

# What's Going On?

January 2004

A Report to the Honorable Mayor and City Council

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## City Reinvents Web Site

The City of College Station will unveil its new website on February 3, 2004. On January 15, 2004, members of the senior computer education class re-viewed the site and gave Stacey Arnold, the City's E-Government coordinator, input on how to make the site even better. The seniors were impressed by the site, and found it to be user friendly, Arnold reported. City staff will author departmental homepages and maintain the sites. They will also be responsible for any news update, calendar events, e-notifier features, and any general changes that will need to be made on a periodic basis.

The new site features:

- *a new look*
- *citizen friendly format this is service based*
- *extensive searches*
- *survey tools for employees to evaluate programs and processes*
- *e-notifier*

- *calendars and detailed events*
- *weekly internet feature that shows viewers the most up-to-date happenings*
- *on-line bidding from the Purchasing Division*
- *the new Human Resources interactive sites*
- *e-pay for convenient utility payments*
- *department pages that are updated and maintained on a regular and consistent basis*
- *friendly content management that allows each department to have their own web master*

**VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE:**

[www.cstx.gov](http://www.cstx.gov)

## Update on Southside Traffic Calming

The City Council recently approved the bid award for construction to carry out the traffic calming program for the Southside area of College Station.

Texcon General Contractors will complete the Southside Traffic Calming project. The labor, materials and equipment required for the improvements related to the project, total \$93,033. Funding for this project is budgeted in the Streets Capital Improvements Fund. The project includes: a lane narrowing median, curb

extension, landscape enhancement, centerline pavement stripes and reflective buttons. On May 22, 2003, the City Council unanimously approved the traffic calming plan for this project area. The approved

plan includes the area just north of Dexter to just south of Fairview (east to west— from George Bush Drive to Holleman).

The final plan was the result of an extensive

effort to include stakeholders in the Southside Area in order to have to receive input into what traffic calming measures would be enacted in the area. This process included a series of 9 meetings in which residents developed a traffic calming plan. Once the plan was developed, ballots were mailed to area residents and property owners to allow them to vote for or against the plan. Sixty-eight percent of residents in the area favored this project. Texcon will begin construction in early February.

### *The Southside Traffic Calming project includes:*

- *lane narrowing median*
- *curb extension*
- *landscape enhancement*
- *centerline pavements stripes*
- *reflective buttons*

## College Station Installs Three New Traffic Signals

Three new traffic signals began service in College Station in January. The new lights are located at Texas Avenue and Manual Drive near Target, George Bush Drive East and Holleman Drive, and University and Forest Drive by the Scott and White



Clinic. Lee Robinson, the City's Traffic Systems Supervisor, said that getting a new signal in place typically take 12 to 15 months from start to finish. The City studies the number of vehicles passing through an area, pedestrian traffic and the amount of accidents in specific locations. "On Texas Avenue, for instance, we've got 40,000-plus peo-

ple a day going through there...It makes it difficult for people to make left turns on to Texas Avenue from those side streets." The cost for each signal: Texas Avenue and Manual, \$150,164; University Drive and Forest Drive, \$161,403; and George Bush Drive East and Holleman Drive, \$102,605.

The photo on the left is one of the three new signals. This signal is located at the intersection of Texas Avenue and Manual Drive, near Target.

## College Station Public Library Now Open on Sunday

For the past several years, there has been considerable interest in having access to the public library on Sunday. The College Station library board has strongly been in favor of increasing the hours of operation for the City's library. Originally, efforts to pursue this initiative were not successful, due to financial restraints. However, after careful evaluation by City staff and the Community Librarian, it was determined that the

expansion of operating hours, to include Sundays, was possible. In fact, this operations expansion was accomplished without additional resource allocation.

The College Station Public Library, began its Sunday hours on January 4, 2004. The Bryan library shares the same hours of operation on Sundays. The Library also recently replaced carpet in needed areas.

The work areas behind the counter and the large meeting room were replaced with either tiles or carpet tiling. The work was completed during the Christmas holidays.

### **Library Hours:**

**Monday, Wednesday 9 a.m.—9 p.m.; Tuesday, Thursday 9 a.m.—7 p.m.; Friday, Saturday 9 a.m. -5 p.m.; Sunday 1:30 p.m. -5:30 p.m.**

## State of Risk Management in the First Quarter of FY 2004

The first quarter of FY 2004 was a good one for the Risk Management Division. The City paid out less on all claims than was collected in subrogation, resulting in a surplus of \$34,277. These payout results are very encouraging. Auto Physical Damage payments are down 60% from the same period in FY 02 and down 22% from the same period in FY 03. Likewise, liability payments continue to decrease from the previous fiscal years.

