

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2016



Building a Better Community with You

POPULATION: THE JUNE POPULATION ESTIMATE IS 107,062

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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 2,000 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: I own a local business in town. My distributor is sending an abundance of products, due to rising demand, that overflow shelves and our warehouse. I want to place (a portable storage container) in the parking lot to store the extra products. Do I need to get a permit?

A: Properties with an active building permit, or zoned M-2 Heavy Industrial or BPI Business Park Industrial, and not located next to residential districts, are exempt from obtaining a permit to place a storage container. If your property does not qualify for such exemptions it would be required to obtain the necessary permit depending on the duration of time the container is to be on-site.

If the container is to be on-site for temporary use, a building permit is required. This allows the container to be on-site for 45 days. Multiple storage containers are allowed if no more than 5% of the parking area is utilized or 16 parking spaces, whichever is smaller. Also, the container must meet the setbacks for the zoning district and be placed in the rear or side of the structure, where it does not interfere with on-site traffic flow. It is not allowed in the front of the structure or adjacent to public streets. An alternative location can be approved if these requirements cannot be met. A permit may be obtained up to 3 times a year, when each permit is at least 30 days apart.

If your business is in need of a storage container to be on-site permanently, a Site Plan Amendment must be submitted for review. The placement of the container must meet building setbacks and must be screened from view if visible from the street or adjacent properties. Such screening will be done with landscaping and an 8-foot wooden fence or wall. The square footage of the storage container will also be accounted in the required parking for the site.

Regardless if the container is temporary or permanent it must be placed on an improved surface, on private property, and out of the sight triangle.

For more information on portable storage containers, please contact the Planner-On-Call.

Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Program

The Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Program aims to create opportunities for residents and visitors to bike or walk for recreation or transportation, includes a network of sidewalks, trails, and bike facilities and encourages environmental stewardship. Below are some things that may be of interest to encourage you to get outdoors and involved.

BIKE CLASSES

The City of College Station offers FREE Bike Classes to help you gain the confidence you need to ride safely and legally in traffic or on the trail. Participants will 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. Anyone over the age of 14 can participate. A bicycle and helmet are required.

Class dates are currently being finalized for the FALL. Visit the following website in early August for class dates and to register: www.cstx.gov/bikepedgreenways.



BIKE MAP – IT'S FREE

Plan your next bike ride using the City of College Station Bike Map & Info Guide available online at www.cstx.gov/bikepedgreenways. The map not only shows you where to bike, but has park locations and information. Hard copy guides can be requested online or through the contact info below.

ADOPT-A-GREENWAY PROGRAM

This program encourages volunteers from area neighborhoods, churches, businesses and other groups to help maintain the city's greenway system. Keep Brazos Beautiful provides the supplies. All that's required is a two-year commitment to remove trash from a designated greenway at least twice a year. Volunteers will be recognized on the city's website and on signs along their adopted greenway.

So... what are Greenways?

Greenways are protected open spaces that follow natural features such as creeks and rivers. Some greenways link neighborhoods and parks through trails, and others are located along utility or road corridors. Most of College Station's greenways can be found along Wolf Pen Creek, Bee Creek, Lick Creek, Spring Creek, Carters Creek and their tributaries.

Greenways not only help protect wildlife and plant habitats, they also improve air and water quality by relieving traffic congestion and reducing pollution with trails for biking and walking. In addition, greenways help protect floodplains that in turn help minimize costly flood damage to developed areas. The environmental benefits are obvious, but greenways also encourage residents to live healthier lifestyles through nature-based recreation and exercise. By protecting and maintaining our greenways, we make College Station a safer, cleaner and healthier place to live.

To sign-up to help, go to www.cstx.gov/adoptagreenway.

For more information, contact Venessa Garza, Senior Greenways Program Manager at 979-764-3674 or vgarza@cstx.gov.

Traffic Impact Analyses for Single-Family Residential Development

As development occurs, more demands are placed on the existing transportation system. A traffic impact analysis is one tool the City has to mitigate these effects. The City currently has a traffic impact analysis ordinance which was adopted in 2008. The current ordinance requires a traffic impact analysis for developments generating more than 150 trips in any peak hour with a few exceptions. These exceptions include zoning requests for R-Rural, E-Estate, RS-Restricted Suburban, GS-General Suburban, D-Duplex, and T-Townhouse, as well as, site plan applications for developments within the Northgate zoning districts: NG-1, NG-2, and NG-3.

