

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2014



Building a Better Community with You

POPULATION: THE JUNE POPULATION ESTIMATE IS 100,517

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CITY OF COLLEGE STATION
Home of Texas A&M University®

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PLANNER ON CALL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Planner on Call system helps over 1,800 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 979.764.3858 or POC@cstx.gov.

Q: What are the requirements to construct a carport in my residential zoning district?

A: Garages and carports in residential zoning districts, including those of a temporary nature, should have a minimum rear setback of twenty feet (20'). The side setback from an interior lot line is seven and a half feet (7.5'). A minimum side-yard setback of twenty feet (20') is also applied when garages and carports, including those of a temporary nature, gain access from a side street. All other setbacks shall be applied as required in the district in which the structure is located. The following restrictions apply to garages and carports:

- a. A minimum rear setback of twenty feet (20') ; and,
- b. A minimum side street setback of twenty feet (20') is required for garages or carports that take access from the side street.



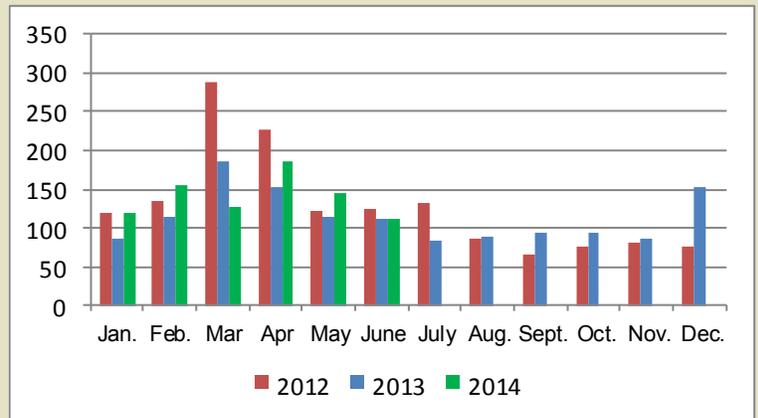
BUILDING INSPECTIONS:

MONTH	BUILDING	PLUMBING	ELECTRIC	MECHANICAL	LAWN	SIGN	POOL	TOTAL
JANUARY	361	264	189	100	15	5	7	941
FEBRUARY	301	232	218	116	11	12	6	896
MARCH	464	322	262	186	13	6	6	1,259
APRIL	602	338	273	235	29	9	11	1,497
MAY	483	331	337	208	14	7	17	1,397
JUNE	565	379	307	265	13	16	17	1,562
TOTAL	2,776	1,866	1,586	1,110	95	55	64	7,552

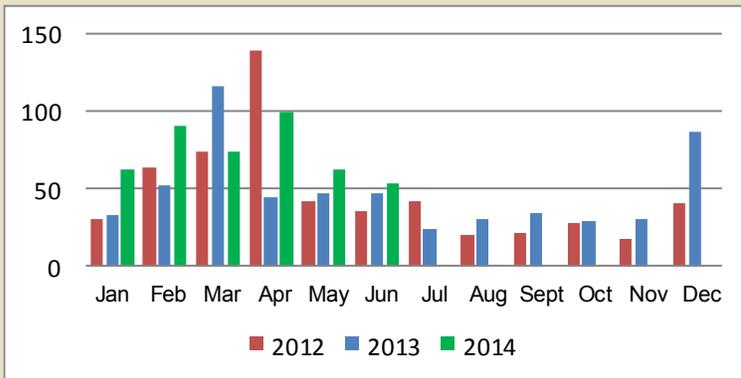
PERMITS BY TYPE
YEAR TO DATE

Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Amount
Single-Family Home	424	424	\$69,963,772
Duplex	4	8	\$1,013,586
Tri-Plex/Four-plex	0	0	\$0
Apartment	24	0	\$55,130,730
New Commercial	39	N/A	\$27,296,711
Commercial Remodel	53	N/A	\$8,598,384

