “about creating a workplace that is inconsistent” with city policies.

“The current investigation revealed that several employees still feel that intimidation, coercion, and fear of retaliation exist in the Aviation Department, which is contrary to the City’s stated policies,” the managers wrote.

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