

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2011



Building a Better Community with You

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PDS TEAM GROWS!

Budget cuts due to a challenging economy and reorganization have resulted in a growing and improved Planning & Development Services Department. The City's Economic and Community Development Department was recently disbanded and reduced in staff. The City continues to remain committed to both economic development and community development, but the belief is that these services can be delivered in a more effective manner.

The economic development functions will now be managed out of the City Manager's Office, while the Community Development and Northgate functions will be managed out of the Planning & Development Services Department.

These changes will allow the Community Development and Northgate operations to continue their high-level of service but allow even greater coordination with other City functions and to take advantage of the resources available within PDS. Debbie Eller, Mary Itz, David Brower, Charles Michalewicz, Betty Vermeire, and Susan Sharp will continue to provide outstanding community development services for the City, they will just now do them as part of a larger team. Likewise, John LeBlanc and his team will continue to provide outstanding services in Northgate.

These changes will allow PDS to continue to make sure services are delivered and aligned with the City's policies and strategies and in the most effective manner practical. I look forward to working with each of these very dedicated public servants as we continue to make College Station a great place to live!



Robert S. Cowell, Jr., AICP, CNU-A
Executive Director - Planning & Development Services



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TRACKING THE NUMBERS

New Single-Family Homes:

YTD - 1 yr	YTD - 2 yr
↓ 8%	↓ 3%

New Commercial:

YTD - 1 yr	YTD - 2 yr
↓ 11%	↑ 17%

Total Permits:

YTD - 1 yr	YTD - 2 yr
↑ 5%	↑ 20%

Year-to-date, single-family home permits decreased in quantity when compared to last year at this time, July 2010, and decreased when compared with two years ago, July 2009.

Year-to-date, new commercial permits experienced a decrease in quantity when compared to last year at this time, July 2010, and increased when compared with two years ago, July 2009.

Year-to-date, total permits experienced an increase in quantity when compared to last year at this time, July 2010, and experienced an increase when compared with two years ago, July 2009.



PLANNER ON CALL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

The Planner on Call system helps over 1800 people a year that call, email, or come into the P&DS office with questions related to planning and development. This section highlights some of the more common questions. If you have questions for the Planner on Call, please contact us at 979.764.3570 or POC@cstx.gov.

Q: I want to change the building color of my business. Do I need permission before I start painting?

A: With a few exceptions, all non-residential buildings are subject to the City of College Station Color Palette. The primary color of a structure must be an approved color. All others are considered accent colors and may be used on 5-15% of each façade, depending on the size of the building plot in which the structure is located. Additional building color requirements may apply in the Wolf Pen Creek Corridor, Northgate District, and the Corridor Overlay.

A Non-Residential Architectural Standards Building Review (NRA) application is required to be submitted to Planning & Development Services (P&DS) for review and approval. Application requirements include the submittal of color samples or list of colors to be used and building elevations. There is no fee associated with an application for a color-only change to an existing building.