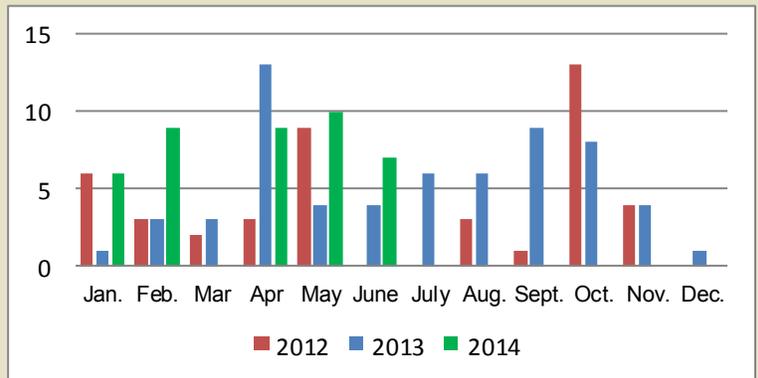
TOTAL PERMITS
3 YEAR—COMPARISON BY MONTH



NEW SINGLE FAMILY PERMITS
3 YEAR—COMPARISON BY MONTH



NEW COMMERCIAL PERMITS
3 YEAR—COMPARISON BY MONTH



Tracking the Numbers

New Single-Family Homes:

YTD - 1 yr
25% ↑

YTD - 2 yr
10% ↑

Year-to-date, single-family home permits increased in quantity when compared to last year at this time, June 2013, and increased when compared with two years ago, June 2012.

New Commercial:

YTD - 1 yr
40% ↑

YTD - 2 yr
40% ↑

Year-to-date, new commercial permits experienced an increase in quantity when compared to last year at this time, June 2013, and increased when compared with two years ago, June 2012.

Total Permits:

YTD - 1 yr
10% ↑

YTD - 2 yr
-19% ↓

Year-to-date, total permits experienced an increase in quantity when compared to last year at this time, June 2013, and experienced a decrease when compared with two years ago, June 2012.



Month of June 2014						Month of June 2013		
Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Total Sq. Ft.	Heat Sq. Ft.	Amount	Permit	Unit	Amount
Single Family Home	53	53	147,995	112,468	\$9,259,043	47	47	\$7,821,378
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	3	307	\$32,373,914
Residential Addition	3	N/A	2,630	1,289	\$255,000	4	N/A	\$165,000
Residential Remodel	9	N/A	4,111	3,051	\$217,761	18	N/A	\$128,936
Residential Garage/Carport Addition	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$8,600	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Demolition	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$7,500	2	N/A	\$3,750
Residential Slab Only-SF	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-DPLX	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	0	N/A	\$0
Hotel / Motel / Inn	0	N/A	0	0	\$0	1	N/A	\$2,500,000
New Commercial	7	N/A	16,808	14,618	\$1,022,770	4	N/A	\$695,380
Commercial Remodel	11	N/A	19,260	18,352	\$1,077,600	11	N/A	\$1,013,000
Commercial Addition/Retaining Wall	0	N/A	0	0	\$0	1	N/A	\$565,000
Commercial Demolition	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$279,000	1	N/A	\$2,000
Commercial Slab Only	1	N/A	0	0	\$48,900	0	N/A	\$0
Swimming Pool	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$131,000	4	N/A	\$155,240
Sign	7	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	10	N/A	\$0
Moving & Location	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Storage / Accessory	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$140,000	1	N/A	\$3,700
Roofing	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$86,085	4	N/A	\$25,200
TOTALS	111	53	190,804	149,778	\$12,533,259	111	354	\$45,452,498

January 1, 2014 - June 30, 2014						January 1, 2013 - June 30, 2013		
Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Total Sq. Ft.	Heat Sq. Ft.	Amount	Permit	Unit	Amount
Single Family Home	424	424	1,088,423	851,878	\$69,963,772	340	340	\$52,912,104
Duplex	4	8	13,728	12,705	\$1,013,586	5	10	\$1,077,777
Tri-plex/Four-plex	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
Apartment	24	120	798,940	632,542	\$55,130,730	7	357	\$35,771,966
Residential Addition	26	N/A	18,139	10,362	\$1,368,607	18	N/A	\$934,567
Residential Remodel	86	N/A	27,486	20,334	\$1,445,877	58	N/A	\$675,587
Residential Garage/Carport Addition	7	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$136,125	7	N/A	\$116,790
Residential Demolition	21	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$84,300	38	N/A	\$94,400
Residential Slab Only-SF	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	3	N/A	\$59,500
Residential Slab Only-DPLX	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-3&4	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$102,872	1	N/A	\$40,000
Residential Slab Only-Apt.	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Hotel / Motel / Inn	3	N/A	49,728	49,728	\$13,838,226	2	N/A	\$8,100,000
New Commercial	39	N/A	164,689	149,744	\$27,296,711	28	N/A	\$24,469,988
Commercial Remodel	53	N/A	90,526	72,450	\$8,598,384	53	N/A	\$9,465,187
Commercial Addition/Retaining Wall	5	N/A	0	0	\$192,193	1	N/A	\$565,000
Commercial Demolition	7	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$327,000	11	N/A	\$890,097
Commercial Slab Only	7	N/A	0	0	\$2,524,692	5	N/A	\$2,732,513
Swimming Pool	35	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$1,577,972	22	N/A	\$1,035,490
Sign	59	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	62	N/A	\$0
Moving & Location	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Storage / Accessory	13	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$316,550	11	N/A	\$57,069
Roofing	25	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$784,002	90	N/A	\$739,360
TOTALS	841	552	2,251,659	1,799,743	\$184,701,599	762	707	\$139,737,395

