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## Cedar Park VA clinic to launch expansion

With area growth, VA announces second location in about two years

#### **BY CAITLIN PERRONE**

When the Central Texas Veterans Health Care System opened its Cedar Park community-based outpatient clinic in September 2016, CTVHCS Director Christopher Sandles said the organization had planned for the building to hold five primary care teams.

However, the health care system recently selected its seventh primary care team for the facility on 600 N. Bell Blvd.

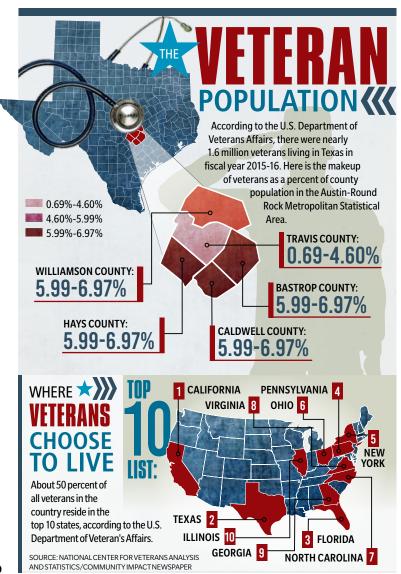
"We've had to do moving and shifting of the staff to make seven teams fit," he said.

As population growth has affected industries throughout Central Texas, the regional VA health care system has also felt the impact. In July, the CTVHCS announced the second expansion to the Cedar Park clinic in about two years.

The CTVHCS is planning to lease a roughly 26,000-square-foot facility adjacent to Cedar Park Regional Medical Center, along with maintaining its current property on Bell.

The expansion announcement comes

CONTINUED ON 40



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**CEDAR PARK** 

LEANDER EDITION











## As Leander evolves, city's agricultural trends shift



#### Data: Percentage of farmland falling

#### BY **ABBY BORA**

Frank Stiles is a fourth-generation Leander resident and veterinarian at the South San Gabriel Animal Clinic. When he first began his practice in 1986, around half of his patients were horses, cows, goats and sheep, he said. Now, he estimates around 98 percent of his job is serving small animals.

"Most of the farmland [and] most of the cows are gone now," Stiles said.

In addition to beef cattle and other livestock, he said the Leander area used to see a lot of cotton production with three cotton gins in the area. The gins closed by the 1960s, he said.



Roopal Bhatt was hit by an SUV while she was walking with her son and daughter.

It took months of therapy for her to learn how to walk again.

Watch her story at stdavids.com.







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**ABOUT US** 

John and Jennifer Garrett began Community Impact Newspaper in 2005 in Pflugerville, Texas. The company's mission is to build communities of informed citizens and thriving businesses through the collaboration of a passionate team.

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#### Local veteran population, agriculture highlighted

Our top stories this month, which begin on the front page, are important stories to tell in Cedar Park and Leander.

In her story, Editor Caitlin Perrone takes a look at the growing veteran population in the Central Texas area. She writes about how the Cedar Park Veterans Affairs clinic has needed to expand twice in about two years due to the growth.

The story describes how legislation and telehealth advancements have helped local veterans get the care they need and how care offerings will expand in the future.

Our second top story is a look at the

history and status of farming in the Leander area. Reporter Abby Bora tells the story of how Williamson County's land has gone from consisting of 95.5 percent farmland in 1950 to the growing extension of Austin it is today.

Farming is still a contributing factor in the lives of some people in Leander, and programs like Future Farmers of America are preparing the city's youth for a career in agriculture. This story is a fun look at the changes that have taken place throughout the history of the Leander area, along with some surprising facts.

Enjoy!



Joe Warner

MANAGING EDITOR jwarner@communityimpact.com

#### **ASK THE EDITOR**



Ceille Lema

Caitlin Perrone
EDITOR
cperrone@communityimpact.com

Do you have a question about how local government works or something going on in town? Send it to lcpfeedback@communityimpact.com.

## What does 'Community Impact Newspaper' report on the Web?

Once a month this paper arrives in your mailbox with local, useful news about your community, but at communityimpact.com, you can find even more news in a faster, briefer format. Although *Community Impact Newspaper* is a print-focused publication—which is becoming more of a rarity in today's media world—we strive to fulfill our mission and our commitment to readers through a robust digital presence that complements the deeper reporting you read in print every month.

That includes immediate coverage of Cedar Park and Leander city councils, the Leander ISD board of trustees and the Travis and Williamson county commissioners courts, as well as daily updates on new businesses, transportation projects, development updates and more in and around our area. You can also follow our news coverage by signing up for one of our free email newsletters, or you can connect with our editors and reporters on social media.

#### FEATURED STORIES

**6** IMPACTS

Now Open, Coming Soon & more

**13** TRANSPORTATION Toll 183A frontage roads gain support of the Mobility Authority

**17** DEVELOPMENT NEWS iSports development breaking ground this fall in Cedar Park

**21** PUBLIC SAFETY Cedar Park police review calls for departmental changes

**33** BUSINESS FEATURE Freedom Fun USA in Leander

**35** DINING FEATURE Tio Loco Tex-Mex in Austin

**45** REAL ESTATE LISTINGS

**49** IMPACT DEALS

#### Correction:

Volume 13, Issue 4

On page 15, the phone number for the Austin Steam Train Association was incorrect. The correct number is 512-402-3830.



### **Full Scratch Kitchen**

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#### **NOW OPEN**

1 BC's Backyard Bar & Grill opened to the public Aug. 3. The restaurant and music venue replaces Lone Star Grille & Amphitheater, which closed Dec. 23. BC's Backyard Bar & Grill serves comfort food and offers indoor and outdoor seating for patrons. In the future, an upstairs area called "The Devil's Advocate Lounge" will open for customers aged 21 years and older. The venue plans to hold children's arts and craft activities on Saturdays and Sundays, music events, movie nights and private parties. The restaurant will begin hosting live music in its yard Aug. 12 at 1 p.m. 1501 E. New Hope Drive, Cedar Park. 512-659-0300. www.bcbackyard.com

2 Da-fan Club Bar & Grill, 15609 Ronald

Reagan Blvd., Ste. A100, Leander opened June 1. The restaurant offers American food from appetizers to entrees and hosts karaoke and trivia events. 737-808-3804. www.dafanclubbarandgrill.com

3 Ismaili Jamatkhana, a center for the Ismaili Muslim community, held a grand opening ceremony Aug. 7. The center is part of a worldwide network intended to pursue

learning and interfaith exchange. It also serves as a location for the Ismaili community to practice prayer. It is located at 2401 S. Lakeline Blvd., Cedar Park. 832-922-0579. www.theismaili.org

4 Lavish Nails & Spa opened June 17 at 12160 W. Parmer Lane, Ste. 140, Cedar Park. The nail salon, which is located in the Presidio development, offers manicures and pedicures. 512-761-4344. www.lavishnailscedarpark.com

**5 Monster Donuts** opened June 25 in Leander. The shop serves coffee, donuts, donut holes, kolaches and breakfast sandwiches. It is located at 1825 Crystal Falls Parkway, Ste. 140, Leander. 512-337-5296

6 Muse Parlour opened June 1 at 11892 Hero Way West, Ste. F, Leander. The luxury spa and salon offers services such as haircuts, hair coloring, balayage, intensive skin care, eyelash extensions and waxing. 512-337-2039. www.museparlour.com

**Rockstar Bagels** opened July 4 in Smooth Village, an Airstream trailer village located in Old Town Leander. The new trailer serves fresh bagels, cream cheese, breakfast sandwiches, lox, coffee and juice Wednesday-Sunday from 7 a.m.-2 p.m. at 203 W. Broade St., Leander. 512-698-1839. www.rockstarbagels.com/trailer

8 The UPS Store opened June 25 at 12160 W. Parmer Lane, Ste. 130, Cedar Park. The shop offers shipping, notary services, shredding and more at Presidio, a mixeduse development in the city. 737-202-4430. www.theupsstorelocal.com/6954

9 Vitality Bowls opened June 28 at 1310 Cypress Creek Road, Cedar Park. The restaurant serves acai bowls, desserts, soup and salad. 512-291-6221. www.vitalitybowls.com

#### **COMING SOON**

tioney & Hay will open in late August at 2800 E. Whitestone Blvd., Ste. 105, Cedar Park. The shop will sell products such as home decor and gifts. Readers with questions may email hello@honeyandhay.com. www.honeyandhay.com

**11 One World Rec Center** is scheduled to open Sept. 1 at 600 S. Bell Blvd., Ste. 20, Ce-



dar Park. The center will offer an after-school program for individuals with disabilities; a coffee shop called Respite Café, which will be staffed by young adults who have disabilities; a drop-in daycare; and adapted activities such as martial arts, yoga and theater classes for individuals with disabilities. 512-804-8103. www.1worldrc.com

12 Construction on The Shops at San Gabriel Ridge, which will include approximately 46,000 square feet of restaurant and retail, will be complete in late August or September. The shopping center will be located at southwest corner of Whitewing Drive and US 183 outside of the city of Leander. In the months after construction is complete, restaurant and retail tenants are expected to open in the center, including a new Furniture Market location. 512-750-3711. www.theshopsatsangabrielridge.com

#### **NEW MANAGEMENT**

13 Sammy Wallace was named as the general manager of the H-E-B Center at Cedar Park, according to a July 19 statement from the center. The H-E-B Center is operated by management company SMG. Wallace previously worked as the H-E-B Center's assistant vice president of booking and marketing and assistant general manager. For the past two years, he served as the general manager of another SMG venue, the Wagner Noël Performing Arts Center in Midland, according to the statement. H-E-B Center at Cedar Park is located at 2100 Avenue of the Stars, Cedar Park. 512-600-5000. www.hebcenter.com

#### **ANNIVERSARIES**

14 CareNow Urgent Care, a clinic associated with St. David's HealthCare, celebrated the one-year anniversary for its Cedar Park location Aug. 1. The clinic officially opened last August and provides urgent care with a physician on-site at 5001 Toll 183A, Cedar Park. 512-595-7000. www.carenow.com

15 On Sept. 1, Jack Brown Cleaners is celebrating the 20-year anniversary of its location at 801 N. Bell Blvd., Cedar Park. The store offers drive-thru and same-day services, including dry-cleaning, alterations and shoe cleaning. 512-219-5847.

#### COMPILED BY ABBY BORA, **AMY DENNEY AND YUE YU**

News or questions about Cedar Park and Leander? Email us at lcpnews@communityimpact.com.

www.jackbrowncleaners.com

16 Simply Crowns celebrated its oneyear anniversary June 16. The business offers four dentistry services—crowns, veneers, bridges and implant crowns—with the goal of reducing costs for patients, according to Simply Crowns' co-founder Kyle Pletcher. It is located at 10601 Pecan Park Blvd., Ste. 101, Austin. In January, Simply Crowns opened another location in San Antonio. Over the past year, Simply Crowns has served 825 patients with 1135 crowns, Pletcher said. 512-539-8558. www.simplycrowns.com

17 ThunderCloud Subs' location at the Village at Cedar Park opened in August 10 years ago at 700 E. Whitestone Blvd., Ste. B200, Cedar Park. The company, which offers sub sandwiches, has locations throughout the area. 512-259-8815. www.thundercloud.com

#### NAME CHANGE

18 Owner Tom Snyder is rebranding the Caffe Yolly coffee shop in July into Illuminate Coffee Bar. Illuminate Coffee Bar, located at 12129 N. RM 620, Ste. 102, Austin, hosted a launch party July 28. Snyder said Illuminate Coffee Bar makes its own flavors in-house and infuses craft lattes with coconut oil. The coffee bar will also be roasting its own beans in-house. 512-468-5575. www.illuminatecoffeebar.com

19 Leander KOA Campground celebrated its rebranding as Leander KOA Holiday on June 12. It offers campgrounds for campers and includes upgraded patio sites and deluxe cabins with full bathrooms. The business plans to break ground in December for 40 additional spaces at 2689 Hero Way, Leander. 406-254-7409. www.nwaustinkoa.com

#### IN THE NEWS

20 Among electric utility companies in the country, Pedernales Electric Cooperative was ranked No. 10 for customer



The **Grove Wine Bar and Kitchen** hit its first anniversary milestone July 11 at 1310 E. Whitestone Blvd., Ste. 500, Cedar Park. The Cedar Park location for the company, which has several restaurants in the Greater Austin area, includes outdoor seating and serves lunch, dinner, happy hour, brunch and a selection of wine. 512-986-7041. www.grovewinebar.com/cedar-park

satisfaction in the J.D. Power 2018 Electric **Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction** Survey, according to a July 17 statement from the PEC. The survey also ranked the PEC as No. 7 for customer satisfaction among electric utility cooperatives, according to the statement. The PEC has an office in Cedar Park at 1949 W. Whitestone Blvd., Cedar Park. 512-331-8883. www.pec.coop

21 The rehabilitation of the Upper **Brushy Creek Water Control & Im-**Project of the Year by the Texas Chapter of the American Public Works Association in the structures category on June 28. The dam is located on Brushy Creek at the edge of Cedar Park and Austin, next to Brushy Creek Lake Park. The project was completed this spring and modernized the dam to meet current dam safety regulations, according to a statement from Williamson County. The dam rehabilitation project was recognized during the Texas Chapter of the American Public Works Association's annual conference in Fort Worth in June. www.upperbrushycreekwcid.org







provement District's Dam 7 was named

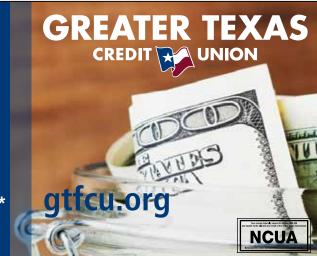
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AUG. 23, 27

## Leander ISD holds middle, high school open houses

Seventh- and eighth- grade open houses are on Aug. 23, while high school open houses are on Aug. 27. Families meet their students' teachers and see the classrooms. Various times and campuses. Free. Call your school for more details. www.leanderisd.org

AUG. 25

## Treasure of the Hills Senior Activity Center holds expo

Sponsored by Cedar Park and the senior center, the expo features 45 vendors and free flu shots for Medicare recipients.
9 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. Cedar Park Recreation Center, 1435 Main St., Cedar Park.
512-331-6000. www.toth-seniors.com

COURTESY TREASURE OF THE HILLS SENIOR ACTIVITY CENTER

AUG. 28

## Leander residents may offer input on city parks

Leander is creating a plan for parks and recreation. Residents can submit feedback for future parks at a public input meeting or through an online survey. 5:30-7 p.m. Free. Pat Bryson Municipal Hall, 201 N. Brushy St., Leander. 512-528-9909. www.leandertx.gov



SEPT. 2

FUNNEL CAKES

## Cedar Park's Splash Jam features family activities

Splash Jam features live music, carnival games, fireworks and inflatables. Washer tournament begins at 4 p.m. Festival starts at 6 p.m. Free admission. Milburn Park, 1901 Sun Chase Blvd., Cedar Park. 512-401-5500. www.cedarparktexas.gov

COURTESY CITY OF CEDAR PAI



Your ultimate local guide for events, business openings, meetings and more in the months of August and September

Find more or submit Leander and Cedar Park events at **communityimpact.com/lcp-calendar**.

