South Austin boundary proposals invoke mixed feelings

BY NICHOLAS CICALE

Overcrowding has been a long-standing issue in Southwest Austin at Baranoff, Kiker and Cowan elementary schools.

To give enrollment relief and make “right-sized” campuses, Austin ISD’s Boundary Advisory Committee has worked throughout the year to create scenarios that lower enrollment at the schools to between 75% and 115% capacity, said Beth Wilson, AISD executive director of planning and asset management.

Some of that relief will come when the future Southwest Elementary School opens for the 2020-21 school year, Wilson said. As AISD prepares for the new school, staff are evaluating scenarios that could help balance enrollment in the entire area.

“We were asked by the superintendent to, as we were creating the new... CONTINUED ON 38

Long-awaited road project set to open

BY NICHOLAS CICALE

Construction on one of the region’s most anticipated transportation projects, SH 45 SW, is in its final stages, and the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority plans to open SH 45 SW to traffic by the end of May, weather permitting.

SH 45 SW is a 3.6-mile toll road that includes two lanes in each direction and entrances at the south end of MoPac Expressway, at Bliss Spillar Road and at FM 1626. The toll costs $1 each way.

A shared-use bicycle and walking... CONTINUED ON 40

HWY. 290 TAKES SHAPE

Construction is prominent along the 14-mile stretch of Hwy. 290 between the city of Austin and Dripping Springs.

Turn to Page 42 to learn about developments being built along the road, including details about...
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Changes coming to the South Austin area

After 34 long-awaited years, the widely anticipated S1 45 SW project is here! In this month’s cover story, Editor Nicholas Cicale provides updates on the yearslong project and the traffic relief it can provide for many drivers. Please be sure and see the inside timeline of the coverage Community Impact Newspaper has provided on this project over the years and the topics that slowed the project down.

With the impending building and opening of Southwest Austin’s newest elementary school, which will open in 2020, many area residents are up in arms on proposed boundary changes in the Shady Hollow and Circle C neighborhoods. This month’s top story outlines some of the proposed changes and Austin ISD’s answers to some neighborhood concerns.

Another area of growth in our community is the Hwy. 290 corridor. Reporter Olivia Aldridge dives into the latest development in the area and plans for future residential and commercial construction in her cover story.

Also please don’t miss our Volunteer Guide (see Pages 28-29) if you are looking for volunteer opportunities this summer. There are plenty of local organizations that would love your assistance!

How does ‘Community Impact Newspaper’ pick what will appear in a guide?

Most months, our Southwest Austin edition publishes a local guide to businesses, services organizations or events that could be of interest to our readers.

When putting a guide together, our Southwest Austin team tries our best to include as many local businesses and groups as possible. To do this, our team conducts research by driving around Southwest Austin and looking up additional information online. We also receive suggestions through social media and email.

When gathering information, we call the groups we plan to feature to confirm details, such as their contact information and program details.

Due to space limitations and the large number of businesses and organizations in Southwest Austin, we cannot always fit every applicable group into a guide. However, we do try to be as comprehensive as possible when we can.
Businesses that have recently opened, are coming soon, relocating or closed

**SOUTHWEST AUSTIN**

1. **Best Made Co.**, an American outfitter offering gear, enamelware, apparel and tools, opened its third location at 1210 S. Congress Ave., Austin, on March 8, in the space previously occupied by South Congress Massage. The company's other locations are in New York City and Los Angeles. www.bestmade.com

2. **Chrys Ghiraldini** opened a space inside Infinity Wellness Center at 5000 Davis Lane, Ste. 160, Austin, on May 18. Ghiraldini said she has close to 20 years of experience as a chiropractor and is also a nutrition specialist and uses "energy medicine." 646-522-4391. www.sacredhealthjourney.com

3. **FirstLight Home Care of Austin**, a provider of non-medical home care services, announced the opening of its new office April 10. Bobby and Michelle Scrupps own the new location at 901 S. MoPac, Bldg. 1, Ste. 300, Austin, and provide companion care and personal care services to residents throughout Austin, Westlake, Lakeway, Bee Cave and surrounding communities. Since opening its first franchise location in 2010, FirstLight Home Care is now serving clients in more than 250 locations in 34 states, a press release said. 512-953-6285.

4. **HeadSpace Salon and Coop**, a "holistic hair care salon" that is home to local stylists and provides space for "local creatives to sell their art, jewelry and CBD oil products," opened April 1, according to manager Regina Wong. The salon is located at 4418 Pack Saddle Pass, Austin. An Instagram account, @headspeacesalonandcoop, will be active soon. 512-632-4435

5. **Lantana Nails & Spa** opened in Lantana Place at 7415 Southwest Parkway, Bldg. 3, Ste. 200, Austin, this spring. The business offers manicures and pedicures, and customers are also offered up to two complementary drinks during an appointment, such as wine, champagne, mimosas, soft drinks and water.

6. **Fashion jewelry retailer Lovisa** opened in April at the Barton Creek Square Mall at 2901 S. Capital of Texas Hwy., Austin. The company sells rings, earrings, hair accessories, bracelets and necklaces, jewelry for body piercings and more. www.lovisa.com

7. **Reliv Organix**, a store selling CBD, or cannabidiol, and hemp products, held its grand opening May 4 at 11410 Manchaca Road, Ste. 200, Austin. The grand opening event included special giveaways. Discounts are available for veterans, law enforcement and seniors. 512-953-8100. www.facebook.com/relivorganix

8. **Boat store Tecovas** opened its first retail location March 15 at 1333 S. Congress Ave., Ste. 160, Austin, at the site of the former St. Vincent de Paul thrift store. The company will also locate its headquarters above the store. 512-675-4343. www.tecovas.com

9. **TruFusion** opened its 12,500-square-foot fitness and yoga studio May 6 at 4211 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin. The space owned by Morgan and Jeremy David features a variety of group fitness class options as well as a smoothie bar and retail shop. 512-893-3878. www.trufusion.com/southaustin

**NOW OPEN**

**COMING SOON**

10. **National fitness chain Orangetheory Fitness** will open in Lantana Place at 7415 Southwest Parkway, Bldg. 5D, Austin,

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on July 13. Orange theory offers workout classes in which participants wear heart monitors to track their heart rate during the workout. Customers receive a report of their workout after each class. 512-537-7815. www.orangetheoryfitness.com

ANNIVERSARIES
13 ChiroFX celebrated its first anniversary in South Austin at 4532 Westgate Blvd., Ste. 200, Austin, in April after relocating from the chiropractic clinic’s original location on South Lamar Boulevard. The clinic offers services, such as spinal decompression and cold laser therapy. 512-480-9999. www.chirofx.net

12 Epic Fun Family Entertainment Center celebrated one year in business at Oak Hill Plaza, 7101 W. Hwy. 71, Austin, on May 10. The Epic Fun family laser tag arena, climbing walls, an arcade and many other family activities. Food is also served, and older visitors can participate in Epic Fun’s newest activity, axe-throwing. 512-394-7844. www.epicfun.com

11 Radio Coffee & Beer celebrates its fifth anniversary at 4204 Manchaca Road, Austin, in May. The café serves espresso, craft beers and snacks, and hosts live music and trivia nights. 512-217-1160. www.radialcoffeabeer.com

NEW MANAGEMENT
14 Con Mi Madre, a South Austin-based nonprofit that “empowers young Latinas and their mothers through education and support services,” named Joanna Moya Fábregas as its new executive director April 18. According to a news release, Moya Fábregas came to the United States at age 14 after living in four Latin American countries. The nonprofit is located at 4175 Friedrich Lane, Ste. 200, Austin. 512-467-4483. www.convimidre.org

15 Todd Steward became the new CEO of St. David’s Medical Center on April 29. Before accepting the position, Steward was the CEO of St. David’s South Austin Medical Center, located at 901 W. Ben White Blvd., Austin, for nine years. In his new role, Steward leads St. David’s Medical Center, Heart Hospital of Austin and St.

COMPiled by Olivia Aldridge and Nicholas Gicale
News or questions about Southwest Austin? Email us at swanews@communityimpact.com.

David’s Rehabilitation Hospital in Austin as well as St. David’s Georgetown Hospital. Previous CEO Don Wilkerson recently retired after eight years in the position and 20 years at St. David’s. 512-544-7111. www.stdavids.com

RELOCATIONS
16 Lux Rox Boutique is an apparel, gift and jewelry store that opened in Lantana Place at 7415 Southwest Parkway, Bldg. 3, Ste. 100, Austin, on April 30. The store was previously located in the Westlake area at 6317 Bee Caves Road, Ste. 210, Austin, before moving to the new spot. www.luxroxboutique.com

EDUCATION NOTES
17 The Austin ISD board of trustees appointed Christina Steele as Travis Early College High School’s new principal April 22. A 13-year AIDP employee, Steele was serving as the school’s interim principal and had previously been the school’s academic director. Travis Early College High School is located at 1211 E. Oltorf St., Austin. 512-414-2527. www.travisrebel.org

CLOSINGS
18 Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf’s Circle C Ranch location at 5701 W. Slaughter Lane, Ste. A170, Austin, closed permanently April 26. The café served espresso and coffee drinks as well as signature teas and iced beverages. Four other Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf locations in Austin still remain open, including a South Austin location at 5030 W. Hwy. 290, Bldg. 11, Austin, which can be reached at 512-494-6348. www.coffeebeanandtealeaf.com

19 Zpizza closed its Austin location in Circle C Ranch at 5701 W. Slaughter Lane, Ste. A160, Austin, in early April. The pizza chain served specialty pizzas, salads, sandwiches, shareable plates and wings. 512-394-9331. www.zpizza.com

FEATURED IMPACT—NOW OPEN
A Austin-based burger chain Hopdoddy Burger Bar opened L’il doddy, described by the chain as “Hopdoddy’s younger sibling,” on April 15 at 4625 William Cannon Drive, Austin. The Oak Hill restaurant is the first L’il doddy location. Although some menu items from Hopdoddy, including the plant-based Impossible Burger, will be offered. L’il doddy has its own menu, including burgers, shareable appetizers and grilled chicken. L’il doddy customers can dine in or order ahead and use the online pickup window between 11 a.m. and 10 p.m. 512-535-0300. www.hopdoddy.com

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IMPACTS

Businesses that have recently opened, are coming soon and more.

NOW OPEN

1. Dripping Springs Ranch Park has partnered with Aging Is Cool, a business that offers activities for older adults. At the Dripping Springs facility, located at 1042 Event Center Drive, Dripping Springs, Aging Is Cool will offer classes including fitness, yoga and brain training. Dripping Springs City Council approved the partnership. A kickoff event was held April 18. 512-790-2663. www.agingiscool.com

2. Arbor House, a hotel featuring stays in luxury tree houses, opened at 931 Sycamore Creek, Dripping Springs, in February. The family-owned business offers accommodations in four unique lofted houses and is located near a number of Dripping Springs wineries and wedding venues. www.arborhouseofds.com

3. Urology Austin, a health care provider that offers standard urology services for males and females and treats emergency conditions, began seeing patients at its new satellite office at 13830 Sawyer Ranch Road, Ste. 203, Dripping Springs, on May 6. The location is currently taking appointments. Urology Austin includes over 40 health care providers and has about 20 locations in the Austin area. 512-248-2200. www.urologyaustin.com

4. Extra Space Storage has broken ground on a new location at 14001 W. Hwy. 290, Austin. The new facility will include 100,000 square feet of climate-controlled storage. According to a representative from CBRE Capital, construction could be completed in October. 512-522-3788. www.extraspace.com

5. Firehouse Animal Health Center celebrated its first anniversary at Belterra Village, 166 Hargraves Drive, Ste. C100, Austin, on May 22. The animal hospital features an interactive learning lab and an all-glass wall that allows pet owners to view their dog or cat during procedures and surgeries. 512-645-1000. www.firehouse.vet

6. The Dripping Springs ISD board of trustees voted unanimously to approve Melinda Gardner as the next principal of Walnut Springs Elementary School, 300 Sportsplex Drive, Dripping Springs, at its April 22 meeting. Gardner, who is currently the principal of Lost Pines Elementary in Bastrop, Texas, was recommended for the position by DSISD Superintendent Bruce Gearing. She will begin serving in her role after current Walnut Springs Elementary Principal Julie Prior retires at the close of the school year. 512-858-3800. www.dsisdtx.us/domain/11