Stairway Handrails

The provision of handrails increases the level of safety when occupants of a residential home use the stairways. Section 311.7.8 of the 2012 International Residential Code addresses the requirements for installing handrails. Handrails are used for guidance, stabilization, pulling and to assist in stopping a fall. This section states that a handrail must be provided on at least one side of stairs that contain four or more risers. Where handrails are required, they must be installed at a height within the limits of at least 34 inches and not more than 38 inches, measured vertically to the top of the handrail from the nosing of the stair tread. Also, handrails must be continuous for the length of the flight of stairs. The term “continuous” means not only that a single handrail must run from the top riser to the bottom riser, but it also indicates that users should be able to grasp the handrail and maintain their grasp without having to release the rail for the whole flight of stairs. For more information regarding handrails, please contact the City of



College Station Building Department at 979.764.3570.

Chris Haver C.B.O.
Building Official

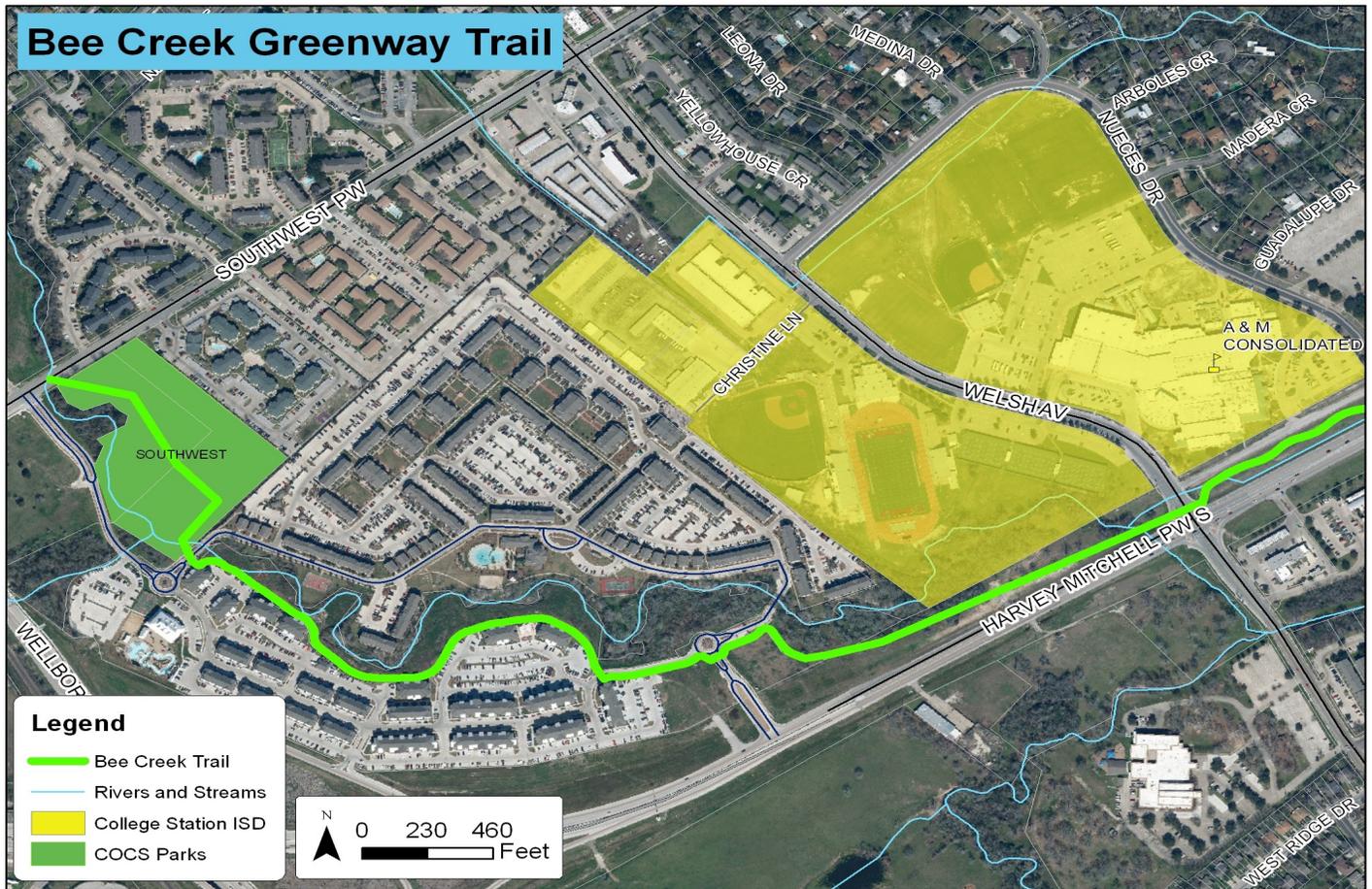
Proposed Electronic and Fuel Price Sign Changes