Event organizers can submit local events online to be considered for the print edition. Submitting details for consideration does not guarantee publication.



SEPT 5

## Hope Alliance speaker presents to MOMS Club

MOMS Club of Leander features a speaker about domestic abuse and tips to teach children how to establish healthy boundaries. 9:30 a.m. Free. Life Church Leander, 1393 E. Woodview Drive, Leander. www.leandermomsclub.wixsite. com/moms-club-of-leander

AUG. 25

## Dive-in Movies series continues in Leander

The city of Leander hosts its Dive-in Movies series and presents a screening of "Sherlock Gnomes." 7:30 p.m. \$2. Robin Bledsoe Park pool, 601 S. Bagdad Road, Leander. 512-528-9909. www.leandertx.gov/parksrec

COURTESY CITY OF LEANDER

SEPT. 7

## 'Early Man' film showing held at Mason Homestead

Event attendees watch "Early Man," a PG-rated comedy set in prehistoric times. Music and games are scheduled before the movie. Movie begins at dusk. Free. Mason Homestead, 1101 S. Bagdad Road, Leander. 512-528-9909. www.leandertx.gov/parksrec

SEPT. 7, 14

## Cedar Park hosts Movies in the Park series events

Families are invited to the city's Movies in the Park series. Attendees can bring a picnic, blankets and lawn chairs. 8 p.m. (Sept. 7), 7:45 p.m. (Sept. 14). Free. Elizabeth Milburn Park, 1901 Sun Chase Blvd., Cedar Park. 512-401-5500. www.cedarparktexas.gov

SEPT. 8

## Hazardous household waste collected in Leander

Residents are invited to safely dispose of items, such as cleaning products. Check online for accepted items. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Free for Williamson County residents. City of Leander Public Works, 607 Municipal Drive, Leander. 512-759-8881. www.williamsoncountylandfill.wm.com



See a list of full events at communityimpact.com/lcp-calendar.



Friday • 8/24

Renaissance Night

first 2.500 fans

Saturday · 8/25

Andy Roddick Texas Legends

Bobblehead Giveaway to the

presented by The Sanders Family

Thursday • 8/30

Fan Appreciation Night

**GET TICKETS** 

Postgame Fireworks

Bud Light Friday Fireworks

#### **Brew for the Heart event** aims to fight heart disease

Featuring beer, music and a raffle, the event benefits the organization Heart-Gift. 1-5 p.m. Free. Whitestone Brewery, 601 E. Whitestone Blvd., Bldg. 5, Ste. 500, Cedar Park. 714-743-3470. www.facebook.com/brewfortheheart

**UPCOMING GAMES** 

#### SEPT. 15

#### **Cedar Park Police hold** children's safety seminar

The class teaches self-defense tips for ages 3-18 years old. The class also discusses topics such as bullying. Various times based on age. Free, donations accepted. Hill Country Bible Church Austin, 12124 RM 620, Austin, 512-260-4656. www.cedarparktexas.gov

SEPT. 19

#### **Old Town Summer Nights** holds final 2018 event

Old Town Summer Nights includes a concert, shopping opportunities, a farmers market, the Leander Car Show and dining options. 6-9 p.m. Free. Old Town Leander, 100 N. Brushy St., Leander. 512-259-1907. www.oldtown leander.com/old-town-summer-nights

SEPT, 21

#### **Kidz Bop Live 2018 tour** begins with Cedar Park

The Kidz Bop Kids perform at the H-E-B Center at Cedar Park as the launch of the second leg of their "Kidz Bop Live 2018" tour. They perform current music hits. Meet-and-greets with the Kidz Bop Kids, VIP packages and merchandise are available. The children's music performing group debuted its latest album, "Kidz Bop 38," on July 13. 7 p.m. Various prices. H-E-B Center at Cedar Park, 2100 Avenue of the Stars, Cedar Park. 512-600-5000. www.hebcenter.com



#### LIBRARY EVENTS

**CEDAR PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY** 550 Discovery Blvd., Cedar Park 512-401-5635

www.cedarparktexas.gov/library

25 The library holds a showing of "Wolf Children," an anime movie about a young woman raising children while hiding the secret of their werewolf ancestry. Snacks are provided. 2-4 p.m. Free

29 During open computer lab, people can come into the library and use the computers, receiving help with basic computer programs, email and creating resumes. 9:30-11:30 a.m. Free

**LEANDER PUBLIC LIBRARY** 1011 S. Bagdad Road, Leander 512-259-5259. www.leandertx.gov/library

AUG. 25, SEPT. 8 and SEPT. 22

The library screens PBS' "The Great American Read" at events through October as part of a grant from PBS and the American Library Association. At the events, screenings are followed by discussion of the topic books, and refreshments are served. 7 p.m. Free

#### **DATE TO KNOW**



**SEPT.** Offices in the cities of Leander and Cedar Park will be closed for Labor Day. All offices will

reopen the following day, and trash pickup will continue as usual. Leander ISD will also honor the holiday, and students will not attend school.

#### **UPCOMING AREA EVENTS**

AUG. 23-26 | TINY HOUSE & SIMPLE LIVING JAMBOREE | AUSTIN www.tinyhousejamboree.com

AUG. 24-25 | 'HOORAY FOR HOLLYWOOD: THE MOVIES' MUSICAL | LAKEWAY www.lakeway-tx.gov/64/activity-center

**AUG. 25 | POP CATS CONFERENCE | AUSTIN** 

www.popcats.org

AUG. 25 | ICE BALL FOR BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF CENTRAL TEXAS | AUSTIN www.austiniceball.org

**AUG. 31 | 'MILLION DOLLAR OUARTET'** MUSICAL | GEORGETOWN

www.georgetownpalace.com

SEPT. 4 | FREE TUESDAYS BEGIN AT GAREY PARK | GEORGETOWN

www.parks.georgetown.org/gareypark

SEPT. 8 | WILCO BLUE STAR MOTHERS **MOTOR MADNESS CAR SHOW | PFLUGERVILLE** 

www.bsmmotormadness.org

**SEPT. 8 | DRIPPING WITH TASTE WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL | DRIPPING SPRINGS** www.drippingspringsranchpark.com

#### **BEACHSIDE BILLY'S AT VOLENTE BEACH RESORT**

16107 FM 2769, Volente 512-258-5110 • www.beachsidebillys.com

23 Casey McPherson, 30 minutes before

**31** Lost Austin Band, 8 p.m

#### <u>SEPTEMBER</u>

**2** Beach Bash with One Ton Country, 8 p.m



Casey McPherson

**BLUE CORN HARVEST BAR & GRILL** 700 E. Whitestone Blvd., Ste. 204, Cedar Park • 512-528-0889 www.bluecornharvest.com

#### **AUGUST**

**23** John Arthur Martinez, 7-9 p.m.

Jim Bryant, 7-9 p.m.

#### **SEPTEMBER**

John Arthur Martinez, 7-9 p.m.

## RED HORN COFFEE HOUSE AND BREWING CO.

13010 W. Parmer Lane, Ste. 800, Cedar Park 512-986-7038 www.redhornbrew.com

#### **AUGUST**

**24** Kenny McCardle, 8-10:30 p.m.

**25** Chase Dean Tutor, 8-10:30 p.m.

Indian and the Jones, 8-10:30 p.m.

#### SEPTEMBER

Julie Bouchard, 8-10:30 p.m.

The Reen, 8-10:30 p.m.

Raphina Austin, 8-10:30 p.m.

**14** Jeremy Fowler, 8-10:30 p.m.

#### **SHOOTERS BILLIARDS & SPORTS BAR**

601 E. Whitestone Blvd., Cedar Park 512-260-2060 • www.shootersbilliards.net

**25** Texas Tallboys, 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m.

**8** Denny Herrin, 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. **15** Rock Hard, 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m.

WHITESTONE BREWERY

601 E. Whitestone Blvd., Bldg. 5, Ste. 500, Cedar Park • 512-765-4828 www.whitestonebrewery.com All shows run from 7-10 p.m.

#### **AUGUST**

25 Seventh Sun

#### **SEPTEMBER**

**8** Groove Monkey

**14** The Here & Now Irish Band

512-260-4646. www.cedarparktexas.gov





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TWIN CREEKS 2742 Grand Oaks Loop 5 BD 5 BA 4,735 SQ FT Haval Abbas 512.897.9565





**SUN CITY** 102 Aransas Cv 2 BD 2.5 BA 3,197 SQ FT **David Ristine** 512.964.9668



**SUN CITY** 908 Glass Mountain Cv 3 BD 3.5 BA 2,568 SQ FT **Drew Bouffard** 512.766.7518





**OAK BROOK** 17030 Capri Isle Ln 4 BD 2.5 BA 3,099 SQ FT Rick Rabon 512.626.0877





MEADOWS AT BRUSHY CREEK 16012 Mickey Dr 5 BD 3.5 BA 3,471 SQ FT Aaron Lancaster 512.751.7533





POINT VENTURE 18921 Peckham Dr 3 BD 2.5 BA 2,090 SQ FT Mary Williams 512.297.5391





RANCH AT CYPRESS CREEK 1511 Somerset Canyon Ln 4 BD 2.5 BA 3,743 SQ FT Cynthia Mattiza 512.940.5293





**BAR-K RANCHES** 8532 Talon Cir 4 BD 2 BA 1.862 SQ FT Sherry Hendrickson 512.771.1624





**SUN CITY** 147 Blazing Star Dr 2 BD 2 BA 1,193 SQ FT Shelly Hall 512.577.1026



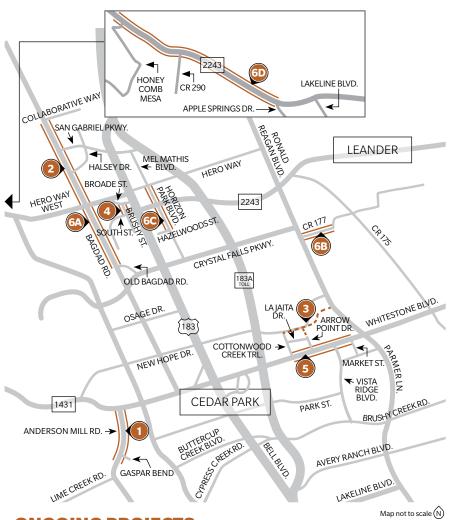


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**ONGOING PROJECTS** 

Project description Timeline

The **Anderson Mill Road** reconstruction project's Phase 1 was slated to be complete this summer, but it has been pushed to October. The project will reconstruct Anderson Mill in several areas from around the intersection of Gaspar Bend north to RM 1431. The project scope was changed to extend a four-lane section of the roadway, which originally would have been two lanes, so the contract was lengthened by 60 days, according to city spokesperson Jennie Huerta. The city of Cedar Park and Williamson County are funding the project, which costs approximately \$7 million.

January 2017-October

Bagdad Road is being widened from two to five lanes between Hero Way West and San Gabriel Parkway. The five-lane roadway is set to merge into three lanes until Collaborative Way. Leander Assistant City Engineer Terri Crauford said that after closing the road from Collaborative Way to Halsey Drive in late June, the contractor plans to reopen Bagdad in time for the start of school on Aug. 16, after Community Impact Newspaper goes to press. In the meantime the contractor has also installed temporary asphalt at connections to local roads to improve driving conditions, Crauford said. The \$8.2 million project is funded by the city of Leander and Williamson County.

January-April 2019

The project extending **New Hope Drive** from Cottonwood Creek Trail to Ronald Reagan Boulevard continues with an anticipated completion date this fall, according to the city of Cedar Park's website. Once complete, the city will need to create two additional westbound lanes between Arrow Point Drive and Cottonwood Creek. The project also includes the creation of street improvements and a traffic signal at Ronald Reagan, new water and wastewater lines, and the extension of Arrow Point from La Jaita Drive to New Hope. The project is funded by the city of Cedar Park's general obligation bonds and costs \$7.8 million.

August 2017fall

#### **RECENT UPDATES**



#### 4 N. Brushy Street streetscape

A streetscape project on N. Brushy Street in Old Town Leander will add improvements, such as landscaping and sidewalks. The road will be closed until December. City contractors began construction July 19 on the roadway between Broade Street and South Street, according to the city's website. Customers of N. Brushy businesses may park at the City Hall parking lot, accessible from Bagdad Street. The city of Leander's utilities drive-thru lane is closed during construction, but people may drop off payments during the day.

Timeline: June-January 2019

Cost: \$1.9 million

**Funding source:** city of Leander general obligation bonds

#### 5 RM 1431 Gap Project

Traffic was switched for the RM 1431 Gap Project June 30, according to Brad Wheelis, spokesperson for the Texas Department of Transportation. The project will expand RM 1431 between Market Street and Cottonwood Creek Trail from four to six lanes to match RM 1431's six lane section from Sam Bass Road to Market. The switch moved traffic onto new pavement on the south side of RM 1431, which allows the project contractor to build the roadway and bridge on the north side. The next traffic switch will happen in late fall, splitting traffic for construction of a central median, he said.

**Timeline:** February 2017-March or April 2019

Cost: \$12.8 million
Funding source: TxDOT

#### 6 Street rehabilitation project

The city of Leander is scheduled to complete its 2018 street rehabilitation program July 31, according to the city website. The project includes (a) the mill and overlay, or street surface removal and repavement, of a portion of Bagdad Road; (a) reconstruction of part of CR 177; (a) reconstruction of a section of Horizon Park Boulevard; and (1) shoulder striping of RM 2243 from Apple Springs Drive to the Williamson County line.

**Timeline:** June-July **Cost:** \$1.4 million

Funding source: city of Leander



#### **HOW IT WORKS**

## Traffic regulations that drivers must follow or face stiff penalties

As the 2018-19 school year begins for many local schools in August, motorists will notice school zones back in effect and school buses on the road.

When driving through a school zone, officials with the Texas Department of Transportation urge motorists to obey reduced speed limits, which typically range from 20-35 miles per hour.

School zones begin at least 200 feet in advance of the school grounds, a school crossing or where any other school-related activities occur, according to the Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Traffic fines usually double in school zones. Drivers should also refrain from using cellphones, as violators can face fines up to \$200.