Claim payments are down 78% from the same period in FY 03 and 25% from Q1 FY 02. Lastly, workers compensation payouts are down 71% from Q1 FY 03 and 42% from Q1 FY 02. Risk Management acknowledges and commends the City staff for the team work effort required in achieving these results. These trends will be maintained through education and cooperation.

***“Risk Management acknowledges and commends the city staff for the team work effort...”***

## 2004 Christmas Tree Recycling Project a Success

The Cities of College Station and Bryan conducted the 16th annual Christmas Tree Recycling project on Saturday, January 3, 2004. As usual, this project received tremendous volunteer support from the Brazos County 4-H Equestrian Club. This group supplied numerous volunteers to staff drop-off locations in College Station's Central Park, where 345 trees were taken in, and at Bryan's Haswell Park, where 197 trees were dropped off.

In addition, both city's Sanitation Divisions picked up Christmas trees on their normal yard waste routes (duplex and single family residences). Between December 26 and January 10, a total of 989 trees were picked up curbside in College Station, and 543 in Bryan. Finally, an additional 333 trees were delivered directly to the compost facility. This gives a total of 2,407 trees taken in by this year's recycling

project. The goal of this annual event is to save space in the landfill by diverting the trees to other uses, and to help educate the public on year-round recycling efforts. In Bryan, the trees taken in at Haswell Park were taken to the compost facility. The trees taken in at Central Park were chipped on site and spread throughout the picnic area by the ponds.

The chips will help alleviate soil compaction caused by foot traffic, reduce soil erosion, and will provide nutrients to the soil. Prior to the recycling project, Christmas tree lot operators were notified by the College Station and Bryan Sanitation Divisions of the chance to dispose of leftover stock at no cost at the compost facility. Roll-off containers were made available to some tree lots at their request.

Many thanks and recognition should go to all the workers involved in this annual event. This includes the College Station Parks and Recreation Forestry Division, the Sanitation Divisions of both Bryan and College Station, the Public Relation divisions of both cities, the Brazos Valley Solid Waste Management Agency, and especially the volunteer efforts of the Brazos County 4-H Equestrian Club.

**Sponsors of the event were:**  
**Keep Brazos Beautiful**  
**Brazos Co. 4-H Equestrian Club**  
**Brazos Valley Solid Waste Management Agency**  
**Bryan/College Station Eagle**  
**Cities of Bryan and College Station**  
**Texas Forest Service**

## College Station hosted the Texas Public Pool Council Conference

During the first week of January, the 22nd anniversary of the Texas Public Pool Council Conference (TPPC) was held at the Hilton. Included in the speaker list, included the City's Human Resources Director Julie O'Connell, Assistant Human Resources Director Carolyn Sander, Master Officer Rhonda Seaton, Sergeant Greg Leeth and the City Communications Director Becky Nugent.

The Texas Public Pool Council is the idea of a former College Station Parks and Recreation employee, Charles Szabuniewicz. He saw the need for aquatic professionals to come together as a group to network and discuss industry standards. Over the past 20 years, this group has grown from a handful of concerned pool operators, to a nationally recognized leader in the aquatics industry.

The Texas Public Pool Council Board of Directors meet quarterly throughout the state, and hold a conference annually for educational purposes for its membership. College Station has hosted this conference for the past 22 years.

During the last few years, this council has grown to include health inspectors from the Texas Health Department and Code Enforcement Officers.

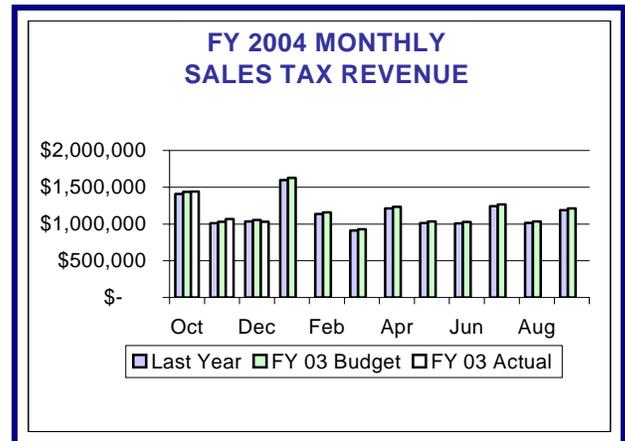
The Texas Pool Council was instrumental in updating the State of Texas regulation for pool operations. The TPPC has become a nationally recognized conference and used as a prototype for other states. The Texas Public Pool Council consists of members from Texas cities, private industry, private pool management companies, and the five state area surrounding Texas.