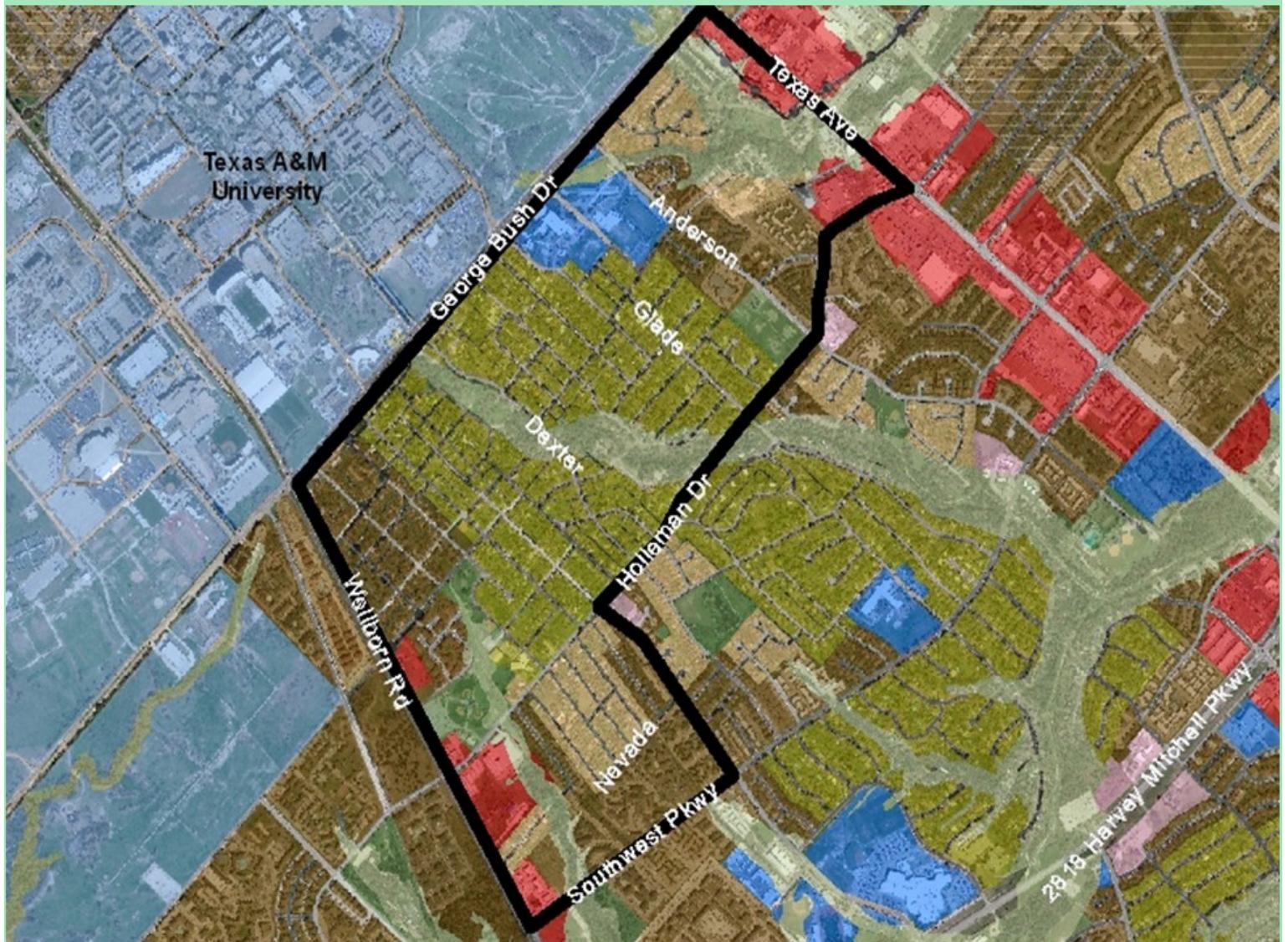
A complete copy of the approved Color Palette can be viewed at the P&DS office. The list of colors included in the Color Palette may be found online at www.cstx.gov/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=11302. For additional information regarding the Color Palette, to determine if your business meets one of the exemptions to the Non-Residential Architectural Standards, or to determine the amount of accent color that may be on the façade of your building, please contact the Planner on Call.



SOUTHSIDE AREA NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

As part of the on-going implementation of College Station's Comprehensive Plan, the City created its Neighborhood, District, and Corridor Planning program to provide focused action plans for smaller areas of the City. Under this program, the City has adopted the Central College Station Neighborhood Plan and the Eastgate Neighborhood Plan. These plans focus on the particular needs and opportunities of the areas.

This fall, College Station will kick off its third neighborhood plan, with a focus on the Southside Area (see map below). City staff is already busy familiarizing themselves with the history of the area, inventorying the existing conditions, and collecting data in the neighborhoods that make up the study area. In the beginning, the City will host a series of public meetings for the community to identify issues and opportunities in the Southside Area. Because the success of the planning process is dependent on meaningful community participation, a variety of opportunities will be available for the community to be involved throughout the planning process. Currently, the City is looking for individuals interested in serving on a Neighborhood Resource Team, a smaller group of people that will assist in developing the plan and discussing implementation strategies. Those interested are encouraged to contact Jennifer Prochazka at jprochazka@cstx.gov or 979.764.3570 for more information.