At the May 12th City Council Workshop, staff presented possible changes regarding electronic reader board and fuel price signage. This effort was in response to a written citizen request and requests made during Hear Citizens at a Council meeting earlier this year. Staff held a stakeholder meeting on June 13th to receive input and feedback on the revisions.

The current ordinance allows electronic reader boards but requires that there are no flashing, blinking, or traveling lights and that the electronic message change no more than once in a 24-hour period. The proposed ordinance retains the static display requirement but would allow electronic message boards to change once every 15 minutes and provides additional brightness and other standards. The brightness standards are endorsed by the International Sign Association and used by a number of Texas cities. The proposed ordinance also expands the size of fuel price signs from 16 square feet to a maximum of 21 square feet.

After a public hearing, the Planning & Zoning Commission considered the proposed changes at their July 3rd meeting and unanimously recommended approval of the changes. After a public hearing, City Council will take final action on the proposed revisions at their July 24th Regular meeting.





Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Program – UPDATE

Bee Creek Greenway Trail – NOW OPEN

The Bee Creek Greenway Trail is officially open. The City of College Station has completed the trail that is now 2.2 miles and connects from Texas Avenue South to Southwest Parkway with the newest portion running from Welsh Avenue to Southwest Parkway. It connects area neighborhoods, parks, A&M Consolidated High School and area businesses. It's a 10 foot wide concrete trail for biking and walking for recreation and transportation.

Bike Classes – COMING THIS FALL

Join us for a safety course that gives cyclists the confidence they need to ride safely and legally in traffic or on the trail. In this short course, participants learn how to conduct bicycle safety checks, fix a flat, on-bike skills and crash avoidance techniques. The curriculum blends classroom instruction, parking lot practice, and on-road riding in traffic. A bicycle and helmet will be required for this course. Anyone over the age of 14 can participate. Classes are being offered this fall for \$20 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Texas A&M University's Transit Building, located at 444 Agronomy Road.

Class Dates are currently being finalized. For more information or to sign up, go to cstx.gov/bikepedgreenways and click on Bicycling Essentials Course.

Bike Map – IT'S FREE

Plan your route using the City of College Station Bike Map & Info Guide available online at cstx.gov/bikepedgreenways. Hard copy guides can be requested online or from Venessa Garza, Greenways Program Manager, by email at vgarza@cstx.gov or by phone at 979.764.3674

College Station hits the 100,000 mark!

The City of College Station's population estimate passed the 100,000 mark in January. Today we estimate that there are 100,394 residents of College Station. Current monthly population estimates can be found online at <http://cstx.gov/Index.aspx?page=397>.

How does the City determine the population estimate?

At the first of every month, we review Certificates of Occupancy (COs) and demolitions for residential structures that were issued in the previous month. Residential structures are grouped into various categories ranging from single-family dwellings to apartments. By adding the number of new units, removing the number of demolished units, and multiplying those remaining by the average household size reported by the Census Bureau (2.38), the current population is estimated.

The monthly population number is only an estimate based on averages and does not always capture all new habitable structures. Structures with Temporary COs (TCOs) are not included in the estimate, but are included once they are issued a full CO. TCOs can be issued when the building is ready for occupancy but there are minor non-life-safety issues that still need to be addressed.