Motorists should also mind the Texas School Bus Law, which mandates a driver traveling in either direction on the roadway must stop when approaching a school bus that is stopped and operating a visual signal to let passengers on and off the bus.

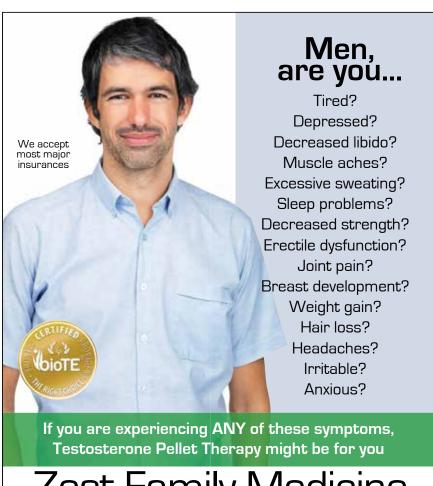
If the road is divided only by a left-turning lane or painted lane, drivers on both sides of the roadway must stop. However, if the lanes are separated by a physical barrier or median, only motorists traveling in the same direction as the bus are required to stop, according to the Texas Department of Public Safety.

The motorist may not proceed until the school bus resumes motion, the driver is signaled by the bus driver to proceed, or the visual signal is no longer activated.

All information on this page was updated as of 8/6/18. News or questions about these or other local transportation projects?
Email us at lcpnews@communityimpact.com.







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## Adding frontage roads along Toll 183A now gains support from toll agency, TxDOT and Cedar Park

#### BY **AMY DENNEY**

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority board threw its support behind adding frontage roads to Toll 183A in Cedar Park during a meeting in July.

Justin Word, the agency's director of engineering, said the Mobility Authority is discussing the project with the Texas Department of Transportation as well as the cities of Cedar Park and Leander as to how to complete the project.

He said TxDOT is already working on design of the project, which would include two to three frontage road lanes in both directions between Avery Ranch Boulevard and RM 1431 in Cedar Park. TxDOT would likely build the frontage roads and fund them with some funding assistance from the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Word said.

"Construction of these facilities would cover the gap, and then we would transfer maintenance and ownership to TxDOT," he said. "It would become the new official US 183 and allow Cedar Park to move forward with the redevelopment of Bell Boulevard."

Cedar Park is currently planning to realign a portion of Bell to make space for a mixed-use center with residential, retail, restaurant and park components.

Previously, Mobility Authority Executive Director Mike Heiligenstein said the agency would not be able to fund adding the frontage road because it was planning the Toll 183A Phase 3 that will extend the toll road to Hwy. 29 in Liberty Hill. That project will break ground in 2020.

Area drivers have long requested the addition of the frontage roads. In 2017, state Rep. Tony Dale, R-Cedar Park, stepped in to spur momentum on the project. He filed a bill in August 2017 that attempted to halt

progress on Austin-area toll facilities until the Toll 183A frontage roads were complete. That bill did not gain traction but kept the conversation going about how to fund the project.

"We've only got two highways that run through [District 136], and both are toll roads and they're almost impossible to avoid," Dale previously told *Community Impact Newspaper*.

Cedar Park Mayor Corbin Van Arsdale also spoke in support of the Mobility Authority's resolution.

"A lot of folks are just trying to go one exit, but there really aren't a lot of options but to go through the Park Street toll," he said.

Van Arsdale also spoke of concerns that the lack of frontage roads could be having an effect on investment and capital coming in to the area.

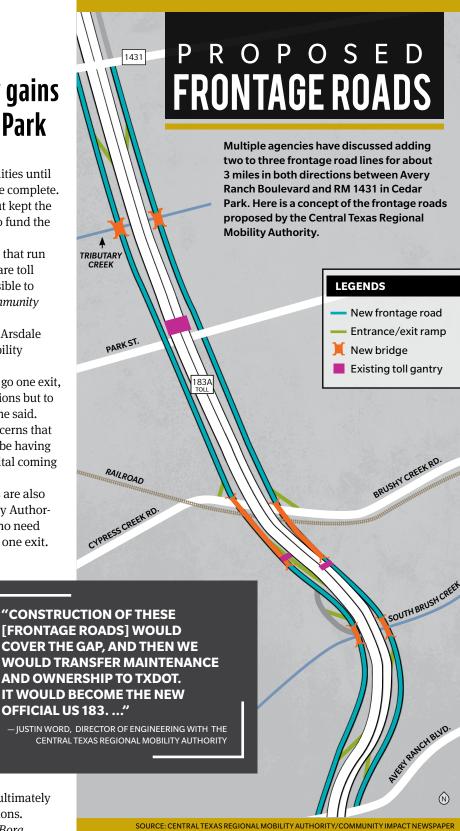
Three reduced tolling options are also being considered by the Mobility Authority to provide relief to drivers who need to use the toll road to travel just one exit.

Currently, drivers are forced onto the toll road when the frontage roads end and must pay the toll at the Park Street gantry, which is one of the highest-priced toll gantries in the Mobility Authority system.

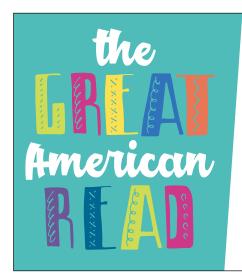
In the coming months Word said the timeline of when the frontage roads will be built would determine

whether the Mobility Authority ultimately pursues any reduced tolling options.

Additional reporting by Abby Bora







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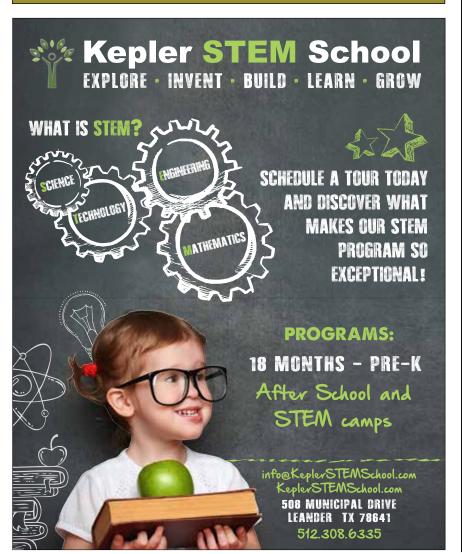
ADVANCED SCREENINGS 8/25, 9/8, 9/22/ 10/6 and 10/13 @ 7:00 pm

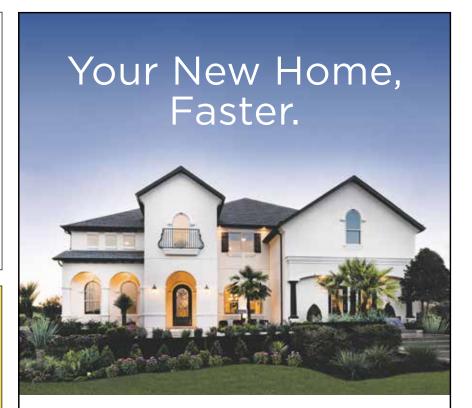
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## Leander Police Department launches K-9 unit with addition of police dog

#### BY CAITLIN PERRONE AND YUE YUE

Leander Police Officer John Carnley pinned a police badge onto the collar of a 16-month-old Belgian malinois named Kodi at the city's department headquarters in July.

The ceremony added a K-9 unit to the police department and welcomed aboard the city's first police dog.

Before acquiring Kodi, Leander police relied on K-9 assistance from the Cedar Park Police Department and Williamson County Sheriff's Office, according to the city. Leander also had an informal K-9 program for about a decade in the 1990s when the police department retrofitted an old 1980s Ford with plywood and carpet to act as the K-9 vehicle, Assistant Chief of Police Jeff Hayes said. At the time, Hayes said officers had to obtain their own dogs and pay for much of the training themselves.

"What we're starting now is a full council-supported program," he said.

The department selected Kodi, who is originally from Poland, at the Pace-setter K-9 training facility in Liberty Hill. Hayes said Pacesetter completes initial basic obedience training with the dogs, and the dog and handler complete more intense training together once they are matched.

"They become a symbiotic team—a unit," Hayes said. "They begin to learn how to work with each other, then how to accomplish the desired tasks."

Carnley, who previously served as a U.S. Marine, is a member of the Central Texas Regional SWAT Team and has served with the Leander Police Department for over 10 years. He said having Kodi will give the police department



self-reliance and will let Leander police support other agencies as well.

"This will give LPD a tool to detect evidence, track lost persons or fleeing suspects, and deter crime through the presence of a unique asset," he said.

Two other new members, Chaplain Joe Bob Ellison and Crime Scene Specialist Haley Williams, also received badges and were officially recognized into the department at the ceremony. The K-9 duo will be assigned to the city's Traffic Enforcement Management unit, assisting patrol whenever necessary, Hayes said. Kodi could also make public appearances in support of community engagement initiatives.

"He is Leander's K-9 and, hopefully, the first in a growing team of K-9 officers and handlers that become a part of LPD as we grow," Carnley said.

## TRAINING LEANDER'S **POLICE DOG**

Leander police selected Kodi from the Pacesetter K-9 training facility in Liberty Hill, and his eight-week K-9 training course included:

■ OBEDIENCE TRAINING S
■ AGILITY WORK

SCENT WORK
CRIMINAL APPREHENSION

■ HANDLER PROTECTION

| | Kodi and his handler,

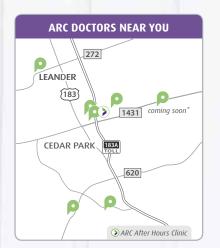
Officer John Carnley, will continue training with area agencies and handlers, according to the city.

SOURCE: LEANDER POLICE DEPARTMENT/ COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER



badge-pinning ceremony at Leander Police Department headquarters in July.

















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## Sports complex with ice rinks, turf fields plans to settle in Cedar Park pending vote

BY YUE YU

Cedar Park residents could soon see a new facility accommodating both indoor and outdoor sports activities, augmented and virtual reality experiences, and family entertainment at the southeast corner of Scottsdale Drive and Toll 183A.

The 157,000-square-foot facility, named iSports Training and Performance Center, is scheduled to break ground in fall 2018 and open between early fall 2019 and January 2020, said Eric Perardi, principal of iSports Real Estate Development. Envisioned as a medical sports retail center, the facility will provide not only recreational sports activities but also sports training, retail, restaurants and sports medicine, according to a press release from iSports Real Estate Development.

The project went before the city's planning and zoning commission
July 17 and requested rezoning and a special-use permit, which was recommended by the commission unanimously. City Council held the first reading of the item Aug. 9 and will vote on final approval at a later date.

Cedar Park Mayor Corbin Van Arsdale said at this stage the project is strictly privately funded.

"[Cedar Park] is a family community, so anything that our kids and families use would be a big deal to us," Van Arsdale said.

The facility will house the second location of Chaparral Ice, an Austin-based ice facility located at Northcross Center. As a major tenant, Chaparral Ice will bring two regulation-sized National Hockey League ice

rinks to the facility along with two turf fields, totaling over 100,000 square feet, Perardi said.

The Texas Stars is the American Hockey League affiliate of the NHL's Dallas Stars and plays home games in Cedar Park. Michael Delay, chief sales and marketing officer of the team, said the team "support[s] projects that will increase ice availability and assist in growing the game of hockey in the Central Texas market" but does not have "formal ties to this development."

The facility will also feature augmented and virtual reality experiences in sports provided by another tenant, Perardi said. The techniques are to help improve athletic performance by offering trainings on cognitive skills and muscle memory, he said.

The project is more than just a recreational sports center, Perardi said.

"This is much more geared towards ... operators who are outstanding in their field," he said. "We are putting them under one roof and allowing

#### "[CEDAR PARK] IS A FAMILY COMMUNITY, SO ANYTHING THAT OUR KIDS AND FAMILIES USE WOULD BE A BIG DEAL TO US."

— CORBIN VAN ARSDALE, MAYOR OF CEDAR PARK

them to work together in a way that brings the best experience for families."

Perardi said he expects to create 100-150 permanent jobs inside the facility. The events the facility hosts would also benefit local retail, restaurants and hotels in the area, he said.

Kevin Lancaster, president of Cedar Park Economic Development Co. Type A Board, said the project would give a boost to the city's tourism.

"We don't have anything that is this significant up here," Lancaster said. "Being able to host a variety of different tournaments ... all that's going to do is just continue to speak to our hotel industry and our wine-and-dine industry."







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#### BY **ALI LINAN**

Williamson County's relationship with the T. Don Hutto Residential Center in Taylor will end in early 2019, but officials doubt the change will have a noticeable effect on day-to-day county business.

County commissioners voted 4-1 on June 26 to end a contract with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and CoreCivic Inc., the private prison operator previously known as Corrections Corp. of America that runs the facility. The contract's termination is effective Jan. 31, 2019.

The county's role with the facility involved administering money transfers between CoreCivic and the federal government, according to the contract.

#### "LET ME BE CLEAR: I'VE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT THE WOMEN AT T. DON HUTTO SHOULD NOT BE THERE. THEY ARE FLEEING HORRIFIC LIVING CONDITIONS"

- PRECINCT 1 COMMISSIONER TERRY COOK

The T. Don Hutto center is a former medium-security prison that now holds women who are suspected by U.S. immigration officials of being in the country illegally. Some of the women held at the facility were separated from their children when they were detained by federal officers.

Precinct 3 Commissioner Valerie Covey, who represents an area of the county that includes Georgetown, was the only commissioner to vote against the ending of the contract. Covey, County Judge Dan Gattis and ICE officials declined interview requests. Precinct 1 Commissioner Terry Cook said the county's role as an intermediary allowed federal officials to avoid seeking bids and undergoing reviews for other potential partnerships, which would be the case if ICE contracted directly with the prison company.

"Let me be clear: I've always believed that the women at T. Don Hutto should not be there. They are fleeing horrific living conditions," Cook said about her vote to end the contract. "This [decision] does not solve that larger immigration issue, but it does allow us in the county to go back and focus on core county functions."

For the county's involvement, CoreCivic paid \$1 per detainee per day to cover administration fees for duties handled by the county's auditor's office, First Assistant County Auditor Julie Kiley said. Payments from CoreCivic went into the county's general fund, and no new positions were created to handle the additional work, Kiley added.

CoreCivic also paid the county \$8,000 a month to cover overtime costs for regular inspections of the center by the Williamson County Sheriff's Office.

Kiley said ending the T. Don Hutto contract would have little effect on the county's general fund as annual revenue from the center accounted for .001 percent of the total general fund.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Cynthia Long said the January date to officially end the contract was selected after county officials were told by ICE officials they would need until early 2019 to seek new partners and to allow for a smooth transition. Long said if ICE decides to work directly with CoreCivic, it would be unlikely that employees at the center and county residents would see much of a difference.