## Local Sales Tax Receipts

The City collected **\$1,030,852.81** for the month of December, **0.35%** below the same month last year. The December receipts are for sales that occurred in November. Sales tax collections for FY 04 YTD are **\$3,538,331.29** or **2.42%** above FY 03 collections. Sales tax receipts have increased by 2.37% when comparing the last 12 months to the previous 12 months.

Overall, state tax receipts have increased in the last several months. Sales tax is projected to grow 2% in FY 04.



## City of College Station Announces Citizens' University Class of 2004

The seventh class of the College Station Citizens' University has been selected. These 24 residents of College Station will spend 10 weeks learning about the goals, objectives, activities, philosophies and other inner-workings of the City.

The class consists of a diverse group of people who are sincerely interested in knowing how their city works so they may become more positively active in local government.

For the past six years, the College Station Citizens' University has been very successful in helping residents understand their local

government and preparing them for roles on boards and committees or even elected office.

City staff has been very supportive and involved in developing a good program with opportunities to interact with local residents in a positive learning environment.

The class is offered once a year in the spring and is free to participants.

## Martin Luther King Celebration at the Lincoln Center

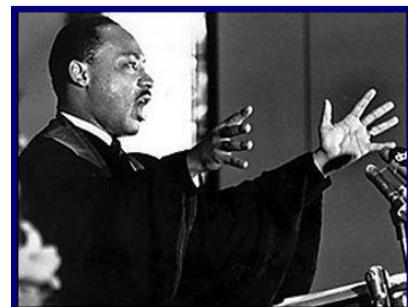
The City of College Station's Lincoln Center and Parks & Recreation Department presented its annual Martin Luther King Celebration and Musical Tribute, on Saturday, January 17 at 6:30 p.m. The celebration will take place at the Lincoln Center, located at 1000 Eleanor Street in College Station.

The guest speaker was be Mr. Andrew Jake White of Colleyville, Texas, Lincoln High Former Student Class of 1962. Special guests included TAMU's Voices of Praise, The Dixon Kids of Houston, Texas, Gospel Stars of Austin, Texas, and End Time Missionary Pentecostal Church of Bryan. Master of Ceremony was Mr. Gary Cochran, Youth Minister of A&M Church of

Christ of College Station, Texas. Additional program guests included the Members of the Lincoln Former Students Association, Anointed Voices of Praise, other Brazos Valley community participants, and the Brazos Valley Boys and Girls Club Lincoln Unit youth.

The mission of the Lincoln Recreation Center is to enhance the quality of life for the diverse group of people which comprises the Brazos Valley Community and assist in the mental and physical growth of youth through ongoing programs and activities while strengthening the community by providing a safe nurturing environment with recreational, educational, and cultural activities which promote learning,

leadership, and high self-esteem. The Lincoln Recreation Center is also known as the headquarters for the Boys and Girls Club of the College Station. The Center is also a Texas Historical Landmark – the former site of the formal education for African –American in College Station during the 1941-1965.



## Wellness in the New Year...

Maintaining those New Year resolutions will be easier this year, thanks to the efforts of the City of College Station's Human Resources division.

From a new gym to Weight Watchers, Human Resources is ensuring that employees have opportunities to live healthier.

A new gym for City employee use opened on January 20, 2004. The gym is located in the Community Development building (former Fire Administration building) next door to City Hall. The gym is open for use by all City employees Monday through Friday from the hours of 6:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Because of space

constraints, the gym is not available to employee family and friends.

The equipment available in the new gym includes: two treadmills, an elliptical machine, an exercise bike, a dip station, a bench press, a strength training machine, and free weights. A separate room for aerobics, complete with a television and VCS is located next to the fitness room. Showers, lockers and restrooms are available for use by gym patrons. The City also offers discount membership programs through Gold's Gym and Aerofit. Human Resources is looking at bringing in Weight Watchers to interested City employees.

The Weight Watcher program will have scheduled meetings during a

lunch hour at a city facility . Weight Watchers has taught millions of members how to lose weight. Currently, more than one million members attend one of over 37,000 weekly Weight Watchers meetings in 30 countries worldwide.