Terminology: the Census Bureau counts "population" and the City estimates "inhabitants."

The Census Bureau conducts a population count every 10 years, the most recent being in 2010 when College Station had an official *population* of 93,857. Our estimated population of over 100,000 in January is actually our count of City *inhabitants*. For simplicity, the City refers to its estimated number of inhabitants as its "population estimate." Based on State statute, cities can make decisions based on population numbers when their estimated number of inhabitants reaches 100,000 (a number created by the City) or when the Census provides the official count every 10 years. Because the monthly population estimates are only estimates, it's not an official count recognized by the Census Bureau or State statute, in some cases.



Now that we've surpassed the estimated 100,000 mark...

The City may use its discretion to make several decisions based on the inhabitant count, or it can wait until the 2020 Census for the official population count:

- **Extension of the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)** – The City of College Station's ETJ currently extends 3½ miles outside the City limit boundary. With an estimated population of 100,000, the City Council could extend the ETJ to 5 miles outside the City limits. Councils aren't required to take this step, but they may choose to do so. State law allows cities to enforce subdivision regulations in the ETJ, which ensures that substandard infrastructure is not assumed by the City as it grows. Extending the ETJ also provides the City with land that we alone can annex.
- **Financial disclosure requirements for public officials** – This provision of State Statute requires public officials such as the mayor, city council members, city attorney, city manager, and each candidate for city office to file an annual financial statement. This requirement will not be in effect until the Census officially reports College Station's population above 100,000, so it is at least six years away.

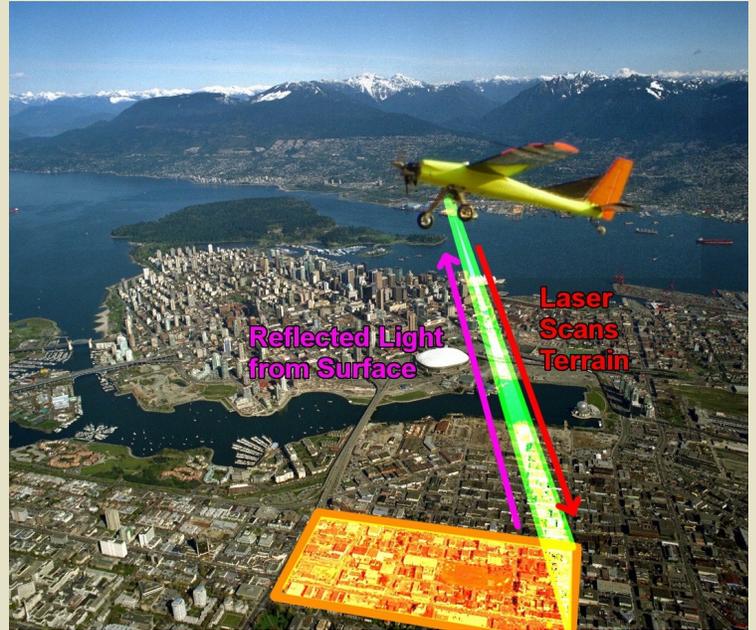
Aside from the legal implications of reaching the 100,000 milestone, some exciting changes could occur in our local economy. College Station's population estimate is attractive to retailers and restaurateurs because cities with populations over 100,000 can provide a solid, promising consumer base. That means we could attract popular businesses that typically cater to larger cities.

We're also one of only 33 Texas cities – and about 300 in the United States – with more than 100,000 people. If you have any questions about the City population's growth or demographics, please contact us by email at Comp-Plan@cstx.gov or by phone at 979.764.3570.