EDUCATION NOTES

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**TO-DO LIST | MAY-JUNE**

**MAY 28**
**TUESDAY WITH A TWIST**
The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center concludes its “Tuesday with a Twist” series, when the center stays open late to offer music, activities and cocktails alongside garden tours. The event will be held rain or shine. 5-8 p.m. Free with admission. 4801 La Crosse Ave., Austin. 512-232-0100. www.wildflower.org

**JUNE 1**
**‘ETHEREAL’ EXHIBITION**
The Russell Collection gallery hosts the “Ethereal” art exhibition through June, featuring artists Kathy Buist, Katherine Houston and Jaime Kirkland. Reservations are requested for the opening reception. 6-8 p.m. Free. 1009 W. Sixth St., Austin. 512-478-4440. www.russell-collection.com

**JUNE 5 & 12**
**COMMUNITY SKATE NIGHT**
Dripping Springs’ yearlong series of community skate nights at Dripping Springs Ranch Park caps off in June. Skate nights are hosted by Drip Skateboarding, an organization working to bring a public skate park to Dripping Springs. 5-7 p.m. Free. 1042 Event Center Drive, Dripping Springs. 214-738-3404. www.dripskatepark.com

**MAY 30**
**TAP YOUR FOOT TO BLUEGRASS**
Every Thursday, St. Elmo Brewing Co. hosts Grassy Thursday. Bluegrass pickers from the Austin area gather to play live music come rain or shine. All ages are welcome. 7-10 p.m. Free. 440 E. Saint Elmo Road, Austin. 737-300-1965. www.stelmobrewing.com

**JUNE 01**
**ATTEND THE SOUL OF AUSTIN CULTURE FEST**
The second annual festival will celebrate diversity in the capital of Texas. Local artists and musicians will perform. Festivalgoers are also invited to take advantage of networking and free community resources. Noon-6 p.m. Free (general admission), $50 and up (VIP tickets). Huston-Tillotson University, 900 Chicon St., Austin. www.soulsofaustin.org

**JUNE 06**
**RUN TOWARD MARGARITAS**
All runners who complete the Maudie’s Moonlight Margarita Run 5K will receive a free margarita at a post-run party. The event will also feature music, food and more. Proceeds from the event will benefit the The Trail Foundation. 8 a.m. $50. Seaholm Power Plant, 800 W. Cesar Chavez St., Austin. 512-791-7572. www.thetrailfoundation.org/mmr

**JUNE 06**
**ATTEND A GARDEN PARTY FOR GOOD**
Harper’s Heroes hosts the 65 Roses Garden Party. Proceeds support the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. The event features champagne trucks, photo booths and a silent auction. 6:30-10:30 p.m. Tickets start at $125. Umlauf Sculpture Gardens, 605 Azie Morton Road, Austin. www.harperheroes.org/gardenparty

**JUNE 15**
**CATCH THE INTERNATIONAL TAP FESTIVAL**
The 18th annual Soul to Sole International Tap Festival features Tapestry Dance Company and The Souls of Our Feet Jazz Trio. The festival will honor female tap pioneers, such as Anita Feldman and Acia Gray. 8 p.m. $29-$39. The Long Center for the Performing Arts, 701 W. Riverside Drive, Austin. 512-474-5664. www.thelongcenter.org

**JUNE 17**
**TAKE A FULL MOON SWIM**
The Austin Motel and Joann’s Fine Foods host a swim party for each full moon, featuring poolside cocktails. Enjoy food from the Joann’s menu, and do not forget your bathing suit. 6-10 p.m. Free. The Austin Motel, 1220 S. Congress Ave., Austin. 512-358-6054. www.austinmotel.com/events

**JUNE 23**
**ATTEND THE CAMP NOWHERE MUSIC FESTIVAL**
The festival, which also has dates in Houston and Dallas, features artists Odesza, Zhu, Chelsea Cutler, Rababak and more. The event will also include art installations themed by the event’s slogan: “Camping is a state of mind.” 5 p.m. Prices vary. Austin360 Amphitheater, Circuit of The Americas Blvd., Austin. www.campnowheretexas.com

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**CALLING ALL YOGIS**
As the summer heats up, so does outdoor yoga around Austin.

**May 28**
Wanderlust Yoga hosts the Tuesday Summer Sunset Series at Republic Square. 7:30-8:30 p.m. Free. 422 Guadalupe St., Austin. 512-502-5183. www.summersunsetseries.com

**June 15**
Meet at McKinney Falls State Park for yoga and a hike along Onion Creek Trail. 8-45 a.m.-1 p.m. $6. 5808 McKinney Falls Parkway, Austin. www.yogahike.com

**19**
Fareground food hall hosts its “Warriors and Wine” series every third Wednesday with yoga, music and food. Tickets available on Eventbrite. 6-8 p.m. $35. 111 Congress Ave., Austin. www.faregroundaustin.com

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*Find more or submit events at communityimpact.com/event-calendar. Event organizers can submit local events online to be considered for the print edition. Submitting details for consideration does not guarantee publication.*

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*Southwest Austin - Dripping Springs edition • May 2019*
ONGOING PROJECTS

1 Slaughter Lane and South First Street intersection improvements
Since construction began in December 2018, improvements to the Slaughter Lane and South First Street intersection created dual westbound left-turn lanes, and medians have been restored. Planned improvements include creating three through lanes in both directions and improvements to shared-use paths.
Timeline: December 2018–June 2019
Cost: $2 million
Funding source: 2016 Mobility Bond

2 I-35 bridge construction at Stassney Lane and William Cannon Drive
Demolition of the Stassney Lane bridge is scheduled for May 31. The demolition is part of a larger effort to improve I-35 at Stassney Lane and William Cannon Drive, including the placement of shared-use paths and widening of I-35 mainlanes. New U-turn bridges have already been constructed and will serve as detours during the Stassney Lane bridge demolition.
Timeline: July 2016–winter 2019
Cost: $79 million
Funding source: Proposition 1 funds

3 MoPac South Project
Rollingwood City Council passed a resolution April 18 opposing House Bill 1644, which authorizes Texas Department of Transportation to enter into comprehensive development agreements with outside entities on projects such as MoPac South. In the resolution, Rollingwood City Council advocated for an opportunity to weigh in on an alternative to the Mobility Authority’s current South MoPac plans, which would add 3 miles of tolled express lanes along MoPac, including elevated lanes near Lady Bird Lake and Bee Caves Road.
Timeline: TBD
Cost: TBD
Funding sources: Proposition 12, other sources

4 Slaughter Lane and William Cannon Drive corridors
On May 4, the Austin Corridor Program Office hosted an open house “fiesta” to share plans for corridor improvements to Slaughter Lane and William Cannon Drive with the public. Austin City Council in April authorized staff to move to the next phase of engineering and design for both corridors.
Timeline: April 2018–2024
Cost: $46.6 million (William Cannon Drive) and $74 million (Slaughter Lane)
Funding source: 2016 Mobility Bond

At a later date, the Austin Corridor Program Office hosted an open house “fiesta” to share plans for corridor improvements to Slaughter Lane and William Cannon Drive with the public. Austin City Council in April authorized staff to move to the next phase of engineering and design for both corridors.
Timeline: April 2018–2024
Cost: $46.6 million (William Cannon Drive) and $74 million (Slaughter Lane)
Funding source: 2016 Mobility Bond
**DEVELOPMENT UPDATES**

**MUSIC LANE MIXED-USE PROJECT TAKES SHAPE**

Music Lane, a 2-acre development at 1009-1123 S. Congress Ave., Austin, continues to be built. The five-building project will have 51,775 square feet of office space in addition to separate buildings for Equinox, an upscale gym, and Soho House, a London-based, members-only club. The first phase is expected to open in October, according to project developer Endeavor Real Estate Group’s website.

Other retail tenants include local dessert business Gelateria Gemelli, which opened its first location in East Austin in 2015, and Dallas-based restaurant Velvet Taco. An opening date has not been announced.

**Address:** 1009-1123 S. Congress Ave., Austin

**Timeline:** 2018-TBD

**Size:** 130,000 square feet

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**LANTANA PLACE ANNOUNCES NEW TENANTS**

Lantana Place, the mixed-use development located at the corner of Southwest Parkway and William Cannon Drive in South Austin, has added five new tenants.

CBRE, a national commercial real estate group that represents landlord Staurus Properties, announced in a May 2 news release it had executed lease agreements with Lux Rox Boutique, UPS, Orangefin Theory Fitness, Lantana Nail & Spa and Black Rock Coffee Bar.

“Lantana Place is the first large retail center of its kind on Southwest Parkway and the developer has incorporated a very high-level of exterior design providing a strong sense of place in this largely underserved retail market,” CBRE Senior Vice President Eric Dejernett said in the release.

“This is an incredible location for a wide variety of retailers as they are within close proximity to a large population of both residential and office tenants and this is, currently, the only large retail establishment in the area.”

A first round of tenants was announced in the winter and included Carve American Grille by Perry’s, Westlake Dermatology, Realty Austin, Cobalt Blue Salon, Scissors & Scotch, Marigold Market, Enamel Dental and Lone Star Eye Moviehouse & Eatery also opened in 2018.

Groundbreaking on the project’s second phase, including construction of a Marriott hotel, will take place later this year.

**Address:** 7415 Southwest Parkway, Austin

**Timeline:** August 2017–2021

**Size:** 35 acres

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**SOCO 44 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT GETS TAX EXEMPTION APPROVAL BY TRAVIS COUNTY**

Travis County commissioners approved a tax exemption for SoCo 44, a forthcoming $62 million multifamily project in South Austin, following a unanimous vote April 16.

SoCo 44 will be located at 4401 S. Congress Ave., Austin, and comprise 275 units. All but 27 units will be restricted to tenants earning incomes at or below 120% of the area’s median income, including 35 units for those under 60% and 132 units for those under 80%.

The developer, Cypress Real Estate Advisors, requested the partnership of the county’s Housing Finance Corp. on this project. By approving the partnership, commissioners allowed the development to be exempt from property taxes while ensuring the HFC has additional input and control over the project.

“This project will target the ‘missing middle’ families that are over-income for traditional tax-credit properties and, therefore, do not qualify to live in these projects but are not quite earning enough to afford a traditional market-rate project,” wrote Andrea Shields, Travis County Corporations managing director, in an April 16 letter to commissioners.

The development is planned for a property at the intersection of the South Congress corridor and the St. Elmo district. Per Shields’ letter, “The area is beginning to gentrify, and having affordability at the levels provided by this project will be key in maintaining the area’s population.”

**Address:** 4401 S. Congress Ave., Austin

**Timeline:** spring 2019–2020

**Size:** 275 living units

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**DOWNTOWN PROJECTS UNDER DEVELOPMENT**

**RiverSouth**

RiverSouth, a 15-story office building, with ground-floor retail and dining broke ground March 13. The project, developed by Stream Realty, is scheduled to be completed in 2021 and will be the first development built under the city’s South Central Waterfront Plan, which Austin City Council adopted in June 2016. The plan aims to create a district-wide network of connected green streets, parks, trails and public open spaces as well as to add new affordable housing units in the area.

**Address:** 401 S. First St., Austin

**Timeline:** March 2019–2021

**Size:** 15-story office and retail building

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A right to COUNSEL

Travis County defendants who cannot afford private counsel can access representation through a variety of departments. A public defender's office could provide more oversight, funding and infrastructure for defendants.

By Jack Flagler and Emma Freer

Since October, a work group appointed by Travis County Commissioners has been drafting a proposal to create a vision of what a public defender's office would look like for the county. Austin is the largest city in the country without a general public defender's office to represent indigent clients, or those who cannot afford an attorney—which local political leaders hope to change.

The county passed a substantial milestone on May 7 as it continues through the process to create the new office. County Commissioners voted 4-1 to approve a grant application for $273 million in state funds over the course of four years that would enable the county to establish the public defender's office. Precinct 3 Commissioner Gerald Daugherty was the lone vote against.

The grant application was submitted to the Texas Indigent Defense Commission—a state agency that provides start-up support for counties that want to establish a public defender's office. The TIDC will announce awardees in June.