As part of the recent Five-Year Comprehensive Plan Evaluation & Appraisal Report, staff was directed to look at removing the exemption for single-family zoning districts: R-Rural, E-Estate, RS-Restricted Suburban, GS-General Suburban, D-Duplex, and T-Townhouse from the current Traffic Impact Analysis Ordinance.

Two public meetings were held in March to engage the community and stakeholders on this effort. A revised ordinance will be presented to the City Council in August.



BUILDING INSPECTIONS:

MONTH	BUILDING	PLUMBING	ELECTRIC	MECHANICAL	LAWN	SIGN	POOL	TOTAL
JANUARY	523	303	305	232	45	8	17	1,433
FEBRUARY	638	417	305	233	45	17	12	1,667
MARCH	735	465	424	267	51	8	11	1,951
APRIL	580	342	336	318	38	13	7	1,634
MAY	698	437	505	347	98	30	24	2,139
JUNE	555	368	470	358	49	18	16	1,834
TOTAL	3,733	368	2346	1756	316	95	88	10,670

With the new TRAKiT software our residential permit types have been combined, the table below provides additional details to show the Residential Subtypes.

Residential Permit	No. of Permits Issued	Valuation
Single-Family (Detached)	80	\$16,687,651
Townhomes	0	\$0
Duplex	4	\$1,052,725





BUILDING PERMIT TOTALS

<i>Month of June 2016</i>						<i>Month of June 2015</i>		
Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Total Sq. Ft.	Heat Sq. Ft.	Amount	Permit	Unit	Amount
ACCESSORY	3	1	1,440	1200	\$6,175.00	4	0	\$67,620.00
ADDITION	3	0	11,483	11023	\$384,500.00	8	4	\$269,930.00
COMMERCIAL ACCESSORY	2	0	1,116	0	\$86,588.00	0		
COMMERCIAL NEW	0					6	0	\$1,020,000.00
COMMERCIAL TENANT FINISH-OUT	4	2	10,850	9345	\$651,425.00	4	0	\$806,000.00
DEMOLITION	4	0	0	0	\$0.00	4	0	\$0.00
OTHER STRUCTURES	1	0	0	0	\$13,400.00	0		
POOL	5	0	0	0	\$411,000.00	9	0	\$400,057.00
REMODEL / RENOVATION	38	35	150,720	88241	\$4,636,396.00	85	1	\$3,671,975.00
REROOF	2	0	0	0	\$11,300.00	6	0	\$40,979.99
RESIDENTIAL	39	39	126,175	99343	\$9,559,663.22	40	40	\$10,771,078.00
RESIDENTIAL ACCESSORY	6	0	2,888	0	\$96,665.98	0		
RESIDENTIAL ADDITION ATTACHED	4	2	890	890	\$45,600.00	0		
SIGN	16	0	0	0	\$0.00	9	0	\$0.00
SLAB ONLY	0					1	0	\$140,000.00
TOTALS	127	79	305,562	210,042	\$15,902,713.20	176	45	\$17,187,639.99

<i>January 01, 2016 - June 30, 2016</i>						<i>January 01, 2015 - June 30, 2015</i>		
Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Total Sq. Ft.	Heat Sq. Ft.	Amount	Permit	Unit	Amount
ACCESSORY	22	6	11,781	4,740	\$603,863.26	13	0	\$163,570.00
ADDITION	24	14	205,879	196,950	\$4,529,640.00	39	8	\$2,230,020.00
COMMERCIAL ACCESSORY	4	0	2,376	1,260	\$127,388.00	0		
COMMERCIAL NEW	18	1	415,473	169,885	\$36,743,963.00	35	88	\$33,562,025.00
COMMERCIAL TENANT FINISH-OUT	23	5	108,860	98,098	\$7,055,224.00	4	0	\$806,000.00
DEMOLITION	57	458	0	0	\$0.00	45	15	\$277,700.00
MULTI-FAMILY	55	775	965,979	898,448	\$75,440,375.25	12	172	\$18,311,026.00
OTHER STRUCTURES	3	0	0	0	\$48,550.00	2	0	\$10,000.00
POOL	44	0	0	0	\$2,431,751.00	40	0	\$2,151,382.00
REMODEL / RENOVATION	211	98	637,922	365,816	\$14,084,940.00	155	9	\$10,584,956.26
REROOF	32	0	0	0	\$955,479.35	33	0	\$242,959.99
RESIDENTIAL	471	566	1,334,408	1,099,794	\$83,510,987.20	494	502	\$93,373,372.24
RESIDENTIAL ACCESSORY	9	0	4,252	0	\$208,665.98	0		
RESIDENTIAL ADDITION ATTACHED	6	3	1,752	1,752	\$91,439.00	0		
SIGN	89	0	0	0	\$0.00	78	0	\$80.00
SLAB ONLY	72	0	279,935	0	\$5,210,302.00	60	0	\$956,318.00
TOTALS	1140	1926	3,968,617	2,836,743	\$231,042,568.04	1010	794	\$162,669,409.49