LiDAR Data for College Station is Available for Download

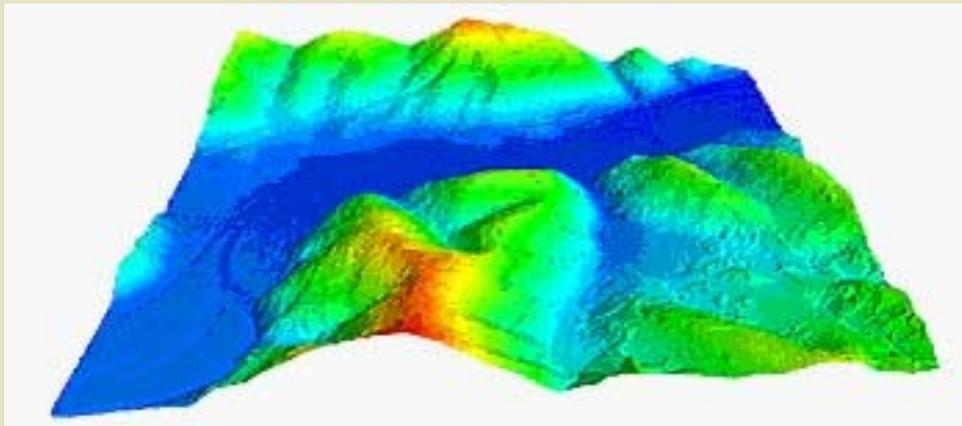
In conjunction with College Station's 2011 aerial fly-over contract with Kucera International, Inc., GeoMetrics GPS, Inc. performed a [Photogrammetric Control Survey \(2010\)](#) to provide additional, updated horizontal and vertical control for mapping by means of LiDAR. College Station's LiDAR data is comprised of tens of thousands of georeferenced points with elevations that have many uses for engineers, GIS users, and others such as creating topographic contours, creating surfaces for floodplain modeling or road design, etc. College Station's raw LiDAR data is available for download at <http://www.cstx.gov/index.aspx?page=2000> or directly at the city FTP site <ftp://ftp1.cstx.gov/>. Click the link for '2011 LiDAR.zip' and extract the compressed files for use. For additional information using the site, please view and read the 'readme.txt' file.

LiDAR (also written **LIDAR** or **Lidar** - excerpts from Wikipedia) is a remote sensing technology that measures distance by illuminating a target with a laser and analyzing the reflected light. Downward-looking lidar instruments fitted to aircraft and satellites are used for surveying and mapping. The term lidar comes from combining the words light and radar. Lidar is popularly known as a technology used to make high resolution maps – in this case, specifically contour mapping. Lidar uses ultraviolet, visible, or near infrared light to image objects and can be used with a wide range of targets, including non-metallic objects, rocks, rain, etc. A narrow laser beam can be used to map physical features with very high resolution. Lidar was developed in the early 1960s, shortly after the invention of the laser, and combined laser's focused imaging with radar's ability to calculate distances by measuring the time for the signal to return. The general public became aware of the accuracy and usefulness of lidar systems in 1971 during the Apollo 15 mission, when astronauts used a laser altimeter to map the surface of the moon.



Additional LiDAR data for other areas across the state is available directly from Texas Natural Resources Information System (TNRIS) through their Services Order Form: <https://www.tnr.org/order-form>, or they can call the TNRIS main line at 512.463.8337.

If you have any questions on College Station's LiDAR data, please contact City Engineer, Alan Gibbs, at 979.764.3570, or GIS Coordinator, Brett Blankner at 979.764.3633.



New Software to Assist in the Building & Development Review Process

The City of College Station is in the process of replacing software that we've been using for over 14 years. After a detailed assessment identifies the inability of the aging software to support the changing business needs of the City and our community, the decision was made to seek better solutions and the process of implementing the new software has begun.

How will the new software, TRAKiT, affect Planning & Development Services' customers?

eTRAKiT will allow customers the ability to perform more tasks online and out in the field (24/7 access to permits, projects, licenses, code cases, land information, and inspections). The following are just a few of the benefits regarding online access:

- Submit new projects and permits (applications, documents, drawings, etc.)
- Make payments
- Check projects, permits, or inspection status
- Review comments and drawing markups
- Change contact information
- Resubmit any necessary drawings or documents
- Schedule inspections
- Renew rental properties

eMarkup

- Staff will have the ability to review and mark up construction drawings electronically; customers can see this information through eTRAKiT

ProjectTRAK

- Customers will be notified instantly by electronic media when the following are completed:
 - ◇ Development Review Comments
 - ◇ Project approval
 - ◇ Staff Reports
 - ◇ Agendas
 - ◇ Final Plat Filed

iTRAKiT

- Inspectors will have the ability to review and approve inspections in the field
- When inspections are resulted, customers will be notified instantly about the status through electronic media (auto-generated emails or eTRAKiT)

Planning & Development Services is scheduled to go live with TRAKiT on April 15, 2015. The electronic plans review option will be implemented in phases. Later this year we'll be selecting several customers to help test the eTRAKiT module. If you're interested in participating in the testing phase or have questions regarding this exciting new software, please contact Bridgette George at bgeorge@cstx.gov or 979.764.3750.



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