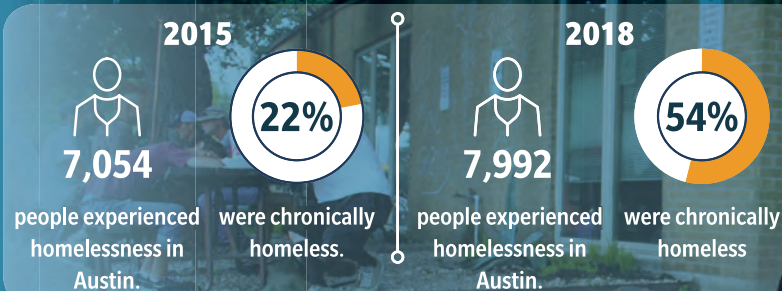


SPECIAL REPORT **HOMELESSNESS TAKES THE SPOTLIGHT**

Growing further from home

Since 2015, not only has the homeless population grown, but the rate of chronic homelessness—those who have experienced homelessness continually for at least a year, or on four separate occasions over the last three years—has increased well above the national average.



COMPARE LOCAL
AND NATIONAL
HOMELESSNESS
PAGE 34

SOURCES: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT 2018 ANNUAL HOMELESSNESS REPORT TO CONGRESS, ENDING COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS COALITION/ COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

Jeffrey Adler sits outside the Sunrise Homeless Navigation Center in South Austin.

Spike in homelessness sparks cry for all-hands response

More than half of Austin's homeless have struggled to move off the streets for at least a year

BY OLIVIA ALDRIDGE AND CHRISTOPHER NEELY

Jeffrey Adler sits in the shade of a tree outside the Sunrise Homeless Navigation Center on Manchaca

Road on a Thursday in late July. The nonprofit, based out of Sunrise Community Church, welcomes homeless individuals every weekday, offering bathrooms, food, water and showers.

The greatest variety of care providers are there Thursdays, creating a line of clients like Adler waiting at the picnic tables outside the church.

CONTINUED ON 32

Garza Ranch set to open first phase

BY NICHOLAS CICALE

Garza Ranch—a 34-acre, mixed-use development located near the corner of William Cannon Drive and MoPac—is set to open two of its five projects this fall. Developed by Brandywine Realty Trust, Garza Ranch at

build-out will include two commercial office buildings; a 140-room Aloft Hotel; a 2-acre public commons; and Alexan, a 370-unit apartment community.

CONTINUED ON 36

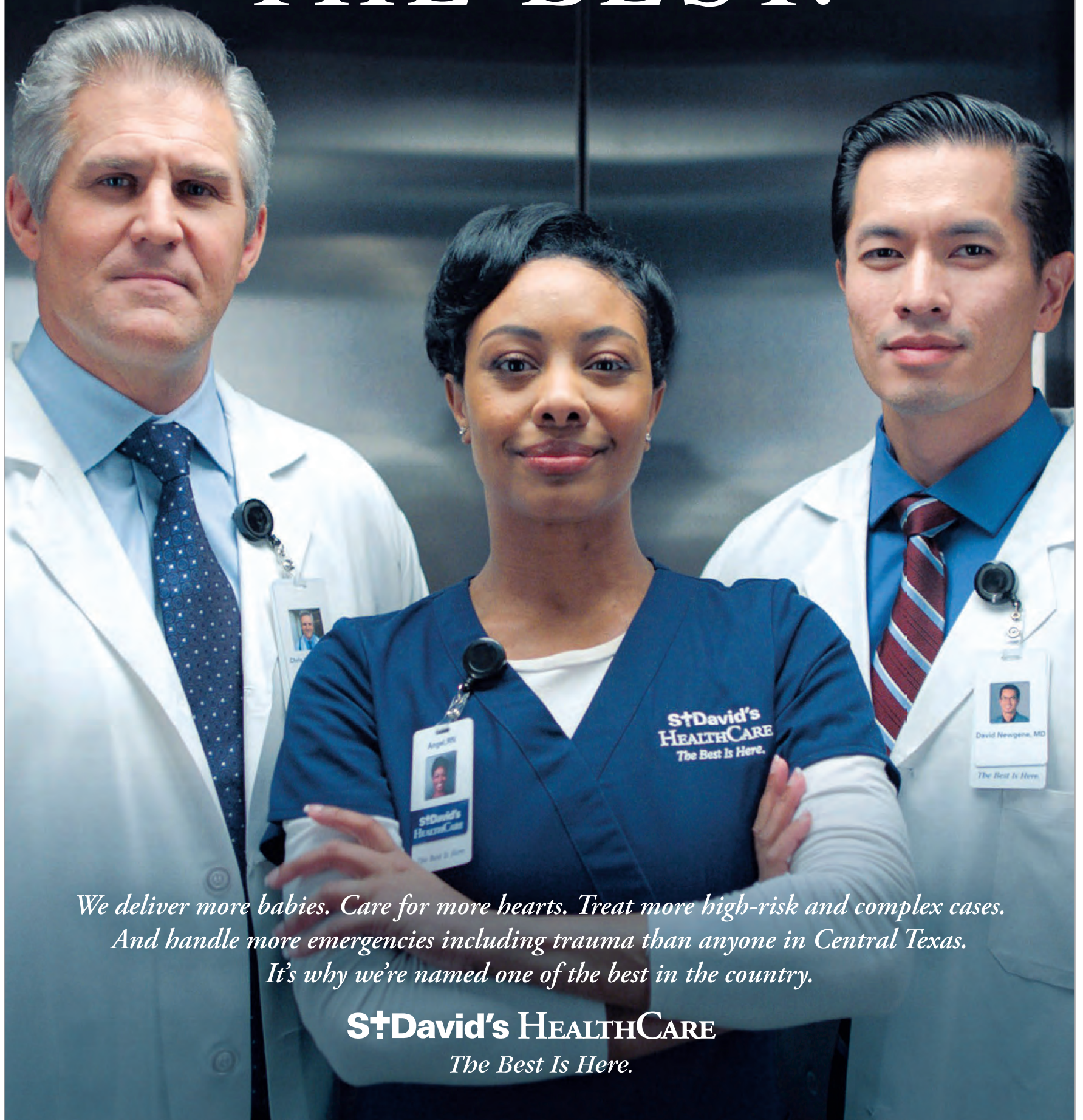
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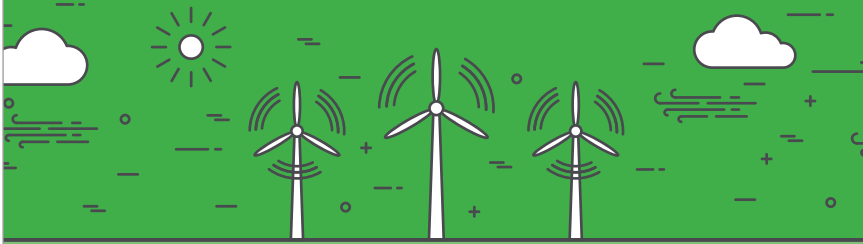
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John and Jennifer Garrett began *Community Impact Newspaper* in 2005 in Pflugerville, Texas. The company's mission is to build communities of informed citizens and thriving businesses through the collaboration of a passionate team.

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Homelessness a growing concern in Austin

The homeless population in Austin is a widely discussed topic. While the homeless population has grown over the past several years, some say there have only been slight adjustments made by the city to accommodate the growth.

For this reason, Austin City Council and the community are currently working on solutions, including new laws.

On this month's front page, please see Reporters Olivia Aldridge and Christopher