BUILDING PERMIT TOTALS:

Month of July 2011						Month of July 2010		
Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Total Sq. Ft.	Heat Sq. Ft.	Amount	Permit	Unit	Amount
Single Family Home	29	29	62,689	50,505	\$3,419,874	33	33	\$4,369,260
Duplex	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
Tri-plex/Four-plex	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
Apartment	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Addition	5	N/A	1,722	1,722	\$174,878	5	N/A	\$135,999
Residential Remodel	14	N/A	11,928	11,479	\$531,081	6	N/A	\$54,371
Residential Garage/Carport Addition	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Demolition	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$9,500	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-SF	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$45,000	14	N/A	\$1,542,208
Residential Slab Only-DP	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-3&4	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-Apt.	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	5	N/A	\$668,732
Hotel / Motel / Inn	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
New Commercial	10	N/A	7,776	7,776	\$1,297,652	3	N/A	\$26,710,000
Commercial Remodel	6	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$432,228	3	N/A	\$283,000
Commercial Addition/Retaining Wall	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$20,000	5	N/A	\$90,156
Commercial Demolition	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$500	2	N/A	\$130,500
Commercial Slab Only	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$68,000	0	N/A	\$0
Swimming Pool	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$372,000	4	N/A	\$138,299
Sign	12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	N/A	N/A
Moving & Location	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Storage / Accessory	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$46,900	1	N/A	\$500
Roofing	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$6,540	2	N/A	\$7,900
TOTALS	90	29	84,115	71,482	\$6,424,153	91	33	\$34,130,925

January 1, 2011 - July 31, 2011						January 1, 2010 - July 31, 2010		
Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Total Sq. Ft.	Heat Sq. Ft.	Amount	Permit	Unit	Amount
Single Family Home	323	323	769,200	607,337	\$42,244,180	353	353	\$48,209,229
Duplex	1	2	3,627	3,470	\$200,000	1	2	\$137,280
Tri-plex/Four-plex	0	0		0	\$0	0	0	\$0
Apartment	49	261	398,862	376,983	\$25,873,080	2	0	\$796,450
Residential Addition	51	N/A	31,197	22,922	\$2,195,537	41	N/A	\$1,310,524
Residential Remodel	78	N/A	31,473	29,928	\$1,918,855	65	N/A	\$1,209,845
Residential Garage/Carport Addition	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$71,700	3	N/A	\$49,500
Residential Demolition	25	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$237,370	9	N/A	\$35,000
Residential Slab Only-SF	13	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$206,512	16	N/A	\$1,565,010
Residential Slab Only-DP	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-3&4	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$20,000	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-Apt.	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$360,000	8	N/A	\$768,732
Hotel / Motel / Inn	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	1	N/A	\$100,000
New Commercial	34	N/A	107,144	98,430	\$37,928,204	38	N/A	\$143,174,765
Commercial Remodel	44	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$4,746,452	34	N/A	\$3,531,009
Commercial Addition/Retaining Wall	13	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$3,056,319	14	N/A	\$1,651,156
Commercial Demolition	12	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$176,970	9	N/A	\$181,700
Commercial Slab Only	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$68,000	3	N/A	\$199,900
Swimming Pool	33	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$1,667,803	38	N/A	\$1,249,574
Sign	72	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	66	N/A	N/A
Moving & Location	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Storage / Accessory	26	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$360,592	11	N/A	\$38,100
Roofing	44	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$527,746	78	N/A	\$441,825
TOTALS	829	586	1,341,503	1,139,070	\$121,859,320	790	355	\$204,649,599

BUILDING INSPECTIONS:

MONTH	BUILDING	PLUMBING	ELECTRIC	MECHANICAL	LAWN	SIGN	POOL	TOTAL
JANUARY	276	233	144	112	18	13	6	802
FEBRUARY	178	197	130	91	21	2	3	622
MARCH	311	298	158	141	11	14	13	946
APRIL	363	277	176	139	26	13	17	1011
MAY	413	331	221	192	19	8	11	1195
JUNE	418	345	246	214	28	14	15	1280
JULY	460	341	300	280	16	8	14	1389

CODE ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES SUMMARY:

MONTH	HEALTH & SANITATION	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	PUBLIC NUISANCE	FIRE PROTECTION	TRAFFIC CODE	SANITATION	UDO/ZONING	RENTAL REGISTRATION	MISCELLANEOUS	TOTAL
JANUARY	64	6	23	1	8	378	60	140	241	921
FEBRUARY	39	27	11	1	2	278	110	79	242	789
MARCH	278	35	26	11	14	338	124	105	370	1301
APRIL	342	25	19	11	12	173	232	157	389	1360
MAY	142	18	15	7	10	298	182	232	430	1334
JUNE	179	9	21	17	4	148	157	290	520	1345
JULY	138	11	13	6	14	98	164	239	493	1176

REZONING SCOOP:

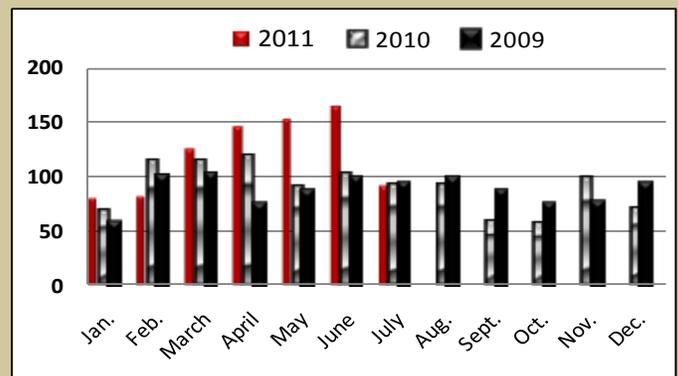
PROJECT NUMBER	LOCATION OF LAND	ACRES	REQUEST	P&Z DATE	STATUS	COUNCIL DATE	STATUS
11-500078	3514,3520,3526 Longmire Dr.	6.283	C-1 & C-2 to PDD	16-Jun-11	Approved	14-Jul-11	Approved
11-500087	2862 North Graham Rd.	7.364	A-O to PDD	4-Aug-11	Approved	8-Aug-11	

POPULATION: The July 2011 population estimate is 96,199

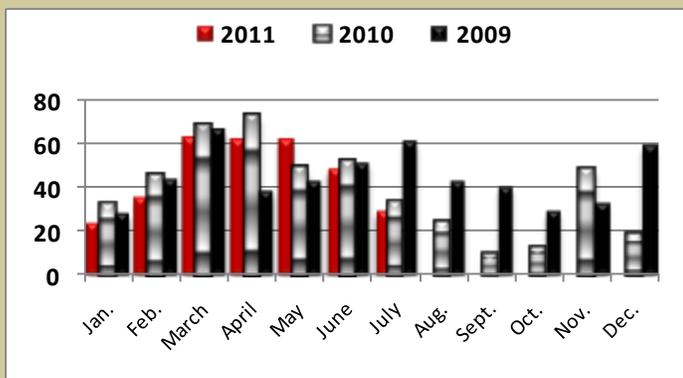
PERMITS BY TYPE
YEAR TO DATE

Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Amount
Single-Family Home	323	323	\$42,244,180
Duplex	1	2	\$200,000
Tri-Plex/Four-plex	0	0	\$0
Apartment	49	261	\$25,873,080
New Commercial	34	N/A	\$37,928,204
Commercial Remodel	44	N/A	\$4,746,452