Tracking the Numbers

New Single-Family Homes:

↓ YTD - 1 yr ↓ YTD - 2 yr
 - 15% - 5%

Year-to-date, single-family home permits experienced a decrease in quantity when compared to last year at this time, June 2015, and decreased when compared with two years ago, June 2014.

New Commercial:

↓ YTD - 1 yr ↓ YTD - 2 yr
 - 49% - 59%

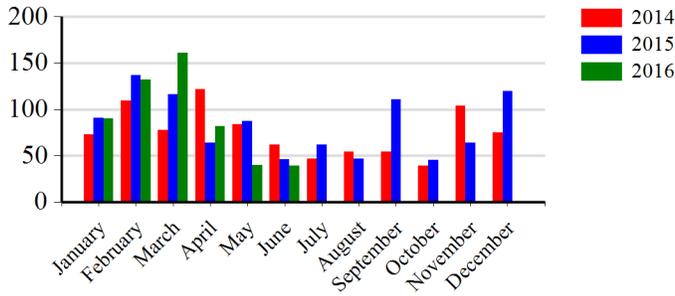
Year-to-date, new commercial permits experienced a decrease in quantity when compared to last year at this time, June 2015, and decreased when compared with two years ago, June 2014.

Total Permits:

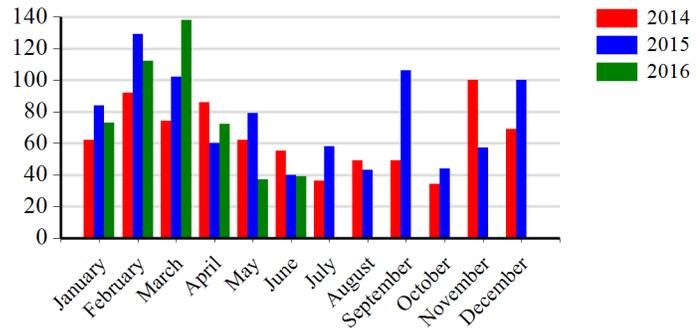
↑ YTD - 1 yr ↑ YTD - 2 yr
 13% 28%

Year-to-date, total permits experienced an increase in quantity when compared to last year at this time, June 2015, and increased when compared with two years ago, June 2014.

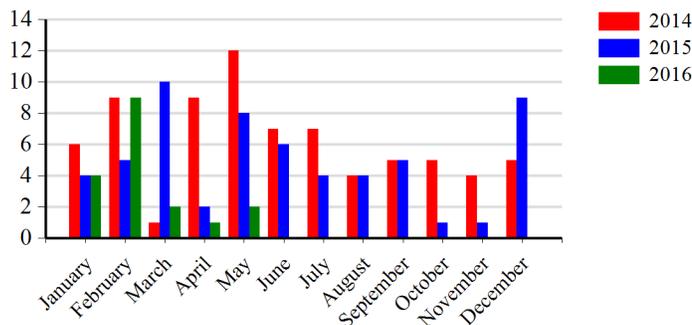
**TOTAL PERMITS
3 YEAR - COMPARISON BY MONTH**



**NEW SINGLE FAMILY PERMITS
3 YEAR - COMPARISON BY MONTH**



**NEW COMMERCIAL PERMITS
3 YEAR - COMPARISON BY MONTH**



Recommendation to Developers and Contractors: Refining a Project SWPPP



The Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) or Erosion Control Plan has a great intention but sometimes these intentions are compromised by habit, the time crunch of projects, or just the difficulties of implementing the plan. SWPPPs don't have to carry so much head ache and stress, if beginning of the leg work of developing new SWPPPs starts at analyzing the current one.

BREAK THE OLD HABIT

It can be very time consuming to implement a new plan for every project but it becomes very evident when a designer pulls an old SWPPP off the shelf, then with some quick and simple updates, the company has a new SWPPP. Even the most esteemed contractor will note that this is the same SWPPP as before then miss the current updates. If precaution is not taken, a company may be implementing a plan that is over twenty years old and missing out on cost effective and updated Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Some suggestions would include: create a front highlight page on the SWPPP to direct contractors to updates, or do a timely audit and research new BMPs on the market. For instance, set a time frame that every 4 - 6 months, a scan of the market will be done for new erosion control products and practices.