However, the commissioners' May 7 vote came with some late changes in the proposal. Local judges and members of the work group came to an impasse on issues regarding oversight and how to fund the office as well as the number of funding for the Capital Area Private Defender Service, or CAPDS, which appoints private lawyers to represent indigent clients.

With those two groups at odds, County Judge Sarah Eckhardt proposed a third option in an amendment she submitted on May 3. The proposal as amended by Eckhardt was the one ultimately approved by commissioners May 7.

Eckhardt described her amendment as "punting" decisions regarding membership of the oversight committee down the road in order to submit the grant application on time.

Initial projections for the total cost of this plan over four years was $40.2 million, according to an analysis by the county's planning and budget office. The proposal commissioners approved on May 7, with more money allocated for lawyers in the CAPDS system, is expected to cost $54.3 million over four years, with $26.9 million funded by the county and $273 million funded by the TIDC grant.

The TIDC requires local judicial support as a prerequisite to approve the grant application. Two days after the commissioners' vote, a majority of Travis County's criminal court judges signed off on the amended proposal.

"I'm super pumped. This is a huge institutional change," Eckhardt said. "If this was easy, we would have done it already."

What's Ahead

Pending the TIDC grant, Travis County still has work to do to create this office.

State lawmakers have made property tax reform a key issue of the current legislative session. If they succeed in passing a revenue cap, the county will be limited in its ability to fund new programs such as the public defender's office.

This was a concern among commissioners, including Gerald Daugherty, who represents Southwest Travis County and voted against the grant application.

"I continue to be very, very nervous about the financial implications of moving forward on this thing," Daugherty said at the May 7 meeting. "I just am as nervous as I've ever been about our budget."

Eckhardt recognized the commissioners' concerns. "It's a huge risk," she said. "I think it's a risk worth taking because we are talking about people's liberty."

If created, the office will fit into a series of criminal justice reforms made at the local level, from the county's jail diversion programs to the city of Austin's Freedom Cites policies, which are intended to reduce racial disparities in discretionary arrests and to ensure police officers who ask about immigration status inform people of their right not to answer.

Since 2001, the TIDC has helped establish 13 of the state's 20 public defender's offices.

"We've seen both in anecdotes and in study after study after study that these public defender's offices tend to provide better representation," said TIDC Executive Director Geoffrey Burkhardt. Much of the reform efforts nationwide had been focused on either the back end, which is to say prisons, or the front end, which is to say pre-trial and policing and things like that, and has really skipped over that middle bit, which is prosecution and defense. If you're going to have criminal justice reform, you have to have public defense reform."

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Southwest Austin - Dripping Springs edition • May 2019
New Austin Convention Center expansion report sparks conversation about future of downtown

BY CHRISTOPHER NEELY

The questions of whether and how to expand the Austin Convention Center, located at 500 E. Cesar Chavez St., have fluctuated from top of mind to backburner for city leaders since before 2015.

Now, a comprehensive study published by the University of Texas’ Center for Sustainable Development on March 29 not only pushed the questions back to center stage, but it has also taken a shot at answering them.

Austin City Council commissioned the university as a nonpartisan entity to examine the expansion questions in late 2017 after momentum around the potential project began picking up—highlighted by a council-commissioned task force’s recommendation to expand Mayor Steve Adler’s “Downtown Puzzle” proposal, which tied an expansion to funding for homelessness initiatives.

Unlike previous reports that examined only the facility itself, the UT-study took a long view of the future of downtown Austin and imagined the Austin Convention Center’s place in a rapidly growing and modernizing urban environment.

Principal investigator on the study and director of the graduate urban design program at the UT School of Architecture Dean Almy said his team saw the convention center as a “critical joint” to a quartet of major projects taking place downtown—Plaza Saltillo to the east, Waller Creek and the Innovation Zone to the north, the Seaholm District to the west, and the South Central Waterfront plan to the south as well as the various other free-market developments popping up throughout the urban center.

“What’s going to happen two decades from now when a whole lot of these projects come online?” Almy said. “We were conscious of how to reconcile these initiatives. You have to look at the convention center, in my opinion, as not one isolated problem, but something that is part of a larger ecosystem in which we can be strategic and get benefits across the city.”

Historically, convention centers have been isolated from the fabric of cities due to their function and size. Austin’s facility, built in 1992 and expanded in 2002, was built with its back to I-35 and Red River Street and provides no ground-floor function to pedestrians who are not attending conventions.

The UT team focused on how a new convention center could engage with the entire city.

“The project needs to contribute to multiple civic goals and be good to visitors and residents alike,” said Allan Shearer, the associate dean for research and technology at the UT School of Architecture.

Shearer emphasized the study was not making any recommendations, but providing information to better educate policymakers.

The report produced five scenarios, ranging from doing nothing to a $1.3 billion, two-phase project to expand the convention center westward across Trinity Street, demolish the existing structure and replace it with a more compact facility and public open space. The scenarios also include opening up Second and Third streets, currently taken up by the existing facility, to create “creek-to-creek” connectivity—Shoal Creek to Waller Creek.

Shearer said convention centers, as a rule, lose money—no convention center out of the 27 they examined across the U.S. and Canada turned a profit. However, Jake Wegmann, assistant professor of community and regional planning at the architecture school, said the convention center’s ability to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors per year trickles down to service industry jobs and to businesses, bringing visitors during weekdays—otherwise the slowest time of the work week.

As for how the city can pay for such a project, Greg Hallman, finance and real estate professor at UT’s McCombs School of Business, said cities in Texas can fund the project through hotel occupancy taxes, of which, he said, Austin produces a lot.

Adler called the nearly 300-page report the first step of an “exciting time.”

“The conversation itself is really exciting when you start talking about placemaking in a city like ours, especially in a quadrant of town that has a lot of potential because it’s not built out yet,” Adler said.

City Manager Spencer Cronk said he would be meeting with council members one on one to listen to further questions they had. Cronk said he plans to schedule work session discussions on the issue in the coming months.

YOU HAVE TO LOOK AT THE CONVENTION CENTER, IN MY OPINION, AS NOT ONE ISOLATED PROBLEM, BUT SOMETHING THAT IS PART OF A LARGER ECOSYSTEM IN WHICH WE CAN BE STRATEGIC AND GET BENEFITS ACROSS THE CITY.”

—DEAN ALMY, DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE URBAN DESIGN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

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Lawsuit questions pipeline process

City of Kyle, Hays County claim railroad commission falls short of constitutional obligation to regulate

BY KATHARINE JOSE

Two years ago, Heinz Stefan Roesch bought a roughly 30-acre property along RR 1623, outside of the city of Blanco. His family is from the Hill Country, he said, and he had been saving all his life to buy something just like it.

Last fall, he heard about a natural gas pipeline that the company Kinder Morgan was planning. Though in the initial routing his land did not fall in its path, in January Roesch received a letter in the mail informing him that the Permian Highway Pipeline would, in fact, cross the approximately 1,000-foot-wide parcel he calls home.

“All my future plans are basically destroyed by this thing,” Roesch said.

Roesch learned that his choices in opposing the pipeline’s path across his land were limited. In Texas, private pipeline companies have historically been given the authority to choose routes and to exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire land for that route—in other words, to take the land even if the owner does not want to part with it.

A lawsuit was filed against the Texas Railroad Commission, with Kinder Morgan as a defendant, on April 22. Roesch is one of the plaintiffs, along with Hays County, the city of Kyle and owners of two other parcels along the route.

The lawsuit, which is being funded by the members of the Texas Real Estate Advocacy and Defense Coalition, charges that the railroad commission’s current process of approving applications for oil and gas pipelines is unconstitutional because it does not provide oversight.

The Permian Highway Pipeline is a $2 billion, nearly 400-mile natural gas conduit that will stretch between the Waha pipeline junction near the Permian Basin and the Gulf Coast. Its route first became public in October, when landowners along the proposed path began to receive requests to survey their land.

Numerous jurisdictions—including Hays County, San Marcos, Kyle, Buda, Woodcreek, Wimberley and Hays CISD—passed resolutions opposing the pipeline and asking the Legislature to take action.

But despite opposition, according to lawyers with experience in the field, actually stopping an oil and gas pipeline or changing its route is unlikely.

The lawsuit does not directly challenge the use of eminent domain by private companies, but it does challenge the manner in which that power is wielded.

Though the Texas Constitution gives the government an inherent right to use eminent domain under certain circumstances, private companies do not have the same authority unless it is delegated to them by the Legislature. According to the suit, oil and gas pipeline companies like Kinder Morgan are allowed to exercise eminent domain “in connection with constructing and operating natural gas pipelines.” But that code also requires that the exercise of those powers “must be subject to rules and policies adopted and enforced by the railroad commission.”

The lawsuit charges that the railroad commission has put in place require so little in the way of transparency or public process that the commission is not doing what the constitution mandates—it does not regulate pipelines in a meaningful way.

The suit claims that the railroad commission, “by implementing its current toothless rules” has authorized Kinder Morgan “to exercise the legislative power of choosing the route and the property to be forcibly taken without any guiding standards,” which is a violation of several articles of the state constitution.

The railroad commission declined to comment on pending litigation, but information on its website does acknowledge limits to its oversight of pipelines. According to the commission’s website, pipelines in Texas “are not required to be permitted before being built. There is no statutory or regulatory requirement that a pipeline operator seek or receive from the railroad commission either a determination that there is a need for the pipeline capacity or prior approval to construct a pipeline and related facilities.”

WHAT IS EMINENT DOMAIN?

Under Article 1, Sec. 13 of the Texas Constitution, the state has the power to take private land for public use under certain circumstances—or to delegate that power to another entity—as long as the landowner is justly compensated.

WHAT IS PRIVATE PROPERTY?

Anything not owned by the government:

LAND | AIR | WATER

WHAT IS PUBLIC USE?

Anything that will benefit the public, according to the government:

ROADS | RAILROADS | SCHOOLS | UTILITIES

WHAT IS JUST COMPENSATION?

Includes: fair market value, damages

SOURCES: TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, TEXAS PROPERTY CODE, COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER
Austin Community College’s new fashion incubator aims to bridge skills gap in growing design industry

AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The college district’s new fashion incubator hopes to help local business owners find employees while simultaneously arming students with skills to quickly enter a growing industry. ACC unveiled the new space on its Highland campus in Austin on April 30.

The incubator provides a space for students in the community college’s associate degree program in fashion marketing and the forthcoming associate degree program in fashion design, which will be offered beginning in the fall semester. It also provides access to technology for fashion startups and entrepreneurs.

ACC’s degree programs are intended to prepare students with both the business and technical skills to enter an industry that contributed 1,300 jobs and $86 million to the city, according to a 2014 report by TXP Inc. and prepared for the city of Austin.

Incubator Director Nina Means said the skills to master the Gerber Technologies cutting machine will make students ready for work right away.

“I think that’s really where everyone gets the biggest win in the shortest timeline,” Means said.

The city of Austin provided $355,000 as part of an agreement with ACC to help fund the incubator, and according to ACC board documents, Gerber Technologies donated the technology valued at $13 million. ACC is responsible for providing the space and sewing machines and funding the renovations at the Highland campus.

Mayor Steve Adler said the city approached ACC about five years ago with the proposal in order to improve an industry and provide more jobs to Austin residents who do not have a four-year degree.

“One of our challenges in this city is finding middle-skilled jobs,” Adler said. “We have lots of jobs for people making $125,000 or $150,000 a year. Where we’re really challenged is finding jobs that are paying [$50,000-$80,000] and then training the people who live here to take those jobs.”

ACC President Richard Rhodes said he believes the incubator will launch Austin into an industry leader nationwide.

“What happens here is actually going to change the fashion industry in Central Texas and in the central part of the United States. When you think about fashion, oftentimes you think about New York City. You think about San Francisco. Now you’re going to think about Austin, Texas,” Rhodes said.
Marisa Grijalva and Joanna Day voted onto Dripping Springs ISD board in close May election

**DRIPPING SPRINGS** Incumbent Marisa Grijalva and newcomer Joanna Day were the top two vote getters in the May 4 Dripping Springs ISD election, winning seats on the board.