Long said her vote to end the contract had nothing to do with the national political climate, but she felt it was the appropriate time for the county to back out of the contract.

"For me, a large portion of my job [as commissioner] is to budget and manage county finance," Long said. "Immigration is not a county core function so it made sense. ... I support strong borders and do not support illegal immigration. It was a contractual issue, and I weighed the risks associated with that."

Ending the contract does not mean the facility will close.

Amanda Gilchrist, CoreCivic's director of public affairs, said in an email: "Our focus at the T. Don Hutto Residential Center remains on continuing to meet our partner's needs while maintaining our standing in the community as a good corporate citizen and employer."

More than 150 people demonstrated at the county courthouse June 26 before commissioners voted to end the county's contract.

"It's a huge win for the Central Texas community," said Cristina Parker, communication director for the Grassroots Leadership advocacy group that has pushed to close the detention center. "It shows the power of when people show up locally."

## A TIMELINE OF LOCAL INVOLVEMENT

For the past 13 years, Williamson County officials have performed inspections and managed financial transactions between CoreCivic Inc. and the federal government at the T. Don Hutto facility in Taylor.

Here are some key events at the detention center during that time.

October: Federal policy instructs immigration officers to detain people believed to have entered the U.S. illegally

**December:** T. Don Hutto becomes an immigration center to hold people detained by federal immigration officials

April: T. Don Hutto changes focus to hold families detained on suspicion of being in the U.S. illegally, pending court hearings

February: New agreement pays county \$1 per day, per detainee, and \$5,000 a month to pay for sheriff's inspections of the center

2007

2010

2014

2018

March: The American Civil Liberties Union files 10 lawsuits against the federal government for poor facility conditions

January: County signs contract allowing sheriff's deputies greater freedom to enter the center, now housing only women

**December:** Previous agreement amended to give county \$8,000 per month to cover costs of sheriff's office inspections

June: County commissioners vote to end its contract with the T. Don Hutto center with termination effective Jan. 31, 2019

## **ALL ABOARD!**

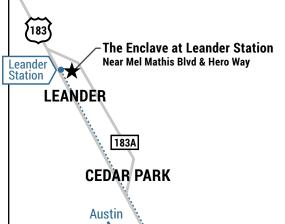
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The independent review conducted by investigations consulting firm Hillard Heintze highlighted what the Cedar Park Police Department is doing well, areas for improvement in the criminal investigations division and the firm's recommendations for the department.

Interviews with police officers, city government, community stakeholders and

prosecuting attorneys' offices

WHAT WAS EVALUATED: /

A random sampling of

45 CASES

Reviews of policies, protocols and police department documents and ride-alongs



## Cedar Park police review calls for training, staffing analysis

BY CAITLIN PERRONE

The independent firm hired to review Cedar Park's police department recommended conducting a staffing analysis, improving supervision and providing more training for those in the criminal investigations division during a presentation of its findings to City Council in July.

Council members had requested a review of police policies and procedures in August 2017 after several residents said police did not properly investigate Greg Kelley's case.

According to the Williamson County District Attorney's office, Kelley was convicted in 2014 of super aggravated sexual assault of a child. In 2017, an investigation was opened into claims that Kelley was wrongly convicted. He was released on bond in August 2017 after a judge in the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals recommended relief.

In October 2017, City Council hired Hillard Heintze, a Chicago-based investigations consulting firm, to evaluate the department. Robert Davis, the senior vice present for law enforcement consulting with Hillard Heintze and a former police chief with the San Jose Police Department, was part of the team that assessed Cedar Park's department.

During the July 12 council meeting, Davis said they reviewed the department's policies, protocols and documents and conducted site visits and ride-alongs. The firm also investigated a random sampling of 45 cases of various sizes between 2013 and 2017.

Cedar Park Police Chief Sean Mannix said the department is not aware if the Kelley case was among the random selections.

During his presentation, Davis said officers experience high morale, say the department has a family atmosphere and feel a connection to the community. He also said the department receives quality resources from the city.

"... We know that there's a culture here that is going to embrace these recommendations and do something about it," he said.

Within the criminal investigations division, Davis highlighted several areas of improvement including improving the quality of written initial reports and ensuring supervisors are thoroughly reviewing initial and follow-up investigative reports before giving approval.

"[The criminal investigations division sergeant] doesn't have the time that we believe is necessary to take a look at these cases and make sure they're thorough and complete before they go to the DA's office for investigation," he said.

Davis said they saw "failings" occur because of the volume of cases handled by the department. He said the criminal investigations division handles upwards of 1,600 cases a year, so detectives have 60-100 cases at a given time. When he previously worked as a sergeant handling financial crimes, Davis said he handled about 15-20 cases at a time.

He recommended the city conduct a staffing analysis to determine if more officers are needed. He also recommended more training, more daily supervision and documentation of the daily work done by the criminal investigations division.

Davis also recommended the department become a

"one-stop-shop" for specific types of crimes to allow victims to come to the department and speak to police, a prosecutor and a social services advocate under one roof instead of having to attend separate interviews.

Prior to presenting his report, Davis said he had spoken to members of the police department earlier that afternoon. He said they had been accepting of the criticisms, and afterward several approached him to express support and recognize that they needed to improve.

"Council members, that is not normal, so it speaks very well to the culture of the organization," he said.

City Manager Brenda Eivens said the report provided the city with a strong map on actionable items to take to improve the department.

"The report really does have some very important findings and some very fundamental observations that we're going to have to be able to address in operations and processes, and we will definitely, definitely do that," she said.

Mannix said the feedback provided was constructive and instructive to the police department, and he said some of the recommended items have already been implemented, such as weekly meetings and a draft of an operating manual. He said he will be requesting funds to implement some of the recommendations in the city's upcoming fiscal year budget, and the other recommendations will be assigned to various supervisors within the police department.

"My staff and I will develop plans of action for each one of the recommendations," he said. "You will see swift work and swift implementation of many of those things."





Improving the quality of initial written reports

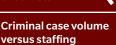
Hold regular team meetings to improve daily supervision

Supervisors should thoroughly review initial and follow-up investigative reports

Prioritizing incoming cases based on solvability



Use standard operating procedures checklists



#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:** J

Conduct a formal staffing analysis

Create a standard operating procedures manual





Conduct weekly meetings in the criminal investigations division

Facilitate additional training regarding the use of solvability factors for incoming cases

Provide updated training on implementing a communityoriented policing plan throughout the department

SOURCE: CITY OF CEDAR PARK/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSF











### Leander ISD scheduled to adopt tax rate Aug. 23

**LEANDER ISD** The school district is developing its 2018-19 budget, which includes setting a tax rate.

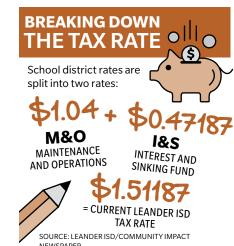
LISD's current property tax rate is \$1.51187 per \$100 valuation. School district taxes include two rates—the maintenance and operations tax rate, and interest and sinking fund tax rate, which funds debt payments, according to the Texas Education Agency.

LISD's maintenance and operations tax rate is set at \$1.04 per \$100 of valuation, and that rate cannot be raised unless there is a tax ratification election, according to district documents.

The interest and sinking fund tax rate is currently set at \$0.47187. On Aug. 3, some trustees expressed their support for an option that could reduce the rate to \$0.47, bringing the total rate to \$1.51 per \$100 valuation.

"[The lowest debt service model] at least gives us the best way to pay off our debt the quickest, while giving a tax decrease, while being able to pay our bills, and gives us the option to review it again next year," trustee Pam Waggoner said.

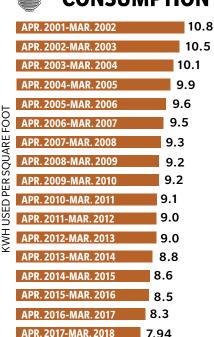
On Aug. 23, the board of trustees is expected to make a decision on the tax rate, and the public will have the opportunity to comment.



## Leander ISD estimates \$3.73 million in energy cost savings districtwide between Apr. 2017-Mar. 2018

LEANDER ISD Between April 2017 and March 2018, Leander ISD saved around \$3.73 million in energy costs districtwide.





 ${\tt SOURCE: LEANDER\,ISD/COMMUNITY\,IMPACT\,NEWSPAPER}$ 

LISD anticipated \$10.39 million in energy costs during that time frame, but actual costs were around \$6.66 million, according to LISD documents.

"It's [the result of] an energy team all the way across the school district, with the teachers and staff, administration," LISD Energy Manager Mike Conkle said at a school board meeting July 19.

Since the start of the district's current energy program in 2001, LISD has saved approximately \$39.73 million in energy costs, according to meeting documents.

The 17 years of the energy program resulted in saving 1,340,651 million British Thermal Units of energy, which equate to stopping 191,873 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions—the equivalent of 39,973 cars being taken off the roads a year or planting around 4.92 million trees, according to the documents.

Comparing 23 school districts, a Benchmark4Excellence report ranked LISD as consuming the second-lowest amount of energy per square foot in the 2016-17 fiscal year, district documents state.

All of LISD's campuses qualify for the Energy Star rating, Conkle said.

## Charlie Rodriguez selected to serve as the new principal of Cox Elementary School in Cedar Park

LEANDER ISD Charlie Rodriguez will be the new principal of Cox Elementary School, Leander ISD Superintendent Dan Troxell announced July 20.

Rodriguez began teaching full-time in 2005, according to LISD. He previously worked as an elementary teacher, a summer school principal and an assistant principal in Keller ISD, and he now serves as a principal in Castleberry ISD.



Charlie Rodriguez

## Capital Metro changes service agreements with Austin Community College, University of Texas

AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE Longstanding agreements with two higher education institutions in Austin were renewed July 30 by the Capital Metro board of directors with a few changes that could increase student ridership.

Capital Metro has had a pay-perride agreement with Austin Community College with a 35 percent discount through Capital Metro's MetroWorks program for higher education institutions. In September 2014, ACC began charging students \$25 per semester for its transit Green Pass to use Capital Metro services to get to campus.

Ridership has been on the decline with ACC students, peaking at 130,717 Green Pass trips in October 2012. In October 2017 there were 56,163 trips, representing a 57 percent decline. Enrollment at ACC has also declined.

"This is another great opportunity to realign our relationship with ACC," Capital Metro board Chairman Wade Cooper said.

Under the new agreement, ACC will pay Capital Metro a flat fee of \$429,000 with an option to extend the agreement for four years. ACC will not charge students for the pass.

The Capital Metro board approved a similar agreement with The

University of Texas that consolidates its two separate agreements with the university into one. UT will also pay a flat fee based on the 35 percent discount.

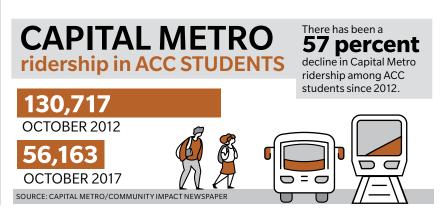
The new agreement is expected to generate \$19.4 million for Capital Metro. Currently, UT reimburses the agency on a pay-per-swipe basis. UT shuttles will also be paid through the flat fee rather than by cost per hour, a method that had been decreasing ridership. The agreement also allows students and faculty to use their IDs to ride other Capital Metro routes.

"One thing we found with these partner agreements is that when they're paying per ride it gets more expensive for them when more people ride, which actually disincentivizes their interest to promote the program," said Dottie Watkins, Capital Metro's vice president of bus operations.

She said that in the past 10-15 years, UT has asked for a decrease in service hours provided by the transit system to help with budget crunches.

Cooper said UT-related usage of the transit system has a significant effect on broader travel patterns within Capital Metro's jurisdiction.

"This partnership, I think, is very important not just for Cap Metro but for our community," he said.







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A rendering of Indigo Ridge North shows restaurants lining green space in the development.

### Plans for Indigo Ridge North project near Sam Bass Road move forward

Initial plans for Indigo Ridge North, a proposed mixed-use development in eastern Cedar Park, received the zoning commission's seal of approval at a meeting July 17.

A petition to consider a future land-use plan amendment for the project was approved by City Council on March 8. If approved by City Council, the amendment would change the property's future land-use plan designation from regional office, retail and commercial to a planning area.

The project is proposed to be located on 126 acres at the northwest corner of East Whitestone

Boulevard and Sam Bass Road, according to city documents.

Developed by Todd Madden, president of Thompson Morris Real Estate Development, Indigo Ridge North is planned to include retail, hotel, office and residential components in buildings that could reach up to 10 stories tall, according to the documents.

"We're excited about Indigo Ridge for a lot of reasons," said Barry Hand, who is working on the project for architecture firm Gensler. "[Such as] the beauty of the site [... and] the potential there to do a really exciting [...] town center for Cedar Park."

The zoning commission also recommended the rezoning of the property from planned development—with the base zoning districts of multifamily, general business, light industrial, local business and open space greenbelt—to planned development with the mixed-use base district, with some conditions.

Commissioners recommended that laundromats and day care centers require special-use permits in both sections of the project, and they also recommended City Council consider stricter dark sky initiatives for Indigo Ridge North.

### Leander Springs could include water activities, shops and housing

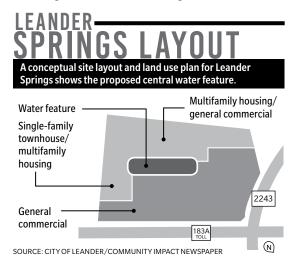
A development proposed to bring multifamily housing, offices, shops, restaurants, and a water feature with beaches and swimming received approval from Leander City Council in August.

The project, called Leander Springs, lies within the city's transit-oriented development district southwest of RM 2243 and Toll 183A. The approximately 77.23-acre property was rezoned to general commercial, multi-family and single-family townhouse. The zoning request also included a number of waivers.

During council meetings in July and August, some members of the community were against the zoning case, citing concerns that plans for the project were too vague and would cause more traffic. Others were in favor, saying they would like to see projects with commercial come to the area.

City Council approved the project with a number of conditions in July, including requiring the water feature to be 4 acres in size and no road connection to the neighborhoods south of the development. In

August, council members limited the multi-family density to an average of 40 units per acre and said the developer must finish the water feature before finishing more than 150 housing units.



## Cedar Park hears development proposal next to Lime Creek Quarry

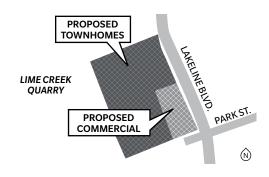
Cedar Park City Council gave initial approval in July of planning a residential and commercial development next to the city's Lime Creek Quarry.

The city's future land-use map suggests regional office, retail and commercial uses for the 13.12-acre tract at Lakeline Boulevard and West Park Street. Peter Verdicchio, who represented Gehan Homes, said the company submitted a future land-use petition to change 10.7 acres of the tract to medium-density residential, while the remaining 2.6 acres would be built as neighborhood-type commercial.