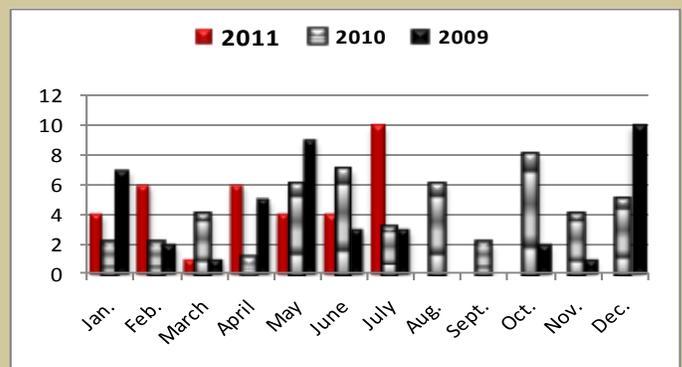
TOTAL PERMITS
3 YEAR—COMPARISON BY MONTH



NEW SINGLE FAMILY PERMITS
3 YEAR—COMPARISON BY MONTH



NEW COMMERCIAL PERMITS
3 YEAR—COMPARISON BY MONTH





COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT'S ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

Each year, the City of College Station is required to submit to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) a one-year Action Plan describing projects and activities to be funded with approximately \$1.6 million. On October 1, 2011 the City will receive \$1,029,323 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and \$631,763 in HOME Investment Partnership Grant funds. These funds must be utilized for the principal benefit of persons of low- and moderate-income in College Station. CDBG and HOME funds may only be used to: (1) benefit low- and moderate-income persons; (2) aid in the elimination of slum and blighting influences, and/or; (3) meet a particular urgent need. Further, CDBG funds may be used to meet local needs through a wide range of community development activities, while HOME funds may only be used for affordable housing activities.

Historically, the City has utilized these funds for a variety of programs and activities, including: affordable housing programs (homebuyer assistance, security deposit assistance, rehabilitation, new construction, and minor repairs); funding of direct services to low-income families; demolition; and park, street, infrastructure and public facility improvement in low-income areas of the city.

The Annual Action Plan was developed using input received from a series of public hearings, program committee meetings, and citizen input. The goals and objectives in the 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan were followed in preparing this year's Plan. A variety of programming will be funded in the upcoming 2011-2012 Program Year including non-profit agencies serving low- and moderate-income clients, public infrastructure projects, and housing programs.

The following non-profit agencies will receive CDBG funding: Twin City Mission, Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority of the Brazos Valley, Brazos Valley Rehabilitation Center, Voices for Children, Unity Partners dba Project Unity, Kids Klub, and Lincoln Center. Several public infrastructure projects in designated low-income areas will receive CDBG funding: Cooner Street Rehabilitation Project to include replacement of existing wastewater, water, and roadway infrastructure, Wellborn Road sidewalk design and University Drive sidewalk design. Other City-wide community development programming will continue to be funded including the Down-Payment Assistance Program, the Owner-Occupied Minor Repair and Rehabilitation Program, Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program (security deposit assistance), and programs partnering with non-profit and for-profit affordable housing developers.

For information regarding the Annual Action Plan or the funded programs, please contact the Community Development Division at 979.764.3778. You can access additional information online at www.cstx.gov/communitydevelopment.

STAFF PROFILE: DOUG ERVIN

Doug Ervin is one of our Code Enforcement Officers and has been with the City of College Station for almost four years. He returned in 2007 after previously working for the City from 2003-2005. Doug is originally from Houston, Texas, and came to the College Station area in 1984 when he was offered a DHL Express Area Manager position after his graduation from the University of Houston with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing. In addition to working at the City full time, Doug also works at Texas A&M University part time as the Project Coordinator at Transportation Services, overseeing the transportation custodial staff for all of the university's garages, fleet, and diesel facilities.

Doug is a Registered Code Officer with the Texas Department of State Health Services. He also holds numerous FEMA certifications, which is in addition to his specialized training and education at TEEEX in Introduction to Environmental Health and Safety, DEM HazMat Incident Command Training, Hazwoper for Cleanup Operations, Weekend Firefighting, and Basic Code Enforcement. Doug also has a TCEQ Class C Municipal Solid Waste Operator's License and a Commercial Driver's License, as well as being a Reserve on the TAMU Transportation System for evacuating TAMU employees from coastal campuses in the event of an emergency.