With 1,250 votes, Grijalva received the most support in the election at 29.45%. She was followed by Day with 1,225 votes, or 28.86%.

Challenger Rob Satterfield was not far behind the winners, receiving 1,067 votes in the election, representing 25.14% of voters. Kara Mayfield received 16.56% of votes cast, or 703 total.

Vote totals are according to Hays County election results. All results are unofficial until canvassed.

**LOCAL RESULTS**

- **ELECTED**
  - Marisa Grijalva 29.45%
  - Joanna Day 28.86%

- **NOT ELECTED**
  - Rob Satterfield 25.14%
  - Kara Mayfield 16.56%

**NOTES:** DSISD residents selected two trustees May 4.

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**Changes to sex education curriculum evaluated by Dripping Springs ISD**

**DRIPPING SPRINGS** The district’s School Health Advisory Committee recommended the Baylor Scott & White Adolescent Wellness and Sexual Health curriculum for middle school sexual education lessons.

The committee’s curriculum selection process, which began in February, has drawn attention from DSISD parents and community members. District trustees were scheduled to review and possibly approve the new curriculum at a meeting May 20, after time of press.

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**AISD negotiating salaries as 2019-20 budget decision approaches in June**

**AUSTIN ISD** The district and Education Austin, the AISD teachers’ and employees’ union, continue to clash over proposed salary raises for the 2019-20 fiscal year.

On May 14, Education Austin held a news conference and rally, where President Ken Zarifis demanded a 10% pay increase for all AISD employees. The rally was held just over a week after AISD reported negotiations with the union were continuing at a board workshop May 6.

“In our budget, 87% is salaries, so obviously this is a big topic,” Superintendent Paul Cruz said at the May 6 workshop. “We’re a school district, and what makes us great is our people.”

While school funding is still being discussed by the 86th Texas Legislature, including the possibility for $5,000 raises to teachers across the state, the district is evaluating its future budget as if no funding changes will occur at the state level.

Chief Human Capital Officer Fernando Medina presented options at the workshop the district is considering for raises. He said when looking at employee compensation, the district considers salary and insurance as a package. He said insurance is a big selling point for potential employees as are other benefits the district provides through policies.

A 1% raise for district staff across the board would add about $5.79 million to the 2019-20 budget, while a 5% raise would cost about $28.95 million, according to district projections. Early district proposals showed 1%-2% raises being considered for employees, but options were still being developed. AISD trustees will be presented a final budget for approval in June.

Talking points about employee compensation include stipends, giving incentives to substitute teachers traveling across the district for work and comparing current salaries with those offered by neighboring districts, Medina said.

The district has about 1,000 bilingual teachers who qualify for a stipend, and the district’s current stipend is $2,500, below other districts in the area.

“It’s shameful to say our competing districts are recruiting our bilingual teachers today very aggressively,” Medina said. “Our bilingual stipend is $2,500, where our competitors are $4,500 to $5,000. We will lose teachers.”

Discussions about special education have been around whether stipend investments should go to all special education staff or those positions with current vacancies that are historically harder to fill, Medina said.

As for substitutes, he said a challenge is finding substitutes who are interested in traveling across the district to work “at a very low rate of pay.”

**COMPARING AREA DISTRICTS**

Austin ISD is planning a 1%-2% increase in starting teacher salary for the 2019-20 budget. Here’s how proposed starting salaries compare to other Central Texas district proposals, not including insurance contributions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Proposed Starting Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austin ISD</td>
<td>$43,967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Marcos CISD*</td>
<td>$48,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Travis ISD</td>
<td>$48,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pflugerville ISD</td>
<td>$48,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eanes ISD</td>
<td>$47,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hays CISD</td>
<td>$47,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Del Valle ISD</td>
<td>$47,922</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* San Marcos ISD has not yet proposed increases for the 2019-20 school year; data reflects current salaries

**SOURCE:** AUSTIN KG/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

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**NUMBER TO KNOW**

10% Education Austin, the Austin ISD teacher’s and employees’ union, demanded 10% pay raises for all district employees at a news conference on May 14. The district is set to approve the 2019-20 fiscal year budget in June.

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**DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS**

**AUSTIN ISD** The district held its annual AISD’s Got Talent recognition event May 13 at the AISD Performing Arts Center. District trustees and officials honored students who have achieved at a high level over the 2018-19 school year in academics and extracurricular activities.

**AUSTIN ISD** The district was scheduled to vote on a new dress code policy at its board of trustees meeting May 20, after time of press. A new policy will aim to eliminate policies that could target specific genders or student backgrounds unfairly.

**AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Next year, ACC will begin offering a second bachelor’s degree program. The Bachelor of Applied Science program in Computer Information Technology will have three specializations when the program begins at ACC in the spring semester of 2020: software development, cybersecurity and data science.

ACC’s board of trustees approved the program unanimously May 6. According to board documents, ACC plans to begin the program with 60 students in its first two classes in 2020, then gradually increase by 20-40 students per year. ACC launched its first bachelor’s degree program in the fall of 2018, which was a bachelor’s degree in nursing.

**DRIPPING SPRINGS ISD** At the State of Dripping Springs presentation, DSISD Superintendent Bruce Gearing reported on the strengths and challenges of the local school system. According to Gearing, growth projections for the school district show enrollment will likely double in the next decade. However, while growth may reflect positively on the reputations of the Dripping Springs community and schools, Gearing said filling certain staff positions has become difficult. According to the superintendent, 49% of DSISD employees currently live in the district, with “auxiliary positions,” such as school bus drivers and janitorial workers, finding it difficult to afford growing home prices in Dripping Springs.

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Travis Central Appraisal District will purchase new property due to increased demand for services

**TRAVIS COUNTY** The Travis Central Appraisal District will purchase and renovate a new building in Northeast Austin due to the rapidly increasing number of property appraisal protests the district handles each year.

Leadership of the area’s taxing entities, which include Travis County, Austin Community College, Austin ISD, Central Health and the city of Austin, approved the $10 million project in late April and early May to acquire and renovate the property at 850 E. Anderson Lane.

The TCAD has sufficient funds to cover the costs of the project without any additional funds from area taxing entities, according to public documents.

Since 1985, the TCAD has been located at 8314 Cross Park Drive, which is at maximum capacity. In 2016, the appraisal district purchased land next door to its current facility with a plan to expand.

Before settling on the East Anderson Lane property, the TCAD had proposed to rent the banquet hall facility at the Travis County Exposition Center from May 13 to Aug. 16 for appraisal contest hearings.

County commissioners voted 3-2 in October to reject the TCAD’s proposal because it conflicted with the Republic of Texas Biker Rally and the Heat Wave Car Show, both events that have been held at the center for decades.

Since 2005, the number of protests filed in Travis County annually has increased over 200%, from 46,645 to 142,812 in 2018, according to an April memo from Jessica Rio, a county executive in the planning and budget office. In 2018, property appraisal protests hit a record high with 33% of property owners protesting their assessed values.

The TCAD is responsible for resolving at least 95% of all protests by midsummer, when taxing entities need to know the total taxable revenue in their jurisdiction to set tax rates and finalize budgets.

City Council approves the Dougherty Arts Center’s relocation to Butler Shores

**AUSTIN** In November, voters in Austin approved a $925 million bond to help the city tackle a range of projects—from building more affordable housing to funding flood mitigation projects to rehabilitating some of the city’s libraries.

The aging Dougherty Arts Center, originally built as a naval reserve facility in 1947, received $25 million of those bond funds to construct a new facility.

A 2010 needs assessment found the current building, located at 1110 Barton Springs Road, is “beyond repair,” according to the Austin Parks and Recreation Department. At Austin City Council’s May 9 meeting, Mayor Steve Adler described the building as “literally falling apart.”

City Council on May 9 approved relocation of the center to Butler Shores on Lady Bird Lake by an 8-2 vote with District 6 Council Member Jimmy Flannigan and District 3 Council Member Sabino “Pio” Renteria voting against the motion.

The new facility will replace two Austin ISD softball fields on a tract of parkland directly behind the Zach Theatre fronting Toomey Road.

District 5 Council Member Ann Kitchen, who represents the area the new center will be built, introduced an amendment at the meeting that would require the parks and recreation department to come back to council after the schematic design phase and before beginning construction.

When staff returns to council at that time, Kitchen said the city should be ready to evaluate potential options for construction at the site and address concerns raised by neighborhood residents about traffic and parking.

The DAC’s programming includes theater performances, community rentals, gallery events, art school and artist professional development, according to the parks and recreation department. The center’s programs are offered for both children and adults, and it welcomed 66,000 visitors in 2017, according to the parks and recreation department.
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CDC releases results of scooter study, finds nearly half of injuries are severe

TRAVIS COUNTY A first-of-its-kind epidemiological study conducted by Austin Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found, of those injured while riding dockless scooters, in Austin, nearly half suffered severe injuries and 15% had evidence suggestive of a traumatic brain injury. The results of the study were announced at a May 2 news conference.

Researchers identified injury incidents in the city of Austin from Sept. 5 to Nov. 30 using Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services incident reports and data from nine area hospitals’ emergency departments.

Almost half of the injuries occurred downtown or on The University of Texas at Austin campus, where ridership is most concentrated. Dockless vehicles, including electric scooters, first arrived in Austin in April 2018. Since then their use has skyrocketed, even as the city of Austin has paused issuing licenses to new operators and council members continue to fine-tune regulations around these transportation modes.

Austin City Council is scheduled to vote May 23 on enforceable regulations for dockless mobility including “dismount zones” downtown, where scooters would not be allowed and requiring riders to obey all traffic laws, such as avoiding use of mobile devices.

A study conducted by Austin Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shed more light on dockless scooter riders in Austin. The study only considered injured riders who sought medical care at an emergency department.

**Scooter Stats**

- 41.7% of injuries sustained were severe*
- 7.4% of injured riders had evidence of a traumatic brain injury
- 0.5% of all injured riders were a helmet
- 190 Riders confirmed injured on a dockless scooter
- 936,110 Total scooter trips recorded in Austin during the study period
- 2,100,000 Injuries per scooter trips taken

*Severe injuries include bone fractures, nerve damage or ligament injuries, spending more than 48 hours in a hospital, severe bleeding or sustained organ damage.

SOURCES: AUSTIN PUBLIC HEALTH, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

Sunset Valley sets the timeline for selecting new city administrator

**SUNSET VALLEY** City Council discussed a suggested timeline for their city administrator selection process at the May 7 public meeting.

Council will discuss semifinalists for the position the week of June 17 and finalists the week of July 8, with plans for an offer to be extended by July 26. The new administrator would likely begin work this fall.

Sunset Valley’s search for a new city administrator began when former City Administrator Clay Collins announced his retirement in January. Plans for the selection process thus far have been fraught, with Strategic Government Resources, the consulting firm selected to lead the search, withdrawing itself from consideration. Council chose Chris Hartung Consulting to take over the search, although not without debate. Sara Wilson, assistant city administrator to Collins, stepped in as interim city administrator May 1. Wilson may be considered for the permanent city administrator position, along with a pool of other applicants.

A search ad and position profile have already been posted by the city. While initial review of application materials will begin June 3, applications will continue to be accepted until the position is filled.

**TRAVIS COUNTY** Commissioners adopted updated flood plain standards for land development, taking into consideration a new federal study that shows more intense rainfall has exacerbated the threat of flooding in Central Texas. The study is the first of its kind since 1961. Using updated rainfall intensity data, the NOAA has redefined critical storm events.

quote of note

"IN MY 40 YEARS IN AUSTIN, OUR CITY AND TEXAS CITIES HAVE NEVER BEEN SO AGGRESSIVELY UNDER ATTACK BY THE STATE.”

—MAYOR STEVE ADLER DURING HIS APRIL 17 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS REGARDING CURRENT LEGISLATIVE TOPICS

Dripping Springs All three incumbent candidates—Taline Manassian, Bill Fouls and William Travis Crow—will hold onto their Dripping Springs City Council seats after the May 4 election. For Place 5, Crow came out ahead of Geoffrey Tahahuua and Stephen Randall. Crow received 148 votes, while Tahahuua received 107 votes and Randall had 41 votes. In the Place 1 election, Manassian defeated challenger Anthony Anstar 234 votes to 42. Fouls ran unopposed for the Place 3 seat.

