



Repairs to Blake-Manor Road Have Been Completed

We have all suffered from the roller-coaster roadway on Blake-Manor as it progresses to Manor. Road repairs were recently performed on a stretch of Blake-Manor Road starting at the Blake-Manor/Lockwood intersection and ending near the Manor City limits line.

According to Scott Lambert of Travis County's Transportation and Natural Resources Department, this section of the road was milled down, leveled, and then a new layer of asphalt was applied. Work began on December 2 to remove the cracked and uneven asphalt. There was a short delay in the completion of the project due to recent cold weather. The asphalt mix was applied over the weekend of December 14-15.

According to Mr. Lambert, the county recognizes that this repair is only a temporary fix. Blake-Manor Rd. from East Metro Park northeast to the Manor area is scheduled for major construction on 2017 as an "arterial" highway as part of bond funds approved in 2011, subject to participation funding from local developers.

At its meeting on December 3, 2013, Travis County Commissioners Court attempted to speed up funding so that design work could begin for this project.

Manor ISD Appoints Community Bond Planning Committee

At its November 18th meeting, Manor ISD Trustees discussed appointing a community committee to assist in facilities planning and providing input for a possible bond election in May, 2014. As previously reported, Manor's enrollment is growing very rapidly – much faster than neighboring districts including Elgin, Austin and Pflugerville.

Committee members as of December 10 include parents, business and community leaders and staff members including Lorrie Adams, Ileana Barboza, Donna Beasley, David Burgos, Wil Byrd, Bradley Callis, Bradley Clark, Chris Colter, Ana Cortez, Pete Dwyer, Jimmy Ferguson, Elmer Fisher, Dan Fuchs, Alejandro Gongora, Misty Goodson, Vince Harding, Alayne Johnson, Ruben Juarez, Belinda Leibas-Vizcalla, Jennifer Mann, Denise Martinez, Marlene Medina, Alex Montes-Vela (chairperson), Michael Perkins, Anne Rankin Weir, Leonard Rivas, Wilmer Roberts, Marco Rodriguez, Janie Serna, Gary Stiggers, Jeff Turner, Pam Uhr and Debbie Young.

Committee members will be asked to attend 5 meetings where they will review reports to develop lists of the capital improvement projects needed over the next 5 years; to address growth, safety and health; and review educational programming and technology in a financially responsible manner. The committee will also prioritize projects for a possible bond election. The members will review surveys and demographic trends, study data and discuss options that will result in recommendations presented to the Board in late February, 2014. Meeting dates include December 5, 2013, December 19, 2013, January 9, 2014, January 24, 2014 and February 6, 2014.

According to Manor ISD Superintendent of Schools Kevin Brackmeyer, "We sincerely appreciate the time each of the members has volunteered to participate on this committee and look forward to hearing their recommendations in February."





The purpose of Park Springs NA is to “improve and maintain the quality of life for residents and protect from environmental hazards within the boundaries of the association”. More information is available on the PSNA website – www.parkspringsna.org.

Did you know.....

December 2013 has Sundays, 5 Mondays, and 4 Saturdays. This happens once every 823 years.

Random Tidbits – The History of Christmas Trees

Long before the advent of Christianity, plants and trees that remained green all year had a special meaning for people in the winter. Ancient peoples hung evergreen boughs over their doors and windows. In many countries, it was believed that evergreens would keep away witches, ghosts, evil spirits and illness.

Germany is credited with starting the Christmas tree tradition as we now know it in the 16th century when devout Christians brought decorated trees into their homes. Some built Christmas pyramids of wood and decorated them with evergreens and candles if wood was scarce. It is a widely held belief that Martin Luther, the 16th century Protestant reformer, first added lighted candles to a tree.

Most 19th century Americans found Christmas trees an oddity. The first record of one being on display was in the 1830s by German settlers of Pennsylvania, although trees had been a tradition in many German homes much earlier. The Pennsylvania German settlers had community trees as early as 1747. But as late as the 1840s, Christmas trees were seen as pagan symbols and not accepted by most Americans.



By the 1890s, Christmas ornaments were arriving from Germany and Christmas tree popularity was on the rise around the US. Europeans used small trees about 4 feet in height, while Americans liked their Christmas trees to reach from floor to ceiling.

Source: Trivia Today – December 4, 2013

Important Dates to Remember

- Wed. January 1, 2014 – Happy New Year
- Mon. January 20, 2014 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Wed. February 12, 2014 – Abraham Lincoln’s Birthday
- Fri. February 14, 2014 – St. Valentine’s Day**
- Mon. February 17, 2104 – President’s Day**
- Sat. February 22, 2014 – George Washington’s Birthday



The next PSNA meeting – Tues. February 4, 2014 – more details to come



FM 969 Improvement Project

Decker Lane (FM 3177) to Hunters Bend Road

Travis County, in conjunction with the Texas Department of Transportation is making improvements to a 4-mile stretch of FM 969 from Decker Lane (FM 3177) to Hunters Bend Road. The final project would include a continuous turn lane, two additional lanes, new shoulders and a new sidewalk. The improvements would be designed and built in two phases.

The purpose of the project is to improve safety for drivers and pedestrians along the roadway. As congestion has increased, so has the need for improvements. A new sidewalk would make it easier for pedestrians who also travel along the roadway.

Phase I – Fall, 2016 – This phase would widen the roadway to provide a continuous left turn lane, shoulders, and a sidewalk on one side of the roadway from FM 3177 to FM 973.

Phase II – Spring, 2017 – This phase would provide two additional travel lanes, a continuous left turn lane, shoulders, and a sidewalk on one side of the roadway from FM 973 to Hunters Bend Road.

This project is being funded through a unique partnership between Travis County and the Texas Department of Transportation. A financing method called “pass thru tolling” is being used to share the \$18 million of project costs between the two entities. Travis County would pay approximately \$8.5 million to design and build the improvements. Despite the name of the project’s financing method, drivers who use FM 969 will not be charged a toll to drive on the improved roadway.

For more information about this project, please call (512) 895-9599 or FM969@makingthingsclear.com

Source: Travis County website

Texas House District 50 Election on November 5th Will Require a Run-Off

The candidates who were on the November 5th ballot to replace former state Representative Mark Strama included Republican Mike VanDeWalle and Democrats Jade Chang Shepard, Celia Israel and Rico Reyes.

Mike Van De Walle and Celia Israel advanced to the next round of voting when there will be a run-off election between these two candidates in January or February, 2014. The next step is the regular primary election in March, followed by a general election in November, 2014.

PSNA Boundaries are US 290 on the north, FM 973 on the west, FM 969 on the south, and the Travis-Bastrop county line on the east. Everyone residing in this area is welcome to join. Dues are \$20 and are payable each May. There is more information on our website - www.parkspringsna.org. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 1008 Manor, TX 78653.



A HAPPY
NEW YEAR