Doug's main role with the City is to ensure a safe and attractive environment for both citizens and visitors to our community. His duties include enforcing local city codes and ordinances, as well as enforcing state laws. Doug's extraordinary communication skills provide him with the essential tools needed when communicating enforcement-related issues with property owners and managers of commercial property throughout College Station. Some of the code-related issues that Doug responds to include violations related to smoking, sanitation, signs, banners, and portable structures.

One of the enjoyments of Doug's job is the continuously-changing challenges that he encounters from day-to-day. He enjoys meeting and working with people as he educates them regarding the codes and regulations that commercial companies must adhere to when establishing and maintaining their businesses in College Station. As part of his role in being one of the City's liaisons to the business community, Doug prepares and distributes Welcome Packets to new businesses to help them in successfully opening their business in College Station. Doug is never sure what issues he'll encounter as he heads to work each day, but his knowledge and expertise in working with people to help maintain their businesses in accordance with city codes help to ensure College Station's integrity in all of our business districts.

Doug has been married for 23 years to Kelley and has two children Bryant 19 and Bradley 11. Although he doesn't get to enjoy much free time with two jobs under his belt, Doug does enjoy golfing and saltwater fishing whenever he gets the chance to get away and relax. Doug's willingness to learn new development codes and his positive attitude while working with staff to identify and address issues has been instrumental in him performing his job effectively. His teamwork efforts and enthusiasm to acquire additional code knowledge led to Doug being awarded with the Department's Team Player of the Year award in 2009.





CARTERS AND BURTON CREEK TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR BACTERIA



Pursuant to the Clean Water Act, the Environmental Protection Agency has worked with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to determine which waters in Texas do not meet water quality standards for their intended use. The list of these waters is known as the 303D list. Carters and Burton Creek Watersheds have been placed on the 303D list due to elevated levels of Escherichia Coli, indicating contamination with human or animal fecal matter. The impacted entities have the option of working with TCEQ through the voluntary Total Maximum Daily Load program or enrolling in a more formal program with EPA. Formulating an Implementation Plan in the Total Maximum Daily Load program results in that entity being removed from the 303D list for the five year life of the program, at which time the program can be updated for another five years.

The two Cities, Brazos County, TAMU and TxDOT have worked with AgriLIFE and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NCRS) to formulate an implementation plan. AgriLIFE is scheduled to submit the I-Plan to TCEQ on August 15th.

The Implementation Plan (I-Plan) recommended measures and actions dovetail into existing Storm Water Management Plans (SWMP) for College Station as well as the other local entities. The I-Plan recommends continuing SWMP implementation and monitoring wastewater treatment plant effluent and the following general measures:

1. Coordinate and expand existing water quality monitoring
2. Pursue modifying tax valuation requirements with water quality impacts
3. Improve On Site Sewage Facility Programs (OSSF) (Septic Systems)
4. Implement Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) initiatives
5. Implement Voluntary Agricultural Best Management Practices
6. Establish development mechanisms to mitigate adverse water quality impacts

Additional background, workgroups, maps, technical data, etc. is available at the AgriLIFE project website at: <http://cartersandburton.tamu.edu/reports>, and the TCEQ project website at: <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/85-carterscreek.html>.



**ONLY RAIN
DOWN THE DRAIN**

HELP SAVE OUR CREEKS!