These efforts are part of the preventative wellness program that the Human Resources division has been promoting.



## 2003 Calendar Year Building Activity

	January 1, 2003-December 31, 2003			January 1, 2002-December 31, 2002		
Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Amount	Permit	Unit	Amount
Single Family Home	737	737	\$101,124,252	740	740	\$74,189,399
Duplex	94	188	\$14,707,796	67	134	\$7,164,681
Apartment	23	205	\$15,559,157	17	299	\$19,179,480
Hotel/Motel/Inn	1	1	\$3,000,000	0	0	\$0
New Commercial	51	N/A	\$30,453,847	62	N/A	\$33,500,967
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,442*</b>	<b>1,161*</b>	<b>\$187,893,414*</b>	<b>1,514*</b>	<b>1,221*</b>	<b>\$146,834,073*</b>

*\*totals include single-family home, duplex, tri-plex/four-plex, apartment, residential remodel, residential demolition, residential slab only, hotel/motel/inn, new commercial, commercial remodel, commercial demolition, commercial slab only, swimming pool, sign, moving & location, storage/accessory and roofing permits.*

Despite the slow economy, the City fell just three permits short of last year's record of 740 single-family homes. A very unusual late year surge in permitting brought the total number of permitted single-family homes to 737. The reported per dwelling construction cost (absent lot/land cost) surged 37% over last years reported numbers.

The number of duplex permits increased by 27, and the total cost more than doubled, an increase of \$7,543,115 over 2002.

While apartment permits increased, total cost dropped \$3,620,323. New commercial construction saw a late year surge, but was less than 2002 by \$3 million. The final total on new construction cost is \$30,453,847.

Total reported construction, not including any land cost, was up 28% in 2003 over 2002's record total.

The final total was \$187,893,414. This is an increase of \$41,059,341.

## City of College Station

1101 Texas Avenue  
College Station, TX 77845  
Email: [cmo@cstx.gov](mailto:cmo@cstx.gov)



*College Station.  
Embracing the Past,  
Exploring the Future.*

## SHINING MOMENTS

- **Katie Elrod**, the City's Neighborhood Services Staff Planner, was thanked by David Woodcock, professor of an architecture class at Texas A&M University. She was thanked for taking the time to meet with the Introduction to Historic Preservation class. Mr. Woodcock also extended his gratitude to the City staff, Mayor and City Council for the presentation made at the December 4th Council meeting. He looks forward to working with the City in the future.
- **Steve Beachy** received a letter of thanks from Travis H. Small, Jr. for his appreciation for the Parks and Recreation Department's involvement in the Brazos Valley Veterans Memorial project. "On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Brazos Valley Veterans Memorial and the patriotic people of our community, I wish to express our appreciation to you and your staff for your passionate support of the memorial project over the last 3-4 years. Your excellent leadership has been so integral to our successes and I, along with countless others, have an extreme sense of humility and gratefulness to you for the manner in which you have shared the vision that we all have."
- **Curtis Bingham** was recognized by the Special Olympics of Texas for his involvement in making their Fall Classic an incredible success.
- The **Parks Department** received a letter of thanks from a citizen for the great job they did with Christmas in the Park. Wes Wynn wrote "The event was well organized, the workers were very friendly and personable, and the lights were beautiful. Thank you for all the hard work putting it together – it is very much appreciated."
- **Pamela Springfield** received recognition and a "thank you" note from Travis H. Small, Jr. and the Brazos Valley Veterans Memorial Board of Directors for the work that she has done for them. She was also given the title of Assistant Secretary to the Board.
- City Manager **Tom Brymer** and Public Works Director **Mark Smith** were thanked for their quick response and attention to the Pebble Creek Parkway entrance at Greens Prairie Road. The Pebble Creek Owner Association wrote, "You seem to have a great system of communication and we appreciate all that you do!"
- City Secretary **Connie Hooks** was accepted into the International Institute of Municipal Clerks Master Municipal Clerk Academy. Only 1,636 Municipal Clerks out of the 10,300 registered with IIMC have reached this goal.

## SAVE THE DATE....

The 3rd Annual Brazos Valley Transportation Summit is coming soon!

George Bush Presidential Library and Conference Center  
April 22-23, 2004

For more information:  
[tti.tamu.edu/conferences/bvts](http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/bvts)  
(979) 764-3570