Central Health The final remaining open position on the Central Health Board of Managers has been filled after Dr. Julie Zuniga was officially brought on in early May. Zuniga currently serves as an assistant professor of nursing at the University of Texas at Austin, according to a press release from Central Health. Zuniga’s appointment was approved by Austin City Council on April 25. She fills the position left vacant by former board chairperson Katrina Daniel, who served until 2018.

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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

Find recent community news, events and updates.

COMPiled BY OLIVIA ACLUDRIDGE AND NICOLAS CICALE

1. CALITERRA

The Dripping Springs neighborhood of Caliterra hosted its second annual Race to Brunch 5K on May 11. Runners raced through the community, while vendors offered food, entertainment and merchandise before and after the run.

2. CITY OF DRIPPING SPRINGS

The city of Dripping Springs celebrated its annual Founder’s Day festival April 26-28, honoring the founding of the town in 1850 by three families: the Masses, the Wallaces and the Pounds.

The weekend kicked off with the Founder’s Day parade on Mercer Street, featuring floats designed by an estimated 75 local businesses and organizations. One float, sponsored by Whim Hospitality, featured the live wedding of locals Alee Abbott and Tom Phillips. The celebration also included street dances with live music performed by local musicians as well as carnival activities, street food and cookoff competitions.

3. CITY OF SUNSET VALLEY

Sunset Valley City Council broached the subject of shared mobility devices such as dockless scooters at their May 7 meeting, discussing how to handle the devices making their way into Sunset Valley from Austin. While no dockless scooter operation has formally launched in Sunset Valley, several council members said they had already seen the scooters in their city.

Council Member Rudi Rosengarten requested the item be on the meeting’s agenda, and voiced concerns with the potential safety issues posed by discarded scooters, particularly those left on public walkways where residents with disabilities might find them a danger or hindrance.

Council Member Melissa Gonzales said that Sunset Valley would benefit from waiting to formalize regulations until Austin had updated its own. No action was taken regarding the shared mobility devices during the meeting. However, council members agreed on the need to have further discussions on the issue at upcoming meetings.

4. MANCHACA

Approximately 740 students received two books each during Menchaca Elementary School’s annual book giveaway. Every first grader in the school received canvas tote bags with their names stitched on, according to the school’s co-librarian Rita Painter. Members of the St. Albans Episcopal Church organized the giveaway. Menchaca Elementary is located at 2120 Manchaca Road, Austin.

5. OAK HILL

Oak Hill Association of Neighbors on May 15 honored Austin Police Officers Mathew Valli, Kevin Perrydore and Benjamin Cochran, who successfully rescued three women and a dog from flood waters on Old Bee Caves Road during storms May 3.

6. ST. EDWARDS

Travis Early College High School scheduled its annual Memorial Day commemoration event for the morning of May 25. Each year, the school honors alumni who have lost their lives in the U.S. armed forces at the campus’ Veterans Memorial Monument.

Have suggestions for the Community Notes page? Email us at swanews@communityimpact.com.

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Recent House vote could remove red-light cameras from intersections across the state of Texas

BY ARYA SUNDARAM

Republican lawmakers, who have been trying for years to unplug red-light cameras, scored a win May 7 with the tentative passage of a House bill that would ban cities from operating the devices.

But even if the bill becomes law, red-light cameras may not get chucked immediately. State Rep. Armando Martinez, D-Weslaco, added a provision to House Bill 1631 that would allow local governments to continue operating cameras until their current contracts with vendors expire.

HB 1631 tentatively passed in a 108 to 35 vote. A companion version of the legislation has already been winding through the Senate.

Red-light camera opponents often cite studies that say the cameras don’t improve public safety or may actually increase rear-end crashes. They also cite a 2004 Texas Transportation Institute study, which found that the vast majority of red-light camera tickets are issued for violations that occur within the first seconds after the light changes colors. However, the majority of deadly right-angle or “T-Bone” crashes — the kind that camera proponents aim to minimize — occur five or more seconds after the signal turns.

“Tickets are often being issued for split-second violations where collisions are not actually occurring,” state Sen. Bob Hall, R-Edgewood, said when he introduced the upper chamber’s version of the measure to a Senate committee.

Meanwhile, advocates for the cameras often cite an array of studies, including a 2011 TTI study, as evidence that red-light cameras help keep drivers safe. At Texas intersections where a camera was installed, the study found that red-light-related crashes dropped by 25% — and right-angle crashes were reduced by more than 30%. A 2005 study sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration found similar results.

Tanya Brooks, assistant director for Fort Worth’s transportation Management Division said during a Senate Transportation Committee meeting that crash rates at intersections with cameras in her city have plummeted by 59%. She also said 85% of the red-light runners never receive a second violation — which she cites as proof that the cameras spur drivers to stop breaking the law.

“Eliminating the program is detrimental to improving safety at the intersections in the City of Fort Worth as well as our community,” she said.

In the 2017 fiscal year, $18.3 million from red-light camera fines went to the state’s trauma care, and, according to the bill’s fiscal note, banning cameras would cost $28 million in funding for trauma centers over the next two years. The issue had not been solved as of press time.

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Source: City of Austin/Community Impact Newspaper
COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Central Texas Food Bank has been feeding the community since 1982 and provides meals for about 200,000 individuals each month. Volunteers can help in the food warehouse, community kitchen, mobile food pantry, garden or the food bank offices. 6500 Metropolis Drive, Austin 512-282-2111 www.centartexasfoodbank.org

The Dripping Springs Community Library serves Dripping Springs residents by offering books, enrichment programs, kids camps and meeting spaces. Volunteers starting at age 14 work with library staff to sort and shelve books, coordinate events, read to children and more. 501 Sportsplex Drive, Dripping Springs 512-858-7825 www.dscl.org

Goodwill Central Texas is dedicated to empowering people to work through education and job training, retail stores, business services and community partnerships. Volunteers can assist at three stores in South Austin and one in Dripping Springs. Additional opportunities include helping the organization’s tutoring program, offering professional expertise as a career consultant and disassembling computers. 1015 Norwood Park Blvd., Austin 512-637-7179 www.goodwillcentraltexas.org

The Salvation Army is a Christian ministry that provides services to anyone, regardless of religion or beliefs. Volunteers can provide gifts to children living in shelters and assist with events such as the annual luncheon in May and the celebrity golf tournament in November. During the holiday season, volunteers sort and distribute gifts at the Christmas warehouse in South Austin, work as bell ringers at area malls and serve meals at shelters. 6510 S. Congress Ave., Austin 512 605-1410 www.salvationarmyaustin.org

Southwest Family YMCA offers athletic programs for youth and adults. Programs promote healthy living, youth development and social responsibility. Volunteers can coach, help with community events and programs, clean and greet at the welcome desk. 6219 Oakclaire Drive, Austin 512-891-9622 www.austinymca.org

We Are Blood is the exclusive provider and blood supply for approximately 40 medical facilities in the 10-county service area of Central Texas. Volunteers can assist with blood drives across the Central Texas area, serve refreshments in donor centers, provide office support and transport blood.

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Youth2Seniors is a youth-based organization that creates intergenerational programs designed to pair youth and seniors within the community. Youth volunteer on community service projects and art classes. Adult volunteers help lead activities.
Locations vary
512-961-7805
www.youth2seniors.org

HOUSING/HOMELESS

Austin Habitat for Humanity builds affordable homes, performs critical home repair and provides financial counseling. Volunteers have the opportunity to participate in home repair, new home construction or assist at one of the organization’s two ReStore locations.
500 W. Ben White Blvd., Austin
512-472-8798, ext. 100
www.austinhabitat.org/volunteer

Foundation Communities provides affordable, attractive housing to families and individuals with low incomes across the city. Volunteers work with clients and residents in a variety of ways, such as serving meals, providing free tax-preparation services and financial coaching, and serving as tutors.
3036 S. First St., Austin
512-610-7377
www.foundcom.org

HEALTH SERVICES

El Buen Samaritano is an outreach ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas that helps families lead healthy and productive lives through high-quality, affordable health care and education. Volunteers are needed to help with the food pantry, literacy programs and events.
7000 Woodhue Drive, Austin
512-439-0700
www.elbuen.org

The Health Alliance for Austin Musicians provides access to affordable health care for Austin’s low-income, underinsured working musicians with a focus on prevention and wellness. Volunteer opportunities are open year round and include taking donations at concerts, helping out at community events and assisting HAAM staff in the office.
3010 S. Lamar Blvd., Ste. 200, Austin
512-541-4226
www.myhaam.org

Planned Parenthood of Greater Texas aims to help people make informed decisions about sexuality, reproduction and parenthood. Volunteers perform outreach in the community by attending community events.
201 E. Ben White Blvd., Bldg. B, Austin
512-275-0171
www.ppgreatertx.org

Power for Parkinson’s offers free exercise and dance classes to patients and families battling Parkinson’s disease. Volunteers are needed to help during classes and with events throughout the year.
Classes held at various Austin area locations, including in Circle C Ranch
512-464-1277
www.powerforparkinsons.org

Team Luke Hope for Minds is a nonprofit providing guidance and support to families with children who have suffered a brain injury. Volunteers assist with events and services throughout the year.
5701 W. Slaughter Lane, Ste. A130-324, Austin (mailing address)
512-845-1466
www.teamlukehopeforminds.org

CHILD RESOURCES

Austin Partners In Education connects the community and the classroom by placing volunteers beside students. Through their Math Classroom Coach and Mentoring programs, APIE has seen significant growth in students’ test scores and, most importantly, their self-confidence.
Locations vary
512-637-0900
www.austinpartners.org

Con Mi Madre empowers young Latinas and their mothers through education and support services. Volunteers can be guest speakers, event coordinators, fundraisers or mentors for the program.
4175 Fredrick Lane, Ste. 200, Austin
512-467-4483
www.conmimadre.org

Make a Wish Foundation of Central and South Texas grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions. Volunteers assist in wish granting, fundraising and event planning.
2224 Walsh Tarlton Lane, Ste. 200, Austin
512-329-9474
www.cswt.wish.org

Start-Up Kid’s Club offers a program in which children create a business model and product with the help of mentors and parents. Volunteers are needed to guide students in their projects and in one-off opportunities.
1009 W. Dittmar Road, Austin
512-673-9536
www.startupkidsclub.com

ANIMALS

Austin Pets Alive is a nonprofit animal rescue group that maintains comprehensive programs designed to save animals at risk for euthanasia. Volunteers can help by providing a range of services—from laundry and animal transport in the shelter to assisting in the organization’s thrift store in South Austin.
1156 W. Cesar Chavez St., Austin
Thrift store: 1409 W. Olath St., Austin
512-961-6519
www.austinpetsalive.org

Austin Zoo is a rehabilitation zoo where people can see and learn about rescued animals and spend time outdoors. Volunteers can help with laundry, assist zookeepers, maintain habitats and work in the gift shop.
10808 Rawhide Trail, Austin
512-288-1490
www.austinzoo.org

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Austin Water Quality Report 2018
Austinwater.org/WaterQuality

Para una versión en Español llame al 512-972-0155

Austin WATER
austinwater.org
Slithering into SNAKE SEASON

BY KARA MCINTYRE

Snake season has arrived in the Southwest Austin area. Snakes cannot tolerate extreme cold and will emerge from hibernation starting in late February or early March in Texas, according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Common snakes in the Southwest Austin area

**Coral Snake**
- Size: 2-3 feet
- Color: red, yellow and black bands with red and yellow bands touching

**Copperhead Snake**
- Size: 2-3 feet
- Color: brown- or salmon-colored with chestnut or reddish-brown crossbands in an hourglass shape

**Cottonmouth Snake**
- Size: 2-3 feet
- Color: dark brown, olive brown, olive green or black with wide, dark bands; green-yellow colored tail when young

**Timber Rattlesnake**
- Size: 3-5 feet
- Color: brown or tan with wide, dark crossbands and a black tail

**Diamondback Water Snake**
- Size: 2.5-4 feet
- Color: black or dark brown with a diamond pattern down the back

**Gulf Coast Ribbon Snake**
- Size: 1.5-2.5 feet
- Color: brown or olive brown with tan or yellow stripes down the back

**Texas/Western Rat Snake**
- Size: 5-7 feet
- Color: gray, dark brown or reddish-brown, blotched patterns down the body

**Eastern Hog-nose Snake**
- Size: 20-30 inches
- Color: tan to brown, blotched patterns down the body

ENVIRONMENTAL HELPER

As predators, snakes maintain the balance of nature by helping to keep populations of their prey in check—which consists of everything from earthworms to rabbits, as well as other snakes.