PET
SCOOP THE POOP



CHEMICALS
PROPERLY DISPOSE



TRASH
TRASH YOUR TRASH



AUTO
RECYCLE FLUIDS



LAWN
FERTILIZE SPARINGLY

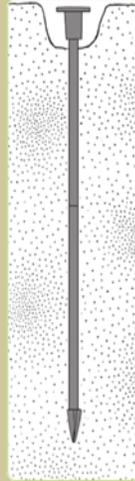
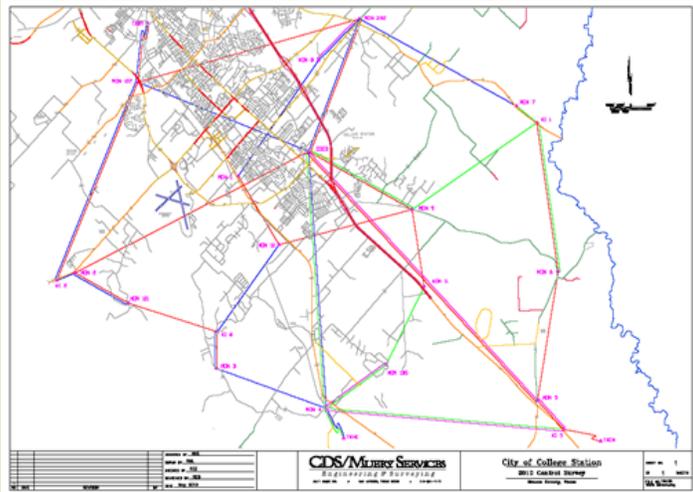


VOLUNTEER
JUST ASK HOW

brazoscleanwater.org



COLLEGE STATION SURVEY CONTROL MONUMENTS



The **City maintains a grid of Survey Control Monuments** which locally serves as surveying reference points. The monuments aid in delineating public and private properties, surveys, subdivisions, construction projects, and especially projects sensitive to accurate vertical elevations such as efforts related to FEMA floodplain, etc. Aerial flyovers also utilize the monuments to aid in orthorectifying, or horizontally and vertically adjusting, aerials and subsequent topographic data as these products are converted to GIS layers and data in GIS to more accurately reflect actual real earth surface locations.

In 1994, the City had 86 **Survey Control Monuments** constructed. However, since that time 20 monuments

have been damaged or removed in construction or adjacent activity. Additionally these original monuments were provided in datums that are becoming outdated (horizontal: NAD-27 and NAD-83, and vertical: NGVD-29).

After the City hosted a roundtable discussion with the local surveying community in 2009, the City proceeded to contract with CDS/Muery Services in 2010 to **establish 11 new monuments** to supplement the loss of monuments and **to update the monument grid to more current survey datums** (horizontal: NAD-83 (CORS Adjustment) and vertical: NAVD-88). Additionally, the new monuments utilize a **more stable and durable construction method of deep rod survey monuments** driven to refusal, instead of the previous common discs simply set in 6 inch diameter 3 feet deep concrete piers.

In 2011, the City contracted with Joe Orr, Inc. to **update the datums and re-survey the remaining original 1994 monuments** to match the new deep rod monuments. Note that the FEMA Map Modernization project is also near completion which will similarly update and **coordinate with new local FEMA maps** to reference vertical datum to NAVD-88 (CORS Adjustment) as well. An effort is now underway to install small pipe bollards to further protect the monuments for long-term use.

Monument data information can be accessed at <http://www.cstx.gov/index.aspx?page=3639>.

Photo 1 – Station Detail



Photo 2 – Station Area Picture





TRANSIT PLANNING COORDINATION

With budgets (federal, state and local) as constraint as they are, transit will need to play an increasing role in the City of College Station's transportation system in order to provide travel choices and minimize expenses in expanding roadway capacity.

The City of College Station is a member of two local transportation planning organizations that interact and coordinate with the local transit providers. The City is a member of the Metropolitan Planning Organization along with the Texas A&M and the Brazos Valley Transit District. This planning organization plans long-term and short-term allocation of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) dollars. The City is also a member of the Regional Planning Organization through the Brazos Valley Council of Governments. This organization provides coordination of public transportation through the various member Counties specifically for elderly, disabled or disadvantaged citizenry.