Some council members said they were concerned about the townhomes located next to the quarry, though they recognized the city plans to eventually end blasting on the site and turn it into a development. Verdicchio said Gehan would design a landscape buffer adjacent to the existing quarry.

Audrey Wernecke, who serves on the city's zoning commission, said she was against the project because of traffic concerns and because the city changed the tract's future land-use status in the past.

The petition's approval starts the process for the city to consider the future land-use map change.



## Plans for the Simpson Tract revisited after initial tabling, approved by Leander council

Leander City Council approved changing the city's comprehensive plan for a 69.1-acre tract, known as the Simpson Tract, in August.

Leander's Planning and Zoning Commission heard a rezoning request in May for a proposed development on the 69.1 acres, which is located southwest of the intersection of Journey Parkway and CR 175. After community members spoke against the request, the applicant tabled the item.

The tract came before City Council Aug. 2 with an amendment to the city's comprehensive plan. The applicant requested the property be removed from the mixed-use and neighborhood center corridors, leaving it as neighborhood residential.

Neighboring citizens said the proposed plan would be a better fit for their area.

City Council also gave initial approval to a rezoning request that could change the property from single-family rural to single-family compact.

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- Annual inspections by LCRA engineers.

Lake Travis

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#### Inks, Wirtz & Starcke dams

Lake LBJ

Lake Buchanan

nks Lake

Marble Falls

Multiple projects are planned or underway for these dams



#### Mansfield Dam

\$11 million floodgate rehabilitation project underway

#### **Tom Miller Dam**

\$10 million floodgate replacement project begins in 2018

\*Also includes investments in dams on lakes Bastrop and Fayette not pictured here.

Lake Austin



## A RIVER FOR OUR REGION

lcra.org/riverforourregion

### **Austin-based national security company** plans to move its headquarters to Leander

LEANDER A national security company currently based in Austin is looking to make Leander its new headquarters.

American Eagle Protective Services provides security, maintenance, training and waste disposal services to U.S. government agencies, according to the company's website.

During a meeting July 19, Leander City Council members approved an economic development agreement with AEPS. The company is currently located along US 183 close to I-35 in Austin, according to its website.

The approved agreement with the city requires the company to have 16 employees making an average salary of \$100,000 in its first year of operations. As part of the economic incentive goals in the agreement, AEPS must purchase two buildings along Crystal Falls Parkway.

The company also must invest \$200,000 worth of



improvements into the buildings and build a third building with a value of \$500,000 within its first three years of operations, according to the city.

Leander will reimburse the company's city property taxes annually for the first five years as long as the company meets the economic incentive goals.

AEPS is expected to launch operations in Leander by the end of the year, according to the city.

### Cedar Park chooses max possible property tax rate for fiscal year 2018-19 at \$0.455 per \$100 of valuation

2017-18

CEDAR PARK City Council voted Aug. 9 to set Cedar Park's maximum tax rate for fiscal year 2018-19 at \$0.455 per \$100

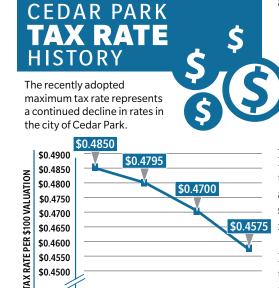
The potential rate is \$0.0025 below the current tax, which is \$0.4575, according

to Cedar Park documents. However, it exceeds the effective tax rate, which is the rate needed to generate the same amount of tax revenue as the previous year's budget. "The max tax rate [...] only sets the ceiling between now and budget

adoption," said Chad Tustison, Cedar Park's assistant finance director. "The final tax rate approved by the council in September after this max tax rate can be lower than that rate, it just can't go above."

Before the official tax rate is adopted, the public will have the opportunity to provide feedback. At the Aug. 9 meeting, the first public hearing was set to take place during the regular council meeting Aug. 23, and the second public hearing was scheduled for Sept. 6 during a special meeting.

The adoption of the city of Cedar Park's FY 2018-19 budget is scheduled to take place during the regular City Council meeting Sept. 13, according to council documents.



2015-16

## Cedar Park City Hall and public works building to undergo renovations valued around \$2.27 million

CEDAR PARK City Hall Building Three and Public Works Building One in the city of Cedar Park are scheduled to be remodeled to allow for additional workspace.

At a meeting Aug. 9, Cedar Park City Council approved a contract with Trimbuilt Construction Inc. for the project, which is not to exceed \$2.27

"[Building Three is an] existing single-story [facility] that we'll demolish and install a

two-story," said Randall Leuders, Cedar Park senior project manager.

2014-15

City Hall Building Three will be replaced with a 5,130-square-foot first floor with a multi-purpose room, offices for tourism staff, a kitchen and bathrooms, according to city documents. The reconstruction will also include a 3,750-square-foot second floor with offices for information services staff members.

The city's Public Works Building One will be

expanded to include an additional 1,032 square feet on the first floor, which will feature offices and

"It's a small expansion to provide, I believe, three offices and a couple workstations for staff out there," Lueders said.

uled to be complete in early summer 2019 if Trimbuilt Construction can get started within the next



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workstations.

The project, including both buildings, is schedmonth or so, he said.



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Again, Wow and bravo Waterloo, you've got me!



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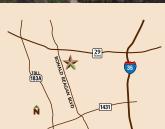
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thustin Business Journal and Homebuilders Association of Austin 2016. Map not to scale. This community map is for illustration purposes only, based upon current development concepts, which are subject to change without notice. No guarantee is made that the features depicted will be built, or, if built, will be as depicted. NASH Rancho Hills, LLC ("Fee Owner") is the owner and developer of the Rancho Sienna Community ("Community"). Certain homebuilders unaffiliated with the Fee Owner or its related entities (collectively, "Rancho Sienna") are building homes in the Community ("Builder(s)"). Fee Owner has retained Newland Communities solely as the property manager for the Community. North America Sekisui House has an interest in one of the members in Owner. Newland Communities and North America Sekisui House are not co-developing, co-building or otherwise responsible for any of the obligations or representations of any of the Builders, and shall have no obligations to any buyer regarding a home purchase from a Builder. Purchasers of homes from any of the Builders waive any claims against Newland Communities and/or North America Sekisui House arising out of their purchase transaction. • Actual development may vary from developer's vision. No guarantee can be made that development will proceed as described. • Prices, specifications, details and availability of Builder's homes are subject to change without notice. 2018 © Rancho Sienna. All Rights Reserved. Rancho Sienna is a trademark of NASH Rancho Hills, LLC, and may not be copied, imitated or used, in whole or in part, without prior written permission. EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY.

### Travis County approves \$9.7 million for new voting system, called ExpressVote

TRAVIS COUNTY On Aug. 7, Travis County commissioners unanimously approved \$9.7 million to purchase and implement ExpressVote, a new voting system provided



through Election Systems & Software.

The system is anticipated to be in use for the November 2019 elections, Travis County Clerk Dana DeBeauvoir said. ExpressVote includes a paper trail—a piece of paper the voter can use to review choices before depositing it into the ballot box scanner—a key security feature voters have been asking for, she said.

"I'm very confident that we are buying the very best equipment on the market," DeBeauvoir said. "It has taken almost 15 years of constant work to get to this point."

Travis County voters have used the current system—provided through Hart InterCivic—since 2001.

Election Systems & Software operates in 145 Texas counties and 43 other states. This system was certified for Texas in April 2017 and allows for early voting and voting on election day, DeBeauvoir said.

With ExpressVote, a voter's experience at the poll will be different than it is now, she said. The voter will receive an activation card to insert into the machine, called a ballot marking device. Navigation is available on a touch screen, not a dial or button.

The machine then prints a verifiable paper record, which a voter can check to ensure his or her selections are accurately reflected. Finally, the voter will insert his or her paper record into the scanner, effectively casting his or her vote.

The new voting equipment—approximately 2,000 booths—will be delivered by spring 2019. A public education campaign to train voters on using the new machines is slated for summer 2019, DeBeauvoir said.

#### **NUMBER TO KNOW**

#### **\$330 MILLION**

Williamson County commissioners voted unanimously Aug. 7 to accept the county's budget office fiscal year 2018-19 budget recommendation of around \$330 million. Commissioners will vote to adopt the budget Aug. 28.

#### **CITY HIGHLIGHTS**

LEANDER The planning and zoning commission recommended two changes to the city's future land-use plan Aug. 9, including reducing the industrial future land-use designation near the Savanna Ranch neighborhood and eliminating the neighborhood center at the intersection of Journey Parkway and CR 175.

CEDAR PARK On Aug. 9, City Council heard the first reading of a future landuse plan amendment that, if approved at a later date, would allow the existing Cedar Park Nissan dealership on Bell Boulevard to expand.

## Leander council sets maximum property tax rate, considers reduction to \$0.5518 per \$100 valuation

LEANDER At its Aug. 2 meeting
Leander City Council set the effective
property tax rate of 56.68 cents per
\$100 valuation as the maximum rate
for fiscal year 2018-19. The effective
rate is the rate that would generate
the same amount of tax revenue as
last year's budget.

The council also proposed to reduce the current property tax rate to 55.18 cents per \$100 of value, according to a release from the city.

This marks the sixth consecutive year the city has proposed reducing the property tax rate during budget discussion. If approved, property tax bills for Leander homeowners would remain almost the same or slightly decrease, according to the press release

Home building and commercial developments in Leander have brought the city approximately \$558.7 million of taxable value, contributing to the property tax rate reduction, the press release shows.

Finance Director Robert Powers said at the meeting the council will set the tax rate in September, and the city will hold two readings of the proposed tax rate before City Council holds an official vote. The city's fiscal year 2018-19 budget begins on Oct. 1.

## CURRENT, MAXIMUM AND PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX RATES

#### IN LEANDER

Leander City Council set the maximum property tax rate for fiscal year 2018-19 at 56.68 cents Aug. 2 and may opt to lower the actual tax

and may opt to lower the actual tax rate later in the process.

WAZION TO THE PROPOSED RATE (FY 17-18) (FY 18-19)

SOURCE: CITY OF LEANDER/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

#### **MEETINGS**

#### **Cedar Park City Council**

Meets the second and fourth Thursday of the month at 6 p.m.
450 Cypress Creek Road, Bldg. 4
512-401-5000 • www.cedarparktexas.gov

#### **Leander City Council**

Meets the first and third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. • 200 W. Willis St. 512-259-1239 • www.leandertx.gov

#### **Travis County Commissioners Court**

Meets Tuesdays at 9 a.m. 700 Lavaca St., Austin • 512-854-9020 www.traviscountytx.gov/commissioners-court

#### Williamson County Commissioners Court

Meets Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. 710 S. Main St., Georgetown 512-943-1100 • www.wilco.org



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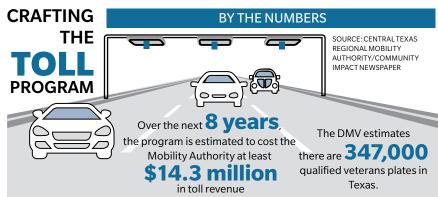
### Central Texas agency approves program to waive tolls for qualified veterans

Starting in November, qualified veterans will be able to have their tolls waived when driving on certain Central Texas toll roads.

In July the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority board approved the new program that will be available for those who meet the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles' requirements for the Congressional Medal of Honor, Legion of Valor and Purple Heart awards as well as disabled veterans license plates.

"I think what we're doing here is a token of appreciation of what veterans do for our country," said board member David Armbrust, who is a veteran himself.

Toll agency staffers will be crafting the program over the next several months and setting up an online portal for those with a qualified plate



to register for a TxTag through the Mobility Authority's website.

The program will only waive tolls on Toll 183A, 290 Toll and SH 71 as well as on the future US 183 south toll lanes and SH 45 SW toll road when those open. It will not apply to the MoPac express lanes because those

tolls are variably priced based on traffic congestion.

The Texas Department of Transportation already offers a Veteran Discount Program on its toll roads, including SH 130 from Georgetown to near Buda, SH 45 N, SH 45 SE and Loop 1 north of Parmer Lane.

## Cedar Park mosquito sample carries West Nile

Mosquitoes from a trap in southwest Cedar Park have tested positive for West Nile virus, according to the city.

According to a statement from the city Aug. 6, there have been no reported human cases of West Nile virus in Williamson County since 2016, and there were none in Cedar Park at that time.

However, a sampling of mosquitoes was found to be carrying the illness after being tested by the Texas Department of State Health Services. The mosquitoes were trapped Aug. 2 near the intersection of Cypress Creek Road and Sun Chase Boulevard.

While many people infected with the virus do not become ill, 20 percent will have mild symptoms, according to the state health department. Some of those who are infected may become severely sick.

Cedar Park is draining standing water on city property and treating water that cannot be drained with a bacterium called bacillus thuringiensis, according to the city.

Cedar Park officials ask residents to report stagnant water on a private or public property at www.cedarparktexas.gov/reportaproblem.





Dress in long sleeves and pants when outdoorsespecially at dawn and dusk.

> Drain standing water around your home —such as flower pots, pet dishes and bird baths—so mosquitoes do not have a place to breed.

SOURCE: WILLIAMSON COUNTY AND CITIES HEALTH DISTRICT/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

## USL will bring professional soccer to city in 2019 with new Austin Bold FC team

The United Soccer League unveiled Aug. 3 the team name and a few signed players for the new Austin Bold FC team.

The inaugural season begins next March at a 5,000-seat stadium being built at the Circuit of The Americas in Austin.



Austin Bold FC will play at the Circuit of the Americas in 2019.

Austin Bold FC, named after the city's boldness for creativity and innovation, confirmed the signing of three players: Edson Braafheid, who played in the 2010 World Cup final; Marcelo Saragosa, who played nine years for Major League Soccer; and Kléber Freitas, known as "Gladiator."

Austin Bold FC General Manager Roberto Silva said the team will also be involved with the community and the numerous youth and adult soccer leagues.

"It's about having the entertainment option and allowing the kids to see professional soccer and development [of their skills and an opportunity for our homegrown talent to stay in Austin," he said.

Soccer fans can already purchase 2019 season tickets ranging from \$189-\$490 for 20 games. More information is available at www.austinboldfc.com.

#### **TOP 5 STORIES**

Most read stories from 7/3/18-8/3/18

 Boil water notice issued for parts of Vista Ridge and Carneros Ranch neighborhoods in Leander (published July 27, 2018)

2 How ZIP codes and city boundaries work in Leander and Cedar Park (published July 31, 2018)

Travis County approves elected officials' salaries and weighs compensation for county employees (published July 31, 2018)

4 City of Austin reveals terms of potential MLS agreement, sets dates for public discussion (published July 27, 2018)

5 Central Texas agency approves program to waive toll for qualified veterans (published May 25, 2018)

Links to all of our social media accounts can be found at

communityimpact.com/social.