OLD SITE PROBLEMS BECOME NEW METHODS

Do you feel as though our inspectors have been continuously at your site and rarely with good news? Addressing the problem at the current site but never addressing it in future projects allows for continuous and recurring site issues. Problems on old projects give ample room for looking or developing new BMPs for future projects. For example, if silt fences are being trampled over and costly replacement is a continual concern, the answer may involve new policy of loading or staging areas and placement of silt fences. The best management practices for recurring problems is to be proactive not reactive to the situation.

TAKE A LOOK BACK TO STEP FORWARD

Take some time during the project and step back to look at the site with new eyes. Evaluate how the site operates during dry and wet seasons. Are there practices that may alleviate the problems based on seasons? Are there some less than best management practices being utilized? Use these mental notes to improve not just your current site but future sites as well. Some improvements may be as little as consistent reminders during morning huddles or as big as a retraining for a crew.



COVER THE GAPS

Regulation is not the fore runner of predicting future problems or developing ways to mitigate the new issues. Typically, development is more experienced at foreseeing upcoming problems as its development who is consistently in the field. When an issue begins to arise that will impact waterways in the future, take the first step forward and 'cover the gap'. Creative minds can flourish in this section as they think of BMPs to alleviate this concern. Great minds with great ideas can add prominence and ingenuity to the company's reputation.

RECOMMENDATIONS



The best assets are the ones already at hand. Allow for an avenue that would encourage workers to suggest new tactics or plans of attack. Employees have a great understanding of day-to-day work so that input can be advantageous. Furthermore, do internal investigating and watch the competitors' forms of BMPs in place. Be sure to note how the products fair based off of location, implementation, and dry or wet season.

CLOSURE

In the development community, SWPPPs are an environmental cornerstone to the upcoming projects. By noticing the problems of today, we can work on creating innovative and effective plans thereby protecting our state's greatest resources.

Implementation of the Wellborn Community Plan through the Creation of New Zoning Districts

The City's Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2009 and acts as a guide to ensure the goals and objectives of the City are implemented by acting as a long-range planning and policy structure for future growth of the City. The Wellborn Community Plan was adopted in April 2013 as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, establishing land uses for the newly annexed Wellborn Community. The Wellborn Community Plan is the result of a year-long planning process, bringing together various stakeholders to address issues and concerns brought up during the annexation process, and to create a guide for future development in the area.

The Wellborn Community Plan identifies 10 Future Land Use and Character designations and calls for the creation of zoning districts that align with the objectives of the Plan as one means of implementation. Since the adoption of the plan, several zoning districts have been created that can be used city wide that also comply with the vision of the Wellborn Community Plan. Using the land uses adopted as part of the Wellborn Community Plan and stakeholder feedback, staff proposes two new residential districts and one new commercial district that will only be permitted in the Wellborn Community Plan Area.

- **WE Wellborn Estate** – This district is generally for areas that, due to public service limitations or a prevailing rural character, should have limited development activities. These areas will tend to consist of low-density single-family residential lots of two acres or more but may be one acre if clustered around undeveloped open space.
- **WRS Wellborn Restricted Suburban** – This district is generally for areas that should have a moderate level of development activities. These areas will tend to consist of medium-density single-family residential lots (minimum 20,000 square feet) and may be clustered for reduced lot sizes (minimum 8,000 square feet). When using the cluster option, open space should be provided so density is not increased. Such open space should be in addition to a minimum open space requirement of 15% of the developing area.
- **WC Wellborn Commercial** - This district is generally for concentrations of commercial activities that focus primarily on the nearby residents versus the larger community. Such uses shall be limited in size and not accommodate for drive-thru services. Specific design elements should be incorporated into such developments so as to limit the visual impact on the community and enhance the defined character.

Public Input Process – A focus group meeting was held on November 10, 2015 at the Greens Prairie Elementary School, to discuss draft concept sheets for the new districts based on the direction of the Wellborn Community Plan. Information gathered during the meeting was used to revise the draft fact sheets and posted online for public review which was open from February 18, 2016 to March 11, 2016.

The Planning and Zoning Commission heard this item at their meeting on June 16, 2016, and voted unanimously to recommend approval to City Council. This item will be heard by City Council at their meeting on July 28, 2016.

For more information on the new zoning districts, contact Jessica Bullock at jbullock@cstx.gov or 979-764-3570. More detailed information can also be found online at www.cstx.gov/ndcplanning.