Projects currently in the pipeline or underway are the Transit Station/parking garage currently under construction in Bryan and partially funded through FTA funds; a co-ridership program between Texas A&M University and Brazos Valley Transit District, and a route study by Brazos Valley Transit will be conducted in the near future. The co-ridership project will funnel pass-thru FTA funds to Texas A&M transit so that everyone can ride Texas A&M buses. Currently Texas A&M transit is funded by student fees. In the route study's scope a task is to develop new routes and eliminate duplication of service between Texas A&M Transit and Brazos Valley Transit providing greater efficiencies. Furthermore, Texas A&M Transit will be serving the core of the City and Brazos Valley Transit serving the outlying areas. Future stops will be at the new HEB at Tower Point and at the new High School. With each of these projects the City of College Station has been at the table and has provided coordination and input.





AIRPORT PLANNING COORDINATION

Easterwood Airport, owned and operated by Texas A&M University System, is located at the western entrance of College Station, within the City limits. Transient general aviation, military, local general aviation, and commercial flights operate at this non-hub regional airport. While the City regulates land uses and development within its limits, it does not regulate airport operations or the development of the airport property, which are regulated through the federal and state governments. The City and the airport do, though, often work in tandem.

An Easterwood Airport representative served on the City of College Station's Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, assisting in the City's latest comprehensive plan update process. The airport also develops master plans (related to their facilities) and shares that information with the City. An update to the 2005 Easterwood Airport Master Plan is currently underway. The plans of both entities should work together to protect the public and property, and the public investment in the airport.



McKenzie Terminal - Photo courtesy of Easterwood Airport

The safety and success of airport operations, with the safety of the general public and protection of property, is in part dependent upon needed air space remaining clear for air navigation. An Airport Zoning Ordinance to limit heights of objects around Easterwood was last revised and adopted by the Easterwood Field Joint Airport Zoning Board in 1983. The ordinance prescribes the maximum allowable heights above sea level of objects, natural or erected, in relation to the airport runways, and how allowed obstructions must be marked and lighted. The City of College Station's Zoning Board of Adjustment has served as the Airport Zoning Board of Adjustment for the consideration of airport height-variance requests, though no requests have been made in the recent past.

Most commonly, communication between the City of College Station and Easterwood Airport occurs in conjunction with the proposal of new developments around the airport, in the City limits. Planning staff confers with the airport and/or Texas A&M University System on development proposals or other items in vicinity of the airport that may be of concern. In addition, Planning staff encourages applicants with development proposals in close proximity to the airport to discuss their proposal with the University System. One example is the new Knightsgate apartments on Harvey Mitchell Parkway. The property on which the apartments have been built had had two different rezoning requests in the past two years. Along with other items, concerns of the University System were taken into consideration in the formulation of Planning staff's recommendations for the proposals and in the Planning and Zoning Commission's and City Council's deliberations of the requests. A compromise on a rezoning proposal was reached in 2010 between the applicant and Planning to which the University System did not object, and after Planning and Zoning and Council support, the Knightsgate Apartments at 1270 Harvey Mitchell Parkway were able to open their doors at the end of July 2011.



NORTHGATE IMPROVEMENTS

For more than a decade the City has worked closely with merchants and property owners in the Northgate area to facilitate development. This partnership has involved millions in public dollars invested in new water lines (which allowed greater fire protection for the area), rehabilitated streets, parking facilities, façade improvements, and much more. The partnership has yielded tens of millions in new development, new businesses and entertainment options for residents and visitors, and significant tax revenue for the City, the County, the local school district, and the State.

The latest step in this partnership has been one that focused on increasing pedestrian safety in the area. In partnership with TxDOT, the area will benefit from wider sidewalks and safer areas for patrons and visitors. This latest effort was possible only through agreements between the City, local merchants, and TxDOT addressing the relocation of on-street parking, new opportunities for outdoor dining and entertainment, and the dedication of necessary easements.

A memorandum of understanding or MOU was created and agreed to by all parties addressing each of the above issues and opportunities. Since adoption of the MOU, the parties have worked together to change parking operations, draft an ordinance to manage new outdoor dining and entertainment opportunities, address signage, and secure the necessary easements. Work on improvements in the area will begin later in 2011 and should make the area much more attractive and safe for visitors.