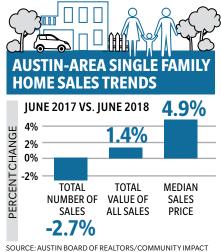


### **Austin metro home** sales down in June, but prices continued to rise

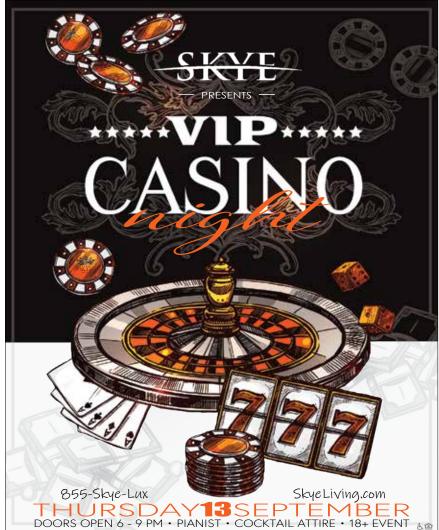
In June there were 2.7 percent fewer single-family homes sold in the Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area than there were the same time last year, according to data released in July by the Austin Board of Realtors.

But despite fewer closings, the total dollar value of all single-family home sales last month still increased 1.4 percent over the same month last year, and the median price was up by 4.9 percent.

June housing inventory also declined to 2.9 months' worth of inventory.



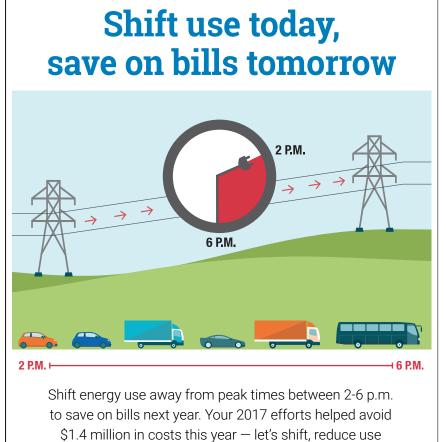






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1: Freedom Fun Leander specializes in activities such as laser tag, foam parties and bubble soccer. 2: The company also offers home movie packages. 3: Co-owner Zack Masters displays some equipment at the company's Leander home office. Freedom Fun USA was started five years ago in the family garage.

#### **SERVICES OFFERED**



FREEDOM FUN USA offers a variety of services, including:

- Laser tag
- Inflatables
- Foam partiesOutdoor movies
- Archery tag
- Bubble soccer
- Water tag and slides
- Snow machines
- Concessions

SOURCE: FREEDOM FUN USA/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

#### Freedom Fun USA

15122 Honeycomb Drive, Leander 512-981-5557 www.freedomfunusa.com

Hours: By appointment only





#### **Freedom Fun USA**

Leander-based company aims to entertain community

BY ALBERT ALVARADO

or Freedom Fun USA co-owner Zack Masters, it's always recess.

Zach co-owns the mobile party rental company with his father, Tim, and said he gets to test out the equipment on his father's land.

"My little sisters will have birthday parties, and we'll have the water slides set up," Zack said.

Tim said he had the idea to start the business five years ago when he spoke with a friend at the party rental company Hop N Party. Tim eventually bought a mobile laser tag system to start Freedom Fun USA.

The company specializes in activities such as laser tag, foam parties and bubble soccer, and offers popcorn, cotton candy and snow cone concessions, along with generator rentals and outdoor movies.

Zack said that one of the reasons the company has grown so fast is the positive reviews on Yelp as well as word-of-mouth recommendations.

"Our focus is on the customer service-based leadership," Zack said. "Communication, quality [and] time management. We make sure all of our equipment is clean; we put the customer first."

Tim has worked for Dell Inc. for 21 years and said one of the most important lessons he has learned is quality and customer service. For him the events bring back memories of coaching Zack in various sports when he was a child.

Zack stressed the importance of hiring the right coaches, being prepared for anything that could arise, and most importantly, remembering that any day at Freedom Fun USA could be a memory his clients will hold on to for a lifetime.

The Masterses plan to announce franchising opportunities for Freedom Fun USA in 37 states by late summer.

"I think this'll be a really good fit for people," Zack said. "You don't need [a] brick-and-mortar [building]. We were running this thing out of our garage for a year or two. A stay-at-home mom [could run a franchise location]—or someone that is looking for a way to make some extra money on the weekends and have fun doing it."

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**Thanks Mamm!** 







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#### **Tio Loco Tex-Mex**

Restaurateurs focus on classic cuisine on RM 620

io Loco Tex-Mex has only been open for 10 months, but for owner Kirby Walker, being in the restaurant business has been a labor of love since he graduated from The University of Texas in 1981.

Walker owns Tio Loco, located on RM 620 in Austin; Nik's Italian Kitchen and Bar, which is also on RM 620; and Noodles Italian Kitchen in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

"[At Tio Loco] we win people by doing a great job day in and day out," Walker said. "You take care of the customer one at a time—as many people as you can touch, and eventually what happens is that ember grows and the fire spreads pretty quickly."

One of Tio Loco's specialties is the brisket enchiladas with slow-cooked, mesquite-grilled brisket topped with

jalapeno-lime cream sauce and served with a side of beans and rice. The dish may be paired with the house frozen margarita, which comes with a flute of Mexicano Alteno reposado tequila.

"We want items that are unique, but we want to be defined by the good, solid, go-to Tex-Mex," Walker said. "We want to meet people's expectations. ... So we have great chips and salsa, great margaritas, [and] no surprises in your tacos and enchiladas."

Family is important to Walker and his wife, Kathy. Their daughter also works at Tio Loco, and the restaurant's name is a tribute to Kathy's brother, Gary Williams, who died before the restaurant opened. There are pictures of Williams along Tio Loco's back wall.

Although Central Texas has many Tex-Mex eateries, Walker said market saturation is not problematic.

"I had a guy tell me a long time ago, 'You need to fish where the fish are biting,'" Walker said. "There's no product with a stronger demand in this market than Mexican food. Granted, there's a lot of them out here, but there's a reason for that—people love it."

BY ALBERT ALVARADO

# Tio Loco Tex-Mex 11620 RM 620, Austin 512-792-9222 www.tiolocotexmex.com Hours: Sun.Thu. 11 a.m.-10 p.m., Fri.-Sat. 11 a.m.-11 p.m.

1: Tio Loco Tex-Mex opened in October. 2: Owner Kirby Walker takes plates of enchiladas and street tacos to customers. 3: One meal at Tio Loco includes chips and salsa, a margarita and brisket enchiladas with a side of rice and refried beans.



No. 1 – two crispy beef tacos, rice and charro beans

**No. 2** – two enchiladas— beef, chicken or cheese, rice and choice of beans

No. 3 – one brisket enchilada with jalapeno lime sauce, Mexican rice and choice of beans

**No. 4** – two tamales with Mexican rice and choice of beans

No. 5 – one cheese enchilada and one tamale with Mexican rice and choice of boars.

SOURCE: TIO LOCO TEX-MEX/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER



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512-425-0053 (a) © 2018 HSL



## Ismaili Jamatkhana opening ceremony in Cedar Park



Speakers at the opening of the Ismaili Jamatkhana, a worship and gathering place for Ismaili Muslims, included Dr. Barkat Fazal, president of the Aga Khan Council for the U.S.; Texas Gov. Greg Abbott; and Cedar Park Mayor Corbin Van Arsdale.

## Backpack Attack event

Hill Country Bible Church Austin and Leander, Leander ISD and nonprofit For the Children hosted Backpack Attack Aug. 2-4. Volunteers assembled 3,200 backpacks with school supplies for families who qualify for LISD's free lunch program.



## Business expo, job fair



The Cedar Park Business Expo and Job Fair included booths for businesses, organizations and restaurants. Guests had the opportunity to seek jobs and network with the business community.

## **Solea Cedar Park community ribbon cutting**



The Cedar Park Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting July 12 at Solea Cedar Park, a new community for active adults. Solea Cedar Park offers apartments for 55-plus adults.

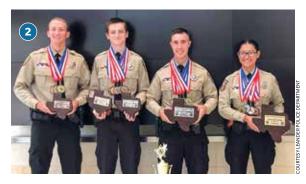
## **Smile Doctors celebration**



The Leander Chamber of Commerce celebrated the opening of Smile Doctors Braces with a ribbon cutting on July 21.

## Police programs for children





Young people in Cedar Park and Leander may participate in their local police department's programs for children.

1 A student graduates from the Junior Police Academy class in Cedar Park July 13. The police department held three separate weeks of the program this summer.

2 The Leander Police Explorers Post 641 ranked fifth place overall against 74 teams in the 2018 Texas State Explorer Competition held July 19-22. Post members earned first place for crisis negotiations.





**IN CEDAR PARK AND LEANDER** 

A non-comprehensive guide to local art workshops

COMPILED BY ABBY BORA DESIGNED BY KARA NORDSTROM

Experienced and novice artists alike can get crafty at local painting and ceramics classes.













## AUSTIN/VOLENTE

ArtBarnATX

14284 FM 2769, Volente 512-563-2675

www.artbarnatx.com

ArtBarnATX offers children's workshops; adult art and game nights; and suminagashi, which is painting with water.









12129 N. RM 620, Ste. 401, Austin 512-258-7928

www.paintingwithatwist.com/studio/ cedar-park

Painting with a Twist holds workshops for attendees to paint canvases, wooden cutouts and wine glasses.







## **CEDAR PARK**

## Art + Academy

3621 E. Whitestone Blvd., Ste. 700, Cedar Park 512-701-8070

www.artclassesaustin.com

Art + Academy offers drawing and painting classes for students from 4 years old to adults.



2011 Little Elm Trail, Ste. 107, Cedar Park 512-529-1282

www.boardandbrush.com/cedarpark

Attendees may paint wooden artwork such as signs, table centerpieces or planter boxes.







## **5** Ceramics N More

601 E. Whitestone Blvd., Ste. 700, Cedar Park 512-528-1157 www.cnmpottery.com

Children and adults may pick their own ceramics and paint them however they like at Ceramics N More.







## Cordovan Art School & **Pottery Parlor**

200 Buttercup Creek Blvd., Ste. 122,

Cedar Park 512-284-9874

www.cordovanartschool.com/cedar-park

Art classes in subjects like painting, clay and anime meet once a week at Cordovan Art School & Pottery Parlor.





## The Studio Cedar Park

400 W. Whitestone Blvd., Ste. C, Cedar Park 512-773-3283

www.thestudiocedarpark.com

A co-op of artists teach painting, pottery, drawing, sewing, digital art and music classes for students of all ages.





## LEANDER

## 8 A Maker's Place

106 W. Willis St., Ste. C, Leander 817-789-7146

www.amakersplace.org

A Maker's Place offers do-it-yourself workshops where attendees may paint rustic and





### Sip and Stain Leander

11894 Hero Way West, Ste. C, Leander 801-860-7841

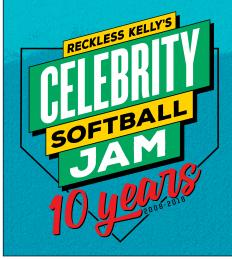
www.sipandstain.com

Sip and Stain Leander offers workshops to create wooden signs from start to finish, including staining, assembling and painting.









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**Q&A WITH A** 

## ESSICA PADGETT

**ART INSTRUCTOR** AT THE STUDIO CEDAR PARK

WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE FOR SOMEONE **PLANNING TO ATTEND THEIR FIRST FINE** ART CLASS?

My advice would be to remember that everyone starts somewhere and the classroom is a no-judgement zone, so try not to be nervous! Consistent practice is more important than talent anyway, so just plan to have fun and learn something

WHAT IS THE MOST VALUABLE THING YOU LEARNED WHILE CREATING ART?

The ability to break a project down into achievable steps. Something like a painting can seem overwhelming when you don't know where to start,

but breaking it down into smaller pieces helps. A lot of tasks in life are that way.

DO YOU HAVE ANY TECHNICAL TIPS OR TRICKS TO SHARE FOR SOMEONE

Sketch out what you want to paint on your canvas lightly before you begin. Start by painting your background before the closer things in your piece. If you make a mistake, you can wipe the paint off with a damp rag if your paint is still wet. Know what your paint will do when it dries-some paints, like acrylics, will dry darker, while others, [like] watercolors, will dry lighter.



620

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170 Deep Wood Dr Suite 100 (512) 343-0062

39

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Cedar Park | Leander edition • August 2018

Map not to scale (N)

#### The Central Texas VA opened its Cedar Park clinic on Bell Boulevard in September 2016, and the health care system is now planning to expand with another facility on Medical Parkway. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is predicting the **EXPANDED CLINIC** national veteran population will decline, but the Central Texas CLINIC EXPANSION: 1401C MEDICAL PARKWAY ON MEDICAL PARKWAY: Veterans Health Care System is predicting growth in several of its clinics from fiscal year 2017-18 to fiscal year 2019-20. Around 26,000 square feet in Medical Office Building II 120,000 MEDICAL PKWY. MENTAL PRIMARY TEMPLE CARE **HEALTH CARE** 3.42% [183] WHITESTONE BLVD. 100,000 **TEAMS** LABORATORY IMAGING 80,000 **SERVICES** 1431 60,000 **CURRENT CLINIC** AUSTIN PROJECTED PATIENTS SERVED CURRENT CLINIC: 13.84% **ON BELL:** 600 N. BELL BLVD. 40,000 N WACO **FUTURE** TELE-PRIMARY **EXPANSION OF** 15.12% SOURCE: CENTRAL TEXAS VETERANS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM/ CARE COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER **SPECIALTY CARE** 20,000 \$5.2 BILLION 10,000 The VA MISSION Act of 2018 institutes a variety of changes 11.50% for veterans who utilize 8,000 **BRYAN** Veterans Affairs services. 0.61% 6,000 The U.S. Department of Veterans The program helps veterans use PALESTINE -11.51% private medical care if they: Affairs plans to retire the Choice Program in one year and establish 4,000 · Live 40 miles or more from a VA BROWNWOOD the Veterans Community Care facility: -2.53% Program, which will provide hospital 2,000 · Would wait more than 30 days care to veterans through community LA GRANGE The law appropriates \$55 for an appointment; partners, such as hospitals and -7.36% billion for veterans services. private practices, similarly to how FY 2017-18 FY 2018-19 FY 2019-20 · Or if their medical needs cannot \$5.2 billion of which is set the Choice program operates. **FISCAL YEARS** be met at a VA facility aside for the Choice Program.

#### CONTINUED FROM 1

at a time when the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is predicting the veteran population across the country will decline, though CTVHCS predictions show several clinics in the Central Texas region could have more veterans to serve in the near future.

SOURCE: CENTRAL TEXAS VETERANS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

"As Austin grows and the surrounding communities grow, obviously we're seeing the growth in places like Cedar Park," Sandles said.

#### **GROWTH IN THE AREA**

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Veteran Population Projection Model from 2016, the total veteran population was predicted to decline from 20 million in 2017 to 13.6 million 2037.

However, Sandles said the Cedar Park clinic has been experiencing a growth rate of about 2-3 percent per fiscal year, and several clinics in the Central Texas VA system are planning to see more patients in upcoming years.

"We do think across the [Central Texas] system we're going to see considerable growth," Sandles said. "As we look at our individual sites, what

we've seen consistently over the past two to three years is that most of the growth is in the Cedar Park and Austin area, and the Temple campus."

The Central Texas VA signed a lease with Welltower Inc. for the Cedar Park clinic's expansion in the second medical office building next to Cedar Park Regional Medical Center in June. Services planned for the new location include primary care, mental health care, and laboratory and imaging services, and the expansion will have space for up to 11 primary care teams.

CTVHCS will also hold onto its current location on Bell, which will be used for the future expansion of specialty care and for Tele-Primary Care, which offers primary care using telemedicine technology.

### **UTILIZING CARE NEXT DOOR**

The expansion of the Cedar Park VA location will be the second clinic the CTVHCS has opened near a private health care facility—the system opened its La Grange campus inside of a private medical center in June.

"This wasn't something VA mandated that we do; it's really something

that we identified strategically to make sense for us," Sandles said.

SOURCES: U.S. SENATE, U.S. REP. JOHN CARTER, U.S. REP MIKE MCCAUL/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

In La Grange, the move prevented the health care system from needing to build its own building and an imaging suite. If a veteran at the future Cedar Park clinic needs specialty care such as physical therapy, Sandles said the patient would be able to go next door for those services.

"Depending upon the veteran's condition, it might not make sense to ask someone to get in a car and drive 45 minutes or an hour to the Austin [VA] location to go to physical therapy, but it could put them in a position to drive to the same place that they typically go to their VA clinic and have that physical therapy provided right there in the same geographic footprint at CPRMC," he said. "So it keeps the health care local."

The entire health care system, including the Cedar Park VA clinic, will also be impacted by the VA MISSION Act of 2018, which President Donald Trump signed into law in June.

The new law allocates \$55 billion for the Department of Veterans Affairs, \$5.2 billion of which is set aside for the Veteran's Choice Program. After one

year, the choice program will be retired and the Veterans Community Care Program will be established.

According to the office of U.S. Rep John Carter, R-Round Rock, the VA MIS-SION Act establishes the consolidated program that allows veterans to use private medical care funded by the VA if they live 40 miles or more from a VA facility or if the veteran's medical needs cannot be met at a VA facility. U.S. Rep. Mike McCaul, R-Texas, said it would also apply if a veteran would wait more than 30 days for an appointment.

Carter said the new clinic will benefit by being next to the CPRMC.

"With the new law that we've passed, being that close is very important," he said. "If we have to use private care, it'll be right there."

#### **SERVING THE VETERAN COMMUNITY**

Mitch Fuller, the senior vice commander with the Leander Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10427, said members of the veteran community are excited about the Cedar Park clinic's expansion.

Fuller said the area has seen a high concentration of veterans because

# A CENTRAL HUB FOR

The Cedar Park VA clinic provides Tele-Primary Care services throughout the state.

## **HOW DOES TELE-PRIMARY CARE WORK?**

The providers are assigned a health care kit from the VA that allows them to work from home or the Cedar Park clinic. The kit allows the physician to connect to a patient remotely.

The physician providing Tele-Primary Care services in Texas is an employee of Central Texas Veterans Health Care System and must live within 50 miles of the Cedar Park clinic.

The provider can give the patient recommendations and prescribe medications, just like if the patient were being examined on-site.

A patient at another location in the state will go to his or her local VA clinic and be evaluated by a nurse in an exam room. All of the information collected by a nurse, such as taking a heart rate, can be seen by the telehealth provider on the other side of

SOURCE: CENTRAL TEXAS VETERANS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

the screen.





## Code VI Veteran Integration

Helps veterans and families transition into civilian life and better suit the civilian world 206 E. Main St., Round Rock 512-538-4552

www.integratedveteran.org

## **Heroes Night Out**

A nonprofit resource center that offers on-site resources and hosts free events for veterans and their families

1150 S. Bell Blvd., Cedar Park (Twin Lakes Fellowship Church property) 512-986-7660

www.heroesnightout.org

## **Mustang Heritage Foundation**

Offers a program that teaches veterans to train mustangs into adoptable equines in six weeks P.O. Box 979, Georgetown 512-869-3225 www.mustangheritage

foundation.org

### **Texas Center Point Veterans** Services

Offers free emergency financial assistance, free counseling and helps with job placement for veterans and surviving spouses 2101 S. I-35, Ste. 219, Austin 512-297-2990 • www.cpinc.org

## Veterans Treatment Court -Williamson County

Offers mental health treatments to both discharged and active duty 405 Martin Luther King St.,

Georgetown 512-956-6622 www.wilco.org/vetcourt

## VFW Post 10427 Leander

Texas are employed

Provides services and benefits and holds monthly auxiliary meetings for veterans

8760 FM 2243, Leander 512-260-8313 • www.vfw10427.org

## WilCo Blue Star Mothers

Provies support for active-duty service personnel, assists veterans organizations and can assist in homeland volunteer efforts P.O. Box 2184, Cedar Park 512-317-2961 www.wilcobluestarmothers. shutterfly.com

## Williamson County Veteran **Service Office**

Provides assistance in disability claims as well as support for eligible veterans, dependents and survivors 3151 SE Inner Loop, Georgetown 512-943-1900

www.wilco.org/vetservices

many were previously stationed at Fort Hood in Killeen or at Camp Mabry in Austin. He said several choose to retire in the area after their service.

"This is a rapidly growing area, and that also means growth in the number of veterans," he said.

Fuller said the expansion can provide more resources and more access to care for veterans in the area. He also said one of the big issues for veterans is access to mental health care. Fuller, an Iraq War Veteran, said the post-war generation needs access to resources and helping with PTSD.

Carter said many veterans within his congressional district need care for PTSD, traumatic brain injuries and mental health issues. He said there have been efforts to expand the treatment offered for mental health in Cedar Park, Temple and Waco.

Sandles said the CTVHCS had previously determined the Cedar Park clinic has been below expected staffing ratios for mental health providers, and he

said part of the issue was available space. When the new site opens, Sandles said the facility will have around five additional mental health providers. which Fuller said is vital.

"This is great for the VFW, for our post, and for all veterans who live in this area," Fuller said.

### A HUB FOR TELEHEALTH

The Cedar Park clinic has also already been helping those who live outside of the area.

care services using telehealth technology, otherwise known as Tele-Primary Care, in October. Rather than have a veteran travel to a VA hospital or medical center in a larger city, the program

videoconferencing to connect "THIS IS A RAPIDLY veterans in an outpa-**GROWING AREA, AND THAT ALSO MEANS** tient clinic or in their home with their pro-**GROWTH IN THE** viders or with spe-**NUMBER OF VETERANS."** cialty care. — MITCH FULLER, SENIOR VICE

COMMANDER WITH THE LEANDER Staples said all VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS POST 10427 physicians providing Tele-Primary Care in

> by CTVHCS, so the Cedar Park clinic serves as a Tele-Primary Care hub for the state. The physicians are provided with a VA health care kit that allows them to videoconference from home or from the Cedar Park clinic.

> Utilizing Tele-Primary Care physicians has been useful for some VA clinics throughout Texas, such as ones that are highly rural, Sandles said. Those clinics can have difficulty recruiting

primary care providers, which means patients might have to wait long periods of time or drive to another clinic for appointments.

"Being in markets like Cedar Park, where we just haven't had a lot of difficulty at all recruiting primary care physicians; we can support those sites but do it remotely," he said.

Deborah Meyer, a spokesperson for the CTVHCS, said Cedar Park was chosen as the hub for Tele-Primary Care because of Sandles' leadership with new and innovative ideas, along with the need for larger space for the program. She said the expanded Cedar Park clinic will allow the telehealth program to grow as needed.

Sandles said he expects the new Cedar Park clinic to open in about eight

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The CTVHCS began offering primary

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"There's maybe a future for [agriculture in Leander] for small plots for farmers markets, but I believe that's all," Stiles said. "It's changed it in some ways for the better and some ways for the worse."

#### **HISTORY OF AGRICULTURE**

For many years, the area now known as Williamson County was occupied by Native American people, including the Tonkawa tribe, according to the Williamson County Historical Commission's website. They hunted and planted crops, according to the tribe's website. They were removed from their homeland in the mid-1850s, and since 1885 have lived in Oklahoma, according to the website.

Historian and Leander resident Karen Thompson is the chairwoman of the city's Historical Preservation Committee and has authored numerous books about the history of Round Rock, Texas and Williamson and Travis counties.

Thompson said settlers—primarily from the Carolinas, Tennessee and Virginia—came to the Leander area in the 19th century after receiving land grants, sometimes as a reward for fighting in the Texas Revolution. Some brought slaves with them. After the Civil War, some of the former slaves worked as farm labor while others operated farms, Thompson said.

Before Leander was founded, a town called Bagdad was created near where present-day Hero Way West intersects with Bagdad Road, according to Thompson and the book "Land of Good Water" by Clara Stearns Scarbrough. Thompson said Bagdad was the largest town in western Williamson County up until Leander was formed in 1882.

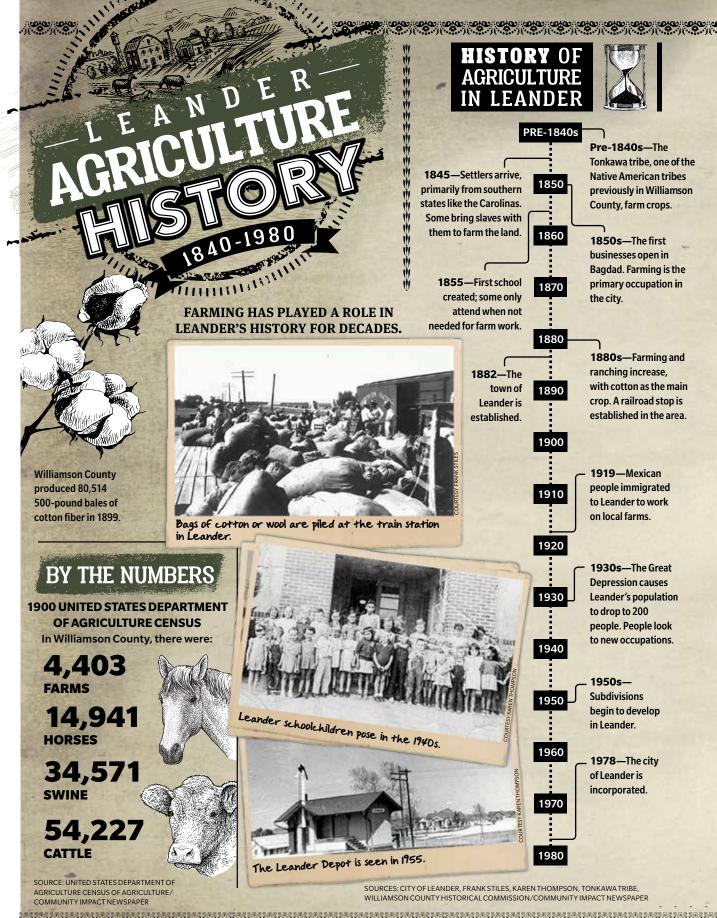
"The primary land [use] for Bagdad was to raise crops and to raise live-stock," she said.

Thompson said most families had cattle, and some had sheep, goats and hogs. The U.S. Census in 1850 showed that Williamson County contained over 21,000 cattle, including working oxen, dairy cows and other cattle. In 1900, that number had jumped to above 54,000 cattle.

## SHIFTING EMPLOYMENT

A public works project—the Mansfield Dam—partially funded through the New Deal in the 1930s changed the employment scene in the area. For many young men, this was their first job outside of the family farm, Thompson said.

In 1950, Williamson County was 95.5 percent farmland, according to that year's U.S. Census of Agriculture. That percentage dropped to 72.5 percent in 1987,



the year after Stiles began his veterinary practice.

Recently, Williamson County has seen the decline in agricultural land continue. The Williamson Central Appraisal District's Agricultural Appraisal Department determines which properties qualify for an agricultural valuation, which could result in tax savings, according to the district's website.

"For Williamson County as a whole [...] and barring the exception of one year, [...agricultural land] has been under decline give or take by 1 percent for the last 10 years," said Aaron Stenulson, the land and agricultural manager for WCAD.

WCAD data shows that in 2007, 569,838 acres in Williamson County received the agricultural valuation—which includes property used for livestock, crops, wildlife management, orchards and beekeeping. This dropped to 497,175 acres in 2018.

Since 2007, the city of Leander has grown by 10,894 acres, according to city data. Taking land acquisition into account, the city's percentage of pasture,

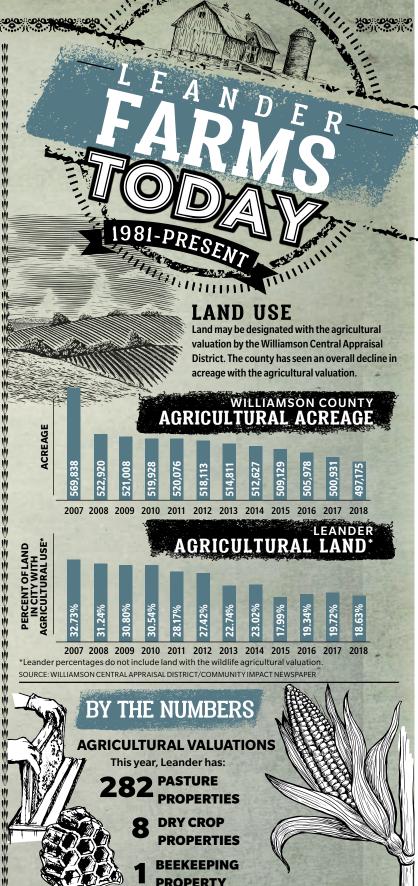




Pete Tamez harvests tomatoes at his family's urban farm, Isle Acre Farms.



Leander High School FFA members offer information about the organization. Leander ISD has nearly 1,300 FFA members across the district.



beekeeping and dry crop agricultural land has gone from 32.73 percent in 2007 to 18.63 percent in 2018, according to WCAD and the city of Leander.

"The best use of this land today [...] is not ranching; it's development," said Jody Giddens, whose family has a history of ranching and farming in Leander.

#### **FARMS TODAY**

While the percentage of agricultural land in the city of Leander and Williamson County is declining, the way farming is practiced may be changing as well.

Tyler Coufal, the agricultural agent for the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension-Williamson County, said that there has been an emphasis on goats and sheep in the western part of the county recently.

"As landowners' [property] continue to decrease in size, people have to find a way to still have their agriculture ventures," Coufal said.

Pastures for farm animals are the largest agricultural use in Leander, according to WCAD data. Coufal

said that this is likely because of the soil in the west side of Williamson County.

"The depth of soil on that side of the county is very, very limited," he said. "The problem is a lot of the plants, a lot of, say, crops for instance, they're not allowed to develop those roots systems that they need to get the proper water, to get the proper nutrients."

Isle Acre Farms is a 1 1/2-acre farm that sits on Thompson's property on Hero Way West in Leander and is run by Pete and Becky Tamez.

"We are so lucky," Pete Tamez said. "This area [...] is flood plain. Being that it is a flood zone, it's also a sediment area."

That means fertile soils have been deposited on the property over time, he said. Isle Acre Farms grows a variety of vegetables over the course of a year, including mixed greens, radishes and onions, the Tamezes said. They sell their produce to restaurants such as Burnt Kitchen in Leander and at local markets, including the new Old Town Farmers Market at Smooth Village.

Pete Tamez said he calls what they do "pioneer farming" because unlike some contemporary farmers, Isle Acre Farms does not use tractors, pesticides or any other sprays or automated machinery. Instead, they use compost and modern hand tools, they said.

Jeff Kelley, an agricultural science teacher at Leander High School, said both urban agriculture—like that practiced by the Tamezes—and agriculture automation are two "promising fields" for students.

"Agriculture has embraced technology, and many jobs our students will have may not even exist yet," Kelley said

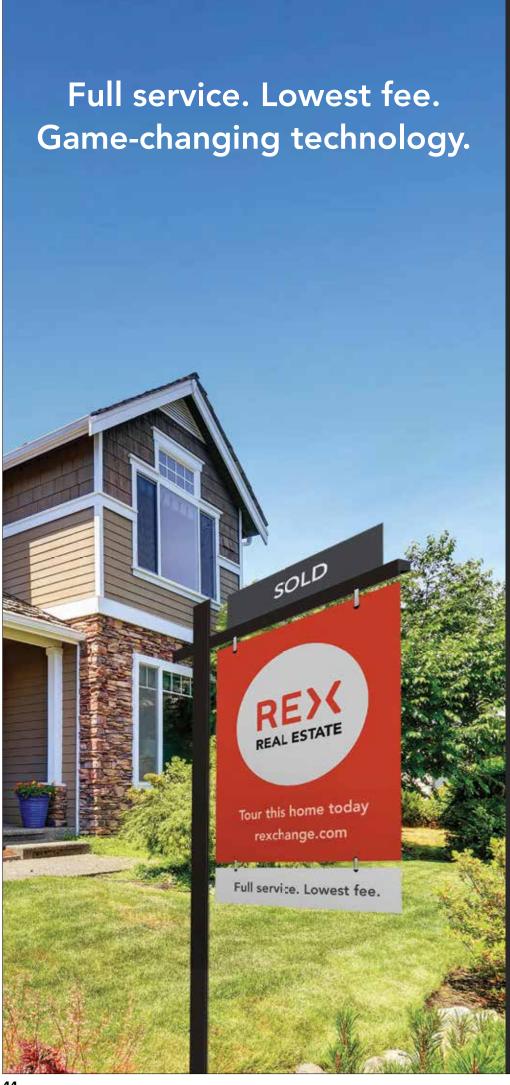
He said most of his students are from the suburbs, at least a few generations removed from ranching and farming, and have their first experiences with agriculture in the classroom.

The National FFA Organization, a student group focused on agricultural education, has a presence in all Leander ISD high schools, after Leander High School's chapter was formed in 1948, according to LISD. In total, 1,287 current LISD students are members of the FFA, according to district data.

Kelley said the most popular agricultural projects for students are stock show animals, although some also "love the garden and orchard" and others complete welding projects.

"I believe that the future of agriculture for young people is very promising," Kelley said.





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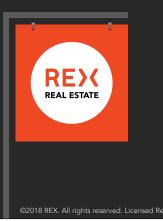
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## **MARKET DATA**

HOMES SOLD (JULY 2018)

	Number of homes sold/average days on the market				
Price range	78613	78641	78717	78726	
\$149,999 or less	1/26	2/28	-	-	
\$150,000-\$199,999	3/18	10/21	-	-	
\$200,000-\$299,999	51/22	84/41	13/52	-	
\$300,000-\$399,999	39/31	38/96	32/37	4/65	
\$400,000-\$499,999	9/32	25/55	8/38	11/61	
\$500,000-\$599,999	9/53	11/57	5/14	3/51	
\$600,000-\$799,999	5/37	7/48	1/144	-	
\$800,000-\$999,999	1/7	3/37	1/1	1/39	
\$1 million +	_	2/70	_	2/55	

## MEDIAN PRICE OF HOMES SOLD IN JULY

78613

+11.84%

\$550,000

\$500,000 \$450,000 \$400,000

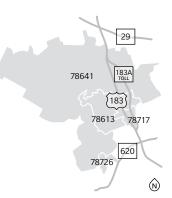
\$350,000

\$300,000 \$250,000 \$200,000 \$150,000 \$100,000



#### **RECENT PROPERTY LISTINGS**

ZIP code	Subdivision	Address	Bed/bath	Price	Sq. ft.	Agent	Agency	Phone
78613	Buttercup Creek	1606 Fall Creek Drive	4br/4ba	\$510,000	3,451	Aaron Lancaster	Realty Austin	512-751-7533
78613	Walsh Trails	711 Edwards Walk Drive	3br/2ba	\$349,000	2,019	Marcia Kim	Realty Austin	512-576-4998
78641	Summerlyn	500 Mourning Dove Lane	4br/3ba	\$239,000	1,862	Laura Rosales	Reilly, Realtors	512-771-5334
78641	Trails of Shady Oak	4233 Trinity Woods St.	3br/2ba	\$329,000	2,341	Rebekah Cummings	RE/MAX 1	512-619-3186
78641	Travisso	4013 Benetton Way	4br/3ba	\$450,000	2,754	Brandy Finnessey	Kuper Sotheby's Itl. Rlty.	512-698-3366
78717	Highland Horizon	105 Latitude Lane	4br/3ba	\$420,000	2,508	Amy Gandy	Realty Austin	512-589-9005
78717	Parmer Crossing	9803 Quercia Drive	4br/2ba	\$376,530	1,851	Matthew Menard	Austin Real Estate Experts	512-947-8787
78726	Anderson Mill Estates	13608 Bullick Hollow Road	9br/10ba	\$725,000	5,445	Michael Said	Realty Austin	512-789-6543



Residential real estate listings added to the market between 8/6/18 and 8/12/18 were provided by the Austin Board of Realtors, www.abor.com. 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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Car Wash Country 54	
Castrol Premium Lube Express 57	7
BEAUTY & FITNESS	
Beauty Triq and Make up Bar50	
Cornerstone Jiu Jitsu Academy	
Muse Parlour	
Zero Gravity Unlimited51	1
DINING	
Austin Gourmet Popcorn 57	7
Bahama Buck's	
BC's Backyard Bar & Grill	
Burnt Kitchen63	
Casa Costa Bake Shop	
Cherry Creek Catfish	
Damiano's	
Ginos Italian Cuisine 50	
J&J Barbeque 62 Kai Sushi 51	
Local Slice	
Los Reyes Mexican Restaurant 58	8
Nancy's Sky Garden61	
PDQ 58 Poke Fit 62	
Santa Catarina 53	
Takara Sushi & Asian Bistro	
Texican Cafe 55 The League Kitchen & Tavern 56	
The Post	
Thundercloud Subs	
Tony C's	
ENTERTAINMENT	
ENTERTAINMENT  Escape Room	
Splash Shack Texas	
The Palace Theatre	9
HOME & GARDEN	
Chem-Free 59	9
Emerald Lawns	
Real Green Pest Control & Lawn Care 63	þ
MEDICAL & DENTAL	
Achieve Integrated Health	
Cedar Park Eye Care	
PET HEALTH/SUPPLIES	
New Hope Animal Hospital 61	1
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	
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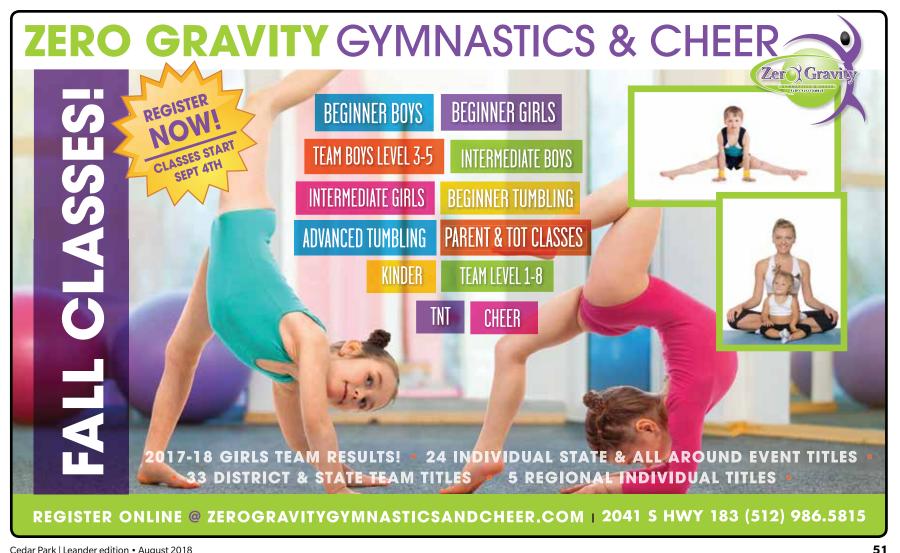
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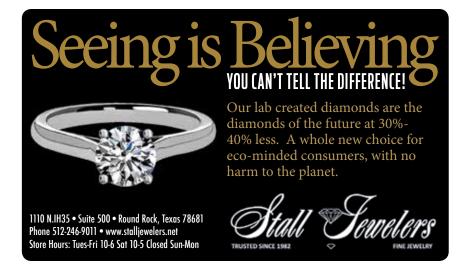




















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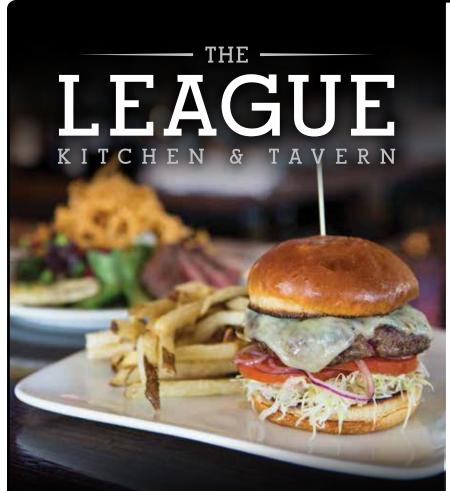






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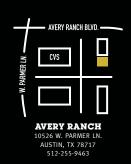
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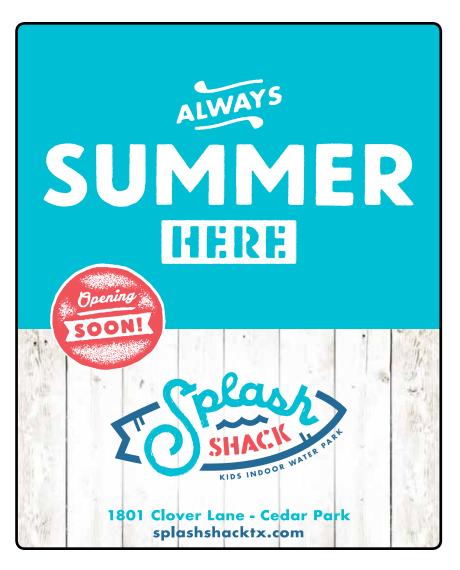


















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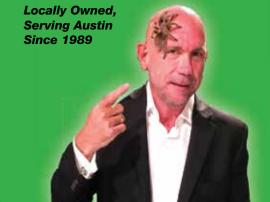












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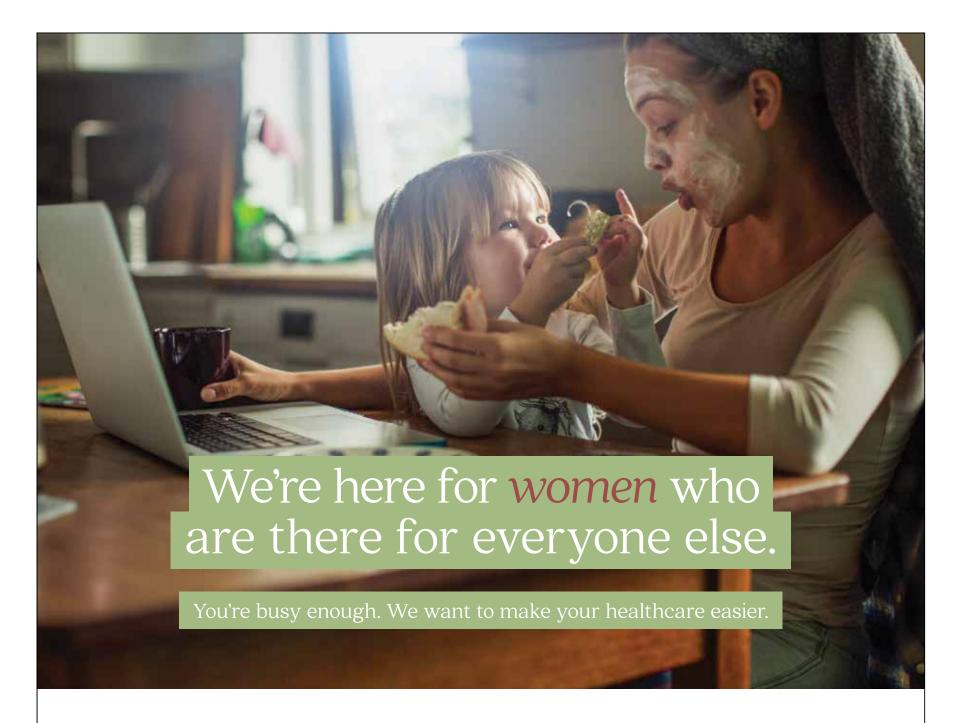
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