Snakes are especially important in the control of rodents, said Kelly Hordid, an urban wildlife program biologist with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Texas is home to about 76 species of snakes, 15% of which are venomous. - TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

**What to do if bitten by a snake:**
- Wash the bite area with a disinfectant soap.
- Remove jewelry such as rings and watches, wear loose-fitting clothes, before the onset of swelling.
- Reduce or prevent movement of the bitten extremity and position it below the level of the heart.
- Get medical attention as soon as possible.

**What NOT to do if bitten by a snake:**
- Do not use a tourniquet or other constricting band unless provided by a trained professional.
- Do not use cold compresses or ice packs.
- Do not use aspirin or related medications to relieve pain. Only pain relievers not containing aspirin may be used.
- Do not firmly wrap the entire limb with an elastic bandage and place a splint.
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McSpadden’s Tire & Automotive
Family-owned shop offers quality repairs and clean locales across Austin

By Nicholas Cicale

For almost 20 years, McSpadden’s Tire & Automotive has been serving the Austin community with quality auto service.

Owners Raymond and Dianne McSpadden opened their first South Congress mechanic shop in 1999, and 16 years ago moved the store further south to the current location at 4241 S. Congress Ave., Austin. Raymond had previously worked as a mechanic and manager at other auto shops in Austin before opening the family business.

“We try to develop relationships with our customers,” Dianne McSpadden said. “We want our customers to trust us.”

McSpadden Administrative Assistant Jean Coffman said the shop is known for having an honest staff of mechanics.

“We make a practice to take customers out and show them what we’re doing,” she said. “Being honest about what a repair is, not trying to upsell them and hopefully doing it right the first time [are goals].”

McSpadden’s offers everything customers would expect: oil changes, tire rotations and alignments, emission inspections and repairs to brakes, air conditioners, transmissions, belts and more. The business offers repairs for import, domestic and diesel vehicles, Coffman said.

McSpadden’s is also AAA certified, which means the business offers a 24-month, 24,000-mile, nationwide warranty, and that staff are Automotive Service Excellence certified, she said.

For customers waiting on repairs, McSpadden’s works to have same-day turnarounds when parts are available, Coffman said. Typical wait times for an oil change and tire rotation is about 45 minutes, she said. McSpadden’s is also cleaner and more comfortable than an average auto shop, Coffman said.

“You just don’t see too many automotive repair shops that are clean and decorated the way ours are,” she said.

Since 1999 the couple has opened a store on Wells Branch in North Austin and a location in the city of Bee Cave.

This summer, the company plans to open a shop in Buda, which will be larger in size than their others and act as a flagship location, Dianne said.

“We’re really excited about it,” she said. “Everything we’ve wanted to do with a store will be there.”

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Backspin Sports Bar
Local chain elevates the classics with creativity

Backspin Sports Bar, a Slaughter Lane institution that expanded last year to a second location in Belterra Village in Dripping Springs, prides itself on being more than your average sports bar.

While Backspin has all of the familiar sports bar trappings—ample TVs, plentiful beer options and comfortable digs—it also features a wide-ranging menu with fresh dining options. Executive Chef Joseph Farner offers a spin on traditional items such as burgers and sandwiches, always “as fresh as possible,” he said. He also includes outside-the-box concepts for a sports bar, including a Sunday brunch menu with eggs Benedict and biscuits and gravy.

“That’s the difference between us and other sports bars: the food,” said Trey Mathis, who co-owns both Backspin locations with his wife, Brooke.

According to the owners, the new location in Belterra Village receives more traffic from families and around double the food orders compared with the original Slaughter shop. Farner said the locations’ differing demographics come with different tastes.

“I’ve had nine years to try and learn what people like over [at the original location], so I have a pretty good idea of what the regulars expect and what they like to see in food there,” he said.

As they continue to learn diners’ tastes in the Belterra community, the Backspin team said they will develop menu items unique to the new location. With a rotating menu, there is plenty of room to experiment, but a core menu of bestsellers always stays.

Some classic menu items hold popularity at both shops. Between the two locations, Farner said Backspin goes through 10-40 pound cases of wings per week. Daily specials like prime rib Fridays and taco Tuesdays and the bars’ selection of draft beers, local wines and custom cocktails are ever-popular, the team said.

The Backspin team said they hope to build a base of dedicated regulars in Belterra, as they have done at the Slaughter Lane location, as well as mirror the dedication of the original staff, many of whom have worked with Backspin since it opened in 2010.

“Everyone feels like it’s kind of a family,” Brooke said.

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COMMUNITY HEALTH CHAMPIONS
by CENTRAL HEALTH
Pound House Historical Farmstead
Peering into the pioneer roots of Dripping Springs’ founders

BY OLIVIA ALDRIDGE

The Pound House Historical Farmstead sits on a 5-acre lot next to the turned ground of a new housing community, a symbol of Dripping Springs’ pioneer roots contrasted against the city’s modern growth. The former home of city co-founders Dr. Joseph Pound and Sarah Pound, the Pound House is a museum of Dripping Springs’ earliest years.

The Pounds were one of three families who settled in what would become Dripping Springs in 1854. Their home became a gathering place as the settlement grew, hosting Dripping Springs’ first church and school.

“They really wanted to make this a thriving community,” said Jenny Pack, Pound House director of marketing and events.

The Pounds passed the farmstead from generation to generation, with descendants living on the property until 1983, when it was willed to the city. The family never altered the log pen home to accommodate running water, nor did they dispose of historic family items. Today, 90% of the items in the Pound House are original to the property.

“I don’t know of another museum where such a large portion of the collection is intact from the family,” Pack said.

After the property was willed to the city, the Friends of the Pound House Foundation formed to support the restoration of the property. By 2003, the farmstead opened as the museum it is today, where Wanda Mauldin, great-great-granddaughter of Joseph and Sarah Pound, still docents.

The museum offers a window into pioneer life, and according to Director of Museum Operations Liz Lubrani, presents unique educational opportunities, such as with its functioning windmill.

“We’re planning a STEM class to teach children how it works,” Lubrani said.

To the surprise of Lubrani and Pack, the name Pound began to circulate in Dripping Springs with renewed interest this March when two local men campaigned to rename the city Pound Town in honor of the founding family. Pack said the campaign had no connection to the Pound House. In fact, she said since Sarah Pound’s sister chose the name Dripping Springs, the town’s official moniker already honors the Pounds.

In addition to hosting regular museum visitors, various events are held on the property throughout the year. From June to August, families are invited to explore the grounds with a Sunday picnic free of cost, and the Pound House annually hosts Dripping Springs’ Pioneer Day, although it was cancelled due to weather this year. With quilt-making contests, Civil War re-enactments and live bluegrass under the property’s 500-year-old heritage oak, Pack said “the entire grounds [are] transformed into an 1800s experience.”

The Pound House Historical Farmstead
570 Founders Park Road, Dripping Springs
512-858-2030
www.drippingfarmstead.org
Hours: Wed.-Sun. noon-3 p.m.

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CONTINUED FROM 1

boundary for Southwest Elementary School, look at other overcrowding in the area to see if we can do anything to help that situation along,” she said.

Thirteen preliminary boundary plans have been presented to the committee, which include boundary shifts that could impact seven elementary schools: overcrowded Baranoff, Kiker and Cowan could send students to Kocurek, Mills, Boone and Menchaca Elementary Schools, which are utilized less.

NEEDING RELIEF

Jennifer Kratky, Village of Shady Hollow resident and a Baranoff parent, said parents and cars crowd the area around the school each day to pick up and drop off students, creating safety concerns and traffic.

“We have some homeowners who have their driveways blocked,” Kratky said. “Parked cars block wheelchair access ramps and park at curbs that are painted in red and too close to intersections that impact sightlines.”

At Baranoff, portable classrooms and other spaces are used to house excess students. While individual classes may not be overcrowded, facilities such as the cafeteria, library and auditorium are undersized, Kratky said. Similar situations exist at Kiker.

“When you have overcrowding, your whole day is affected, starting with safety during drop-off in the morning,” Wilson said. “It puts a strain on the whole school.”

Wilson said portables take up open space that could otherwise be used for recreation. The district’s goal is to move students from portables into traditional classrooms. Once a school population is under 115%, the district can begin removing portables, she said.

Chief of School Leadership Michelle Cavazos said campuses that are underutilized also face challenges. When space is not maximized, it is difficult to offer as many programs to a school, she said.

Although three of the schools are currently overutilized, residents who could be relocated elsewhere said projections show that enrollment is dropping naturally. With Southwest Austin Elementary School opening in 2020, some said they believe the proposed boundary changes are too extreme.

“Looking at some of [the district’s numbers] a lot of the projections look like the problems solve themselves without such a large change and without taking out such a huge chunk off the Baranoff zone,” said Shady Hollow resident Jacob Youngblood, who hopes to continue to be zoned to Baranoff. “You can balance the numbers better and get close [to 115% enrollment].”

TRANSPORTATION CONCERNS

Members of the “North Baranoff” constituency—including the Oak Park, Brodie Springs, Palomino Park and Wyldwood-Kellywood neighborhoods—who are against being zoned to Kocurek have stated safety getting to and from school as a major concern. Resident Juan Torres said students traveling across Brodie Lane and walking along Slaughter Lane took “the most dangerous route to school.”

“In 2018 there were 195 traffic incidents in that area,” he said. “That intersection alone had 75 incidents.”

AISD Transportation Director Kris Hafezizadeh said students who live more than 2 miles away from school are eligible for bus service. For students within 2 miles, buses are considered if there are no safe routes available for students to walk to school, he said. As for the plans that would take North Baranoff students past the Slaughter and Brodie intersection, Hafezizadeh said it is not considered as a hazardous intersection. While busy, he said it is a controlled intersection with traffic signals that provide safety.

“There are tons of roads and intersections around town that are similar” to Brodie and Slaughter Lane,” Hafezizadeh said. “We have current students that do walk across these roads. We have to make it equitable for all the communities.”

Although bus service likely would not be provided if a plan rezoning North Baranoff neighborhoods was selected, he said the city of Austin has agreed to pilot having crossing guards at the intersection for up to two months to evaluate needs. There are also opportunities to increase street signage.

Other schools with similar walks also use “walking school buses” in which a neighborhood of students gather in one location to walk to school together with a parent chaperone, Hafezizadeh said.

Many residents in Circle C Ranch, including Greg Allen, want to avoid plans that send their neighborhood students...
### African Communities

The 13 plans introduced to the Boundary Advisory Committee outline different boundary options for Southwest Austin. These are the proposed changes in each plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan 1</th>
<th>Plan 2</th>
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### Planning Proposals

**Austin ISD** has created a set of primary and secondary criteria the Boundary Advisory Committee will use to rank each proposal. The committee will give scores at a future meeting.

#### Primary Criteria Evaluates Each Campus in a Scenario Based On:
- Three-year enrollment projections
- Three-year population projections

#### Secondary Criteria Evaluates Scenarios Based On:
- Walkability, bikeability and safe routes to school
- The use of major roads and subdivisions as boundaries
- Transportation routes

**Kiker** students across SH 45, Haefezizadeh said bus service would likely be provided.

Similarly, bus service would be likely for any plan that would require Boone students to travel along Davis Lane, which does not have sidewalks, according to the district.

### Neighborhood Talking Points

Some of the proposed maps split the neighborhood of Shady Hollow, sending about 35 projected students to Kocurek while the rest of the neighborhood stays at Baranoff.

“We want to keep our children and families together and allow them to attend the same school that all the kids in their neighborhood do,” Shady Hollow resident Ashley Fredo said.

Circle C Ranch could also be split, with the southern end of the neighborhood moving to Southwest Elementary School in most proposals. Some students could shift to Mills Elementary as well, according to the plans.

While the committee will rate plans partially by evaluating how they keep neighborhoods intact, Beth Wilson said it is hard not to separate larger subdivisions like Shady Hollow and Circle C Ranch.

Resident Jessica Wilson said she moved to the area specifically for Baranoff, a “highly rated school” and would not have bought a house there if it were not zoned as such.

“All we care about is the performance of our school,” she said. “I’m sure the teachers are wonderful at Kocurek, but if you have a classroom of 24 kids and 22 of those kids are struggling, by necessity the teacher [has more work to do].”

School ratings will not factor into the district’s decision and are not part of the committee’s evaluation criteria. However, Cavazos said in the case of Baranoff and Kocurek, AISD rates both campuses A’s, with local accountability scores of 99 and 93, respectively. According to TEA accountability ratings, both schools were rated Met Standard on STAAR tests, although Baranoff scored a 93 compared to Kocurek’s 74.

“We should be able to hold our school district accountable for these [school] ratings by including how a school is performing into the decision-making process when drawing boundary lines,” Fredo said. “How many of the parents are going to consider charter or private schools as a result of this decision?”

Residents from Olympic Heights and Hillcrest, two smaller neighborhoods that were not included in proposals until May, feel like their voices are not being heard, Hillcrest HOA President Nathan Behnke said. Hillcrest, which is currently zoned to Menchaca, was added to a proposal sending students to Kocurek after Shady Hollow residents made the suggestion as an alternative for their neighborhood in April, he said. Selecting a plan with Hillcrest would involve more schools and neighborhoods than other plans, he said.

### Future Decisions

At a May 7 meeting, the committee received an updated timeline to make a selection. Originally scheduled to present to the AISD board of trustees in November, the committee will now hold two open houses over the summer and present findings in August.

The change comes after district staff requested the boundary changes be wrapped into the district’s plan to “reimagine” its use of current facilities.

The committee’s next meeting will take place May 29, with additional meetings in June, although June dates have not been made official.

For more information, visit communityimpact.com.
YEARS in the making

The SH 45 SW toll road was originally proposed in the mid-1980s and over the years has changed designs, timelines and funding sources. Since Community Impact Newspaper’s Southwest Austin edition debuted in 2008, the SH 45 SW project has been featured on the paper’s cover 12 times. Here are some of the project milestones we have reported on over the years.

Continued from 1

A new alternative [for drivers],” he said. A May 18 ribbon cutting was postponed due to inclement weather and weather also delayed final paving of the project, but CTRMA Director of External Affairs Dee Anne Heath said on May 16 it would open “in the coming weeks.”

Once open, CTRMA is offering drivers with an active TxTag free trips on the road through the end of June, she said.

WHO WILL USE THE ROAD?
Heiligenstein said he estimates 25,000-30,000 cars will take SH 45 SW each day. Predictive modeling shows that SH 45 SW is going to capture Hays County motorists who were using neighborhood roads in South Austin to get to MoPac, he said.

“Hays County’s got thousands of people who work at Travis County, Austin ISD, the city of Austin or the city,” Heiligenstein said. “You can afford to live in Buda, San Marcos and Kyle. Another benefit is I think it’s going to help communities and traffic on those major arterials in South Austin.”

Hays County Commissioner Mark Jones said the new toll road will enhance the quality of life for current residents of Hays County.

“Right now we were spending an hour or more in traffic just to get anywhere in Austin, and this is going to cut a lot of people’s commutes in half almost, for a pretty inexpensive price,” he said.

As construction continues on I-35 near the Hwy. 71 interchange and downtown, SH 45 SW will offer an alternative for those in Austin traveling to San Marcos and San Antonio as well, Heiligenstein said.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS
SH 45 SW is located over the Edwards Aquifer, so a key factor in its development was making it as environmentally friendly as possible and achieving “a water quality standard that most road projects wouldn’t seek,” Heiligenstein said.

“It was not an easy project; the water-quality elements significantly complicated it,” he said. “We’ve built probably the cleanest roadway ever in the state of Texas.”

City of Austin conservation easements preserve some of the land around the project, and environmental features like Bear Creek run underneath the road.

The wide shared-use path created along the road—which will connect to the Violet Crown Trail system that stretches north to Zilker Park in the future—will offer locals additional recreational opportunities and areas to overlook nature, Heiligenstein said.

COMPLEMENTARY PROJECTS
Two additional South Austin transportation projects connected to MoPac are still on the way: the MoPac Intersections project and the MoPac South express lane project. Heiligenstein said each project is independently valuable to the region while also complementing another one and creating a continuous system from South Austin to downtown.

Organized by the Texas Department of Transportation, the MoPac Intersections project broke ground in 2018 and creates diverging diamond overpasses to take Slaughter Lane and La Crosse Avenue traffic over MoPac. MoPac through lanes will take traffic under the overpasses, allowing motorists to pass without stopping at the intersections as they previously did.

“They will allow traffic to flow much better instead of having stoplights [on MoPac],” Heiligenstein said.

The first phase of the project,
SH 45 SW includes entrances at MoPac, Bliss Spillar Road and FM 1626. A shared-use bicycle and walking trail is included in the project, alongside a nature viewing area and access to the Violet Crown Trail.

Motorists enter SH 45 SW at MoPac Expressway, SH 45, FM 1626 or Bliss Spillar Road.

A shared-use path runs along the highway.

Bear Creek can be seen from the SH 45 SW shared-use path.

A retention pond is located at the Southeast End of SH 45 SW near FM 1626.

Cows and ranchlands can be found along the Hays County portion of the road.

KEY
- Shared-use path
- Violet Crown Trail
- Trailhead
- SH 45 SW
- SH 45 SW bridges

For more information visit communityimpact.com.

Creating a diverging diamond overpass for Slaughter Lane, was completed in November. Work on the La Crosse overpass began this past winter, and the project should be completed by 2021.

The MoPac South express lanes project has stalled over the past few years, but Heiligenstein said the environmental documents needed are nearly finished, and the team is waiting for “the green light to move forward.”

“It is one of the most congested roadways in the state of Texas, and we need to address that congestion quickly,” Heiligenstein said.

The project would add one or two tolled express lanes in each direction from Slaughter Lane to the Colorado River.

In Hays County, Jones said construction to make FM 1626 a 4-lane road with turn lanes from Brodie Lane south to I-35 will likely be complete in September.

While not currently in development, Heiligenstein said the region could explore expanding SH 45 SW east to the SH 45 SE and I-35 intersection in the future as regional growth requires more expanded road capacity.

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Hwy. 290 corridor sees continued growth

BY OLIVIA ALDRIDGE

Signs of development have steadily cropped up along Hwy. 290 between the Y at Oak Hill and Dripping Springs for the past several years, with both commercial and residential developments impacting the community southwest of Austin. Currently, at least six commercial, seven residential and four mixed-use developments are underway.

John Endendyk, a partner at Endland Properties Group, currently represents two sites master-planned for potential development in Dripping Springs with access to Hwy. 290 and also brokered the sale of Big Sky Ranch, which is now under development by Meritage Homes. He said he focuses on this area for a reason.

“The area is very attractive to buyers and tenants due to the great schools, impressive demographics and beautiful Hill Country setting,” Endendyk said.

“We do not expect this growth to slow down anytime soon.”

FEELING THE GROWTH

On either end of the 14-mile stretch of Hwy. 290, major changes are planned to accommodate growth. Upcoming construction of the Oak Hill Parkway project is expected to relieve congestion around the Y at Oak Hill. Similarly, the city of Dripping Springs recently received $43 million from the Texas Water Development Board supporting expansion of its wastewater treatment plant, which the city has named a necessity for its growing community.

Indeed, the growth heading for Dripping Springs and the surrounding area is significant: the Population and Survey Analysts of Texas have projected that the number of housing opportunities in Dripping Springs alone will grow by over 13,000 in the next decade. Growth from the development of several communities along Hwy. 290 has already prompted the construction of new schools in Dripping Springs ISD, including the district’s second middle school, Sycamore Springs, located near the Beltterra community. Headwaters, a residential community under development in Dripping Springs, was required to reserve space for a potential DISD school site in its development agreement with the city.

“When we evaluate projects, school districts are very important,” said Matt Matthews, division president for Freehold Communities, the developer for Headwaters. “Dripping Springs ISD is a highly prized district. That’s certainly something we find as important.”

In addition to the school district, Matthews said many of Headwaters’ existing residents have migrated from South Austin in search of a more natural setting. Headwaters homes lack “backdoor” neighbors, reserving a back porch view of the Texas Hill Country. Natural views...
are a priority shared by other housing developments in the area, including Saratoga Hills and Belterra.

COMMERCIAL MIRRORS RESIDENTIAL

Beltterra Village became a marker of Hwy. 290 development when the project began in 2017 alongside the Beltterra residential community. Now, both projects have seen significant progress and are in new phases of development.

The residential development is in the midst of its second phase. The Beltterra Village shopping center is at 95% capacity, with plans to move forward with an as yet unnamed apartment complex, said Daniel Campbell, the Endeavor Real Estate representative for Beltterra Village.

“We’ve enjoyed our time building out Beltterra [Village], getting to know the residents and getting to know the city, and hopefully we find more projects to work on in the area,” Campbell said.

The Headwaters residential development will similarly be accompanied by a commercial development also bearing the name Headwaters. Development is separately overseen by Freehold and Oryx Development, respectively.

“Think it’s complimentary,” Matthews said. “Even though it’s not our project, we’re gowing closely with the commercial development to create cohesiveness.”

Smaller commercial developments are underway along Hwy. 290 as well. The Windmill Center, at the intersection of Hwy. 290 and Drifting Wind Run, is scheduled to bring retail space and a 4,500-square-foot restaurant to the area this summer. Similarly, Sawyer Ranch Business Park will offer space suitable for retailers, medical offices and restaurants on Sawyer Ranch Road.

Stand-alone businesses, such as Extra Space Storage, have reserved space along the high-development corridor as well.

FACING CHALLENGES

What makes the western stretch of Hwy. 290 appealing—views with fewer interruptions, elbow room and a wide sky—has also made it challenging.

Some developments have scaled back plans due to red tape, such as the Live Oak Springs development along FM 1826 near Hwy. 290. Originally planned to include 82 homes, Live Oak Springs was reduced to a proposed 30 homes at the end of 2018 after the Austin Zoning and Planning Commission struck down an environmental variance to build a bridge over Slaughter Creek. Live Oak Springs has not made announcements about progress or a new timeline since the change.

Others have had to significantly adjust their construction schedules. Junction Athletic Complex, an indoor-outdoor sports facility near the Y, was announced by owners to be a month away from breaking ground in August 2017. Now, the project still awaits final approval from the Texas Department of Transportation after receiving approval for a number of variances from Austin’s boards and commissions in March. Located in Austin’s extraterritorial jurisdiction, plans for Junction Athletic Complex faced pushback from neighbors concerned with noise and light that might come from the facility. Others expressed concern for increased congestion and the size of the development.

Matthews said artificial light was an issue for developers in Dripping Springs and its extraterritorial jurisdiction as well, since Dripping Springs is a Dark Sky city with strict regulations in place to keep stars visible.

“Dripping Springs is very invested in how they want their city to be developed,” he said.

Jason Lutz, planning director for the city of Dripping Springs, said meeting Dark Sky regulations is an attainable goal for developers, who are not restricted from placing outdoor lighting but must follow certain rules, such as keeping lights downward-facing. Lutz said he thinks Dripping Springs generally poses less restrictive oversight for projects compared to Austin.

However, he also said Dripping Springs’ lack of sewage infrastructure poses a challenge. Currently, many Dripping Springs residents and business owners rely on cumbersome septic systems.

“It makes it difficult for folks to enlarge their homes and businesses,” Lutz said.

Plans are moving forward, however, for expansion of the city’s wastewater treatment plant. Lutz said some businesses may connect to city sewage lines within three years. More widespread extension of sewage lines, however, would likely take a big developer investing in such an expansion, he said.

As for regulations such as Dark Sky, Matthews said these were in fact a draw for Freehold, since they hope to prioritize preservation of the natural landscape.

“[It] has a lot of character,” he said of the area. “It still has that small-town personality we value.”

---

By build-out, these projects will total 3,925 single-family homes.

**SARATOGA HILLS**

*227Smarty Jones Ave., Austin*

The residential development is now in Phase 3, with around 70 lots left to develop, according to Lance Holt of Ashton Woods Homebuilders. When construction for the gated community concludes in 2021, 150 homes will sit on the property.

**JUNCTION ATHLETIC COMPLEX**

*8921 W. Hwy. 290, Austin*

The 69-acre indoor-outdoor sports complex was originally slated to begin construction in September 2017 but only completed its variance approvals from the city of Austin’s boards and commissions as of March. Construction can begin when the project receives final approval from TxDOT, but there is still no sure timeline. The facility is planned to include basketball and volleyball courts, soccer fields and a 50-meter swimming pool.

**Cynosure**

The approximately 300-acre tract, located near the Hwy. 290 and Hwy. 12 intersection, is primarily being marketed to single-family developers. Endendyk said development on the property could begin by the end of 2020.

**Extra Space Storage**

Extra Space Storage broke ground on a new location, 14001 W. Hwy. 290, Austin, which will include 100,000 square feet of climate-controlled storage. According to a representative from CBTX Capital, construction is slated to be completed in October.

**Sawyer Ranch Business Park**

The 22-acre mixed-use development will include space suitable for offices, retailers, medical facilities and restaurants located at Hwy. 290 and Sawyer Ranch Road.

**Ledgestone Senior Apartments**

Development is ongoing on apartments for independent senior living at the Ledgestone Senior Care facility at 13150 Four Star Blvd., Austin.

**H-E-B**

H-E-B has owned 60 acres of land at 12225 W. Hwy. 290, Austin, the current home of Nutty Brown Amphitheatre, since 2014. Nutty Brown has plans to relocate to Round Rock, but H-E-B has not yet confirmed plans for the property after the move.

**H-E-B**

The grocery store chain filed in March initial site plans for a new store at 7901 W. Hwy. 290, Austin. A timeline associated with the project has not yet been announced.

**Palo Verde Apartments**

The 253,902-square-foot apartment complex, which sits on 28 acres at 7880 W. Hwy. 290, Austin, opened to initial residents in July. However, interior construction is ongoing and scheduled to finish by June of this year.

SOURCES: FREETHOLD COMMUNITIES, ASHTON WOODS HOMEBUILDERS, BELTERRA, END, AND PROPERTIES GROUP/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER
REAL ESTATE

MARKET DATA

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RECENT PROPERTY Listings

ZIP code | Subdivision | Address | Bed/bath | Price | Sq. Ft. | Agent | Agency | Phone |
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<td>Callelina</td>
<td>406 Wynnpine Drive</td>
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<td>$849,250</td>
<td>2,450</td>
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<td>512-415-2265</td>
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<td>Hays County</td>
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<td>3br/2ba</td>
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<td>1,831</td>
<td>Ruth Lunday</td>
<td>Realty Austin</td>
<td>512-736-2900</td>
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<td>5br/4ba</td>
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<td>Realty Austin</td>
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<td>4br/4ba</td>
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<td>2,840</td>
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<td>Realty Austin</td>
<td>512-708-0788</td>
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<td>78620</td>
<td>Texas Heritage Village</td>
<td>141 Hunts Link Road</td>
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<td>$364,990</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>Carl Clark</td>
<td>Kuper Sotheby's Int. Realty</td>
<td>512-924-9474</td>
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<td>Lantana</td>
<td>7509 Bonniebrook Drive</td>
<td>4br/4ba</td>
<td>$574,900</td>
<td>3,570</td>
<td>Michael Harrell</td>
<td>Keller Williams Realty</td>
<td>512-732-3806</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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- Competitive Rates
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(512) 573-1007

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Community Impact Newspaper • communityimpact.com
RECENT PROPERTY LISTINGS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ZIP code</th>
<th>Subdivision</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Bed/bath</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Sq. ft</th>
<th>Agent</th>
<th>Agency</th>
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<td>512-794-6643</td>
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<td>BHGRE HomeCity</td>
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<td>Belterra</td>
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<td>AustinRealEstate.com</td>
<td>512-832-3110</td>
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<td>512-990-5775</td>
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<td>Greyrock Ridge</td>
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<td>Guy Puckett</td>
<td>JB Goodwin, Realtors</td>
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<td>3504 Capistrano Trail</td>
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<td>2,282</td>
<td>Courtney Oldham</td>
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<td>The Grange</td>
<td>4704 Sunset Trail, Unit 1203</td>
<td>1br/1ba</td>
<td>$282,000</td>
<td>756</td>
<td>Melinda Miller</td>
<td>Engel &amp; Volkers Austin</td>
<td>512-803-3148</td>
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<td>8106 Edgewater Circle</td>
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<td>10110 Jupiter Hills Drive</td>
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<td>Keller Williams Realty</td>
<td>512-532-9715</td>
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Residential real estate listings added to the market between 5/9/19 and 5/12/19 were provided by Austin Board of Realtors. Although every effort has been made to ensure the timeliness and accuracy of this listing, Community Impact Newspaper assumes no liability for errors or omissions. Contact the property's agent or seller for the most current information.

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Don’t let critters enter through a storm damaged roof!
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We also specialize in Attic Cleanup, Disinfectant, Odor Removal, Repair & Replacement of Insulation

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brunch | sweets | espresso | lunch | custom desserts

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Sun–Wed: 7:00 am – 5:00 pm • Thur–Sat: 7:00 am – 7:00 pm

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BENEFITING The Trail Foundation

SEAHOLM THURSDAY, JUNE 6TH 8:00PM
REGISTER NOW! www.TheTrailFoundation.org

Margarita (21+) and snack provided for all participants at the Finish Line Party!
Cakes Ready now...
or order online for tomorrow!

Brodie & Slaughter
Lane Location

BUY ONE SUNDAE,
GET ONE FOR 99¢
Expires July 30, 2019 and only applicable at The Brodie Lane location. May not be combined with other offers.

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**GET $10 OFF A PURCHASE OF $50 OR MORE**

Excludes delivery fees, gift cards, sale items, rain barrels, & composters. One coupon per customer per visit. Must present coupon. Expires 08/30/2019.

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**Lunch Happy Hour Dinner Drinks**

**YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD FAVORITES IN 78745**

**Dine In Specials**

- **Monday & Midnight**
  - 50¢ Wing Night
  - Boneless or Classic

- **Tuesday All Day**
  - Taco Tuesday
  - $2 Crispy Beef Taco Special

- **Wednesday All Day**
  - Bogo Beef Burgers
  - Buy One Get One Free

- **Thursday 4-8**
  - 1/2 Price Select Appetizers

- **Weekends 10-4**
  - Brunch & Bloody Mary Bar

- **Sunday All Day**
  - Enchiladas
  - $6.95 Enchilada Special

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**MALBEC CHARDONNAY ROSE**

**NOW SERVING SEASONAL WINES**

730 West Stassney Lane at South 1st Street | 512-494-5271 | Open 11am - 2am Daily

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—Passionate, sensual, and instinctive

Group and private lessons  
No experience or partner needed

Please see [TangoTribecom](http://TangoTribecom)  
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Austin 78735

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**Catfish Restaurant**

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**Catfish, BBQ, Fresh Pies & More!**

Treat dad to bbq ribs, shrimp and fish for Father’s Day!

**BUY 1 GET 1 FREE**

Wide Variety of Family Take-Home Meals!  
Catfish · Rib · Shrimp · Combo Packs  
available every day  
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Stop by with this ad and receive a free* Drip Coffee!

Limit one per customer

**Austin Java**

**MANCHACA**

**M-SA 7AM-10PM**  
**Sun 7AM-8PM**

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CLOGGED GUTTERS DAMAGE YOUR HOME’S FOUNDATION AND LANDSCAPING!

5% DISCOUNT
SENIORS • MILITARY
TEACHERS • FIRST RESPONDERS

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Gutter cleaning starting at
$139
Expires 6/25/19.

“Your little artist needs a new canvas.”

Bedrooms for only
$225
Includes 2 coats plus all paint!

$200 OFF
kitchen cabinet painting
With this ad only. Must mention community impact. Residential projects only. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Not valid on previously painted work. Expires 5/25/19.

Our Services
• Interior & Exterior Painting
• Cabinet Refinishing
• Popcorn Ceiling & Wallpaper Removal
• Drywall Repair & Retexturing

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FiveStarPainting.com/austin
Check out Google or Yelp to read some of our 700+ reviews.
Additional 5% discount for military, first responders, teachers and seniors.
Epic Fun, a local, family-owned, 30,000 sq. ft. entertainment gem is nestled behind the trees of Oak Hill Plaza waiting to share a day of epic adventure with you, your family, and friends!

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- **$2 BEER EVERYDAY FROM 7 PM - CLOSE**
- **MONDAY MADNESS** All day Spin & Win
- **TERRIFIC TUESDAYS** Kids Eat Free*
- **WINE DOWN WEDNESDAY** 1/2 price bottles of wine all day
- **THIRSTY THURSDAYS** $2 pints of beer, all burgers 1/2 price

**$10 ARCADE CARD**

No purchase needed.

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Must present coupon to redeem $10 day card. Expires 7/31/19. One card per person. Coupons Passcode: SW

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- Laser Tag
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- Arcade
- Bumper Cars
- Rock Climbing
- Time Challenge
- Mini Bowling
- Ballocity
- Axe Throwing
- Cafe & WiFi
- Beer & Wine
- Chef inspired, family friendly menu
- Birthday Parties
- Private and Corporate Events

7101 W. Hwy 71, Austin TX 78735 | (512) 271-4964 | info@epicfun.com

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**June To-Do List for your Central Texas Garden:**

- **GET TO PLANTING:** You’ll have luck with zinnias, calendula, bulbs, and ornamental grasses.
- **PLANT NOW, ENJOY LATER:** Get your watermelons planted now and enjoy them in the dog days of summer!
- **GROW YOUR OWN SPICES:** In the herb garden get your basil, oregano, thyme, and rosemary started.
- **CONSERVE WATER:** Avoid over-watering plants as we head into heat. Check soil moisture, water deeply and then let dry out.

**Fairy Garden Workshop**

Join us the 1st Saturday of every month for our Fairy Garden Workshop

Register online at [www.gonursery.com/events](http://www.gonursery.com/events) | Classes start at 11:00

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**$10 OFF ANY PURCHASE OF $50 OR MORE**

Limit one coupon per customer per day. Must present this ad. Expires 06/23/19 SWA
REMEMBER THE COLD-WEATHER GRILLING TIPS

Prepare your grill for the colder weather ahead with these tips from Doc’s Backyard:

1.预热燃气：确保燃气充足，并且先预热燃气燃烧器，以确保稳定的工作。
2.使用高热：“高热”会产生强烈的烟雾和卡夫，这是烧烤美味的关键。
3.保持清洁：定期清洁烤架和烧烤工具，以保持最佳效果和安全。

使用这些提示，您的烧烤体验将更加愉快和美味！

8207 BRODIE LN #100 | EATDRINKDOCS.COM

FREE DIP PLATTER WITH PURCHASE OF ENTREE
Expires 6/24/2019
*excluding purchase of breakfast item
*promotion includes pictured platter

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BLAZER TAG
ADVENTURE CENTER

Buy a Nitro Special for $28.95 and get a FREE BLAZER TAG T-SHIRT!
(2 games of laser tag, 2 slices of pizza, a fountain drink and T-Shirt. Retail Value of $42.)

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MOMS, DADS AND GRADS!

RECEIVE A COMPLIMENTARY
$10 GIFT CARD
WITH YOUR

$50 GIFT CARD PURCHASE
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HARD WORK, HIGH STANDARDS
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**HAPPY HOUR**
MONDAY THRU FRIDAY $3-$5 FROM 3-5PM

**SPOON + FORK**

$3 BEER, MIMOSAS, EDAMAME
All beer | Orange Mimosa | Pineapple Mimosa
Bellini | Edamame

$4 WINE, SAKE, APPETIZERS
House Cabernet | House Chardonnay
Hot Sake | Cold Sake | Crispy Roll | Spring Roll
Steamed Dumplings | Crab Cream Cheese

$5 COCKTAILS
Mojito | Margarita | Texas Tea | Mai Tai
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3201 Bee Cave Rd
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**BEE CAVE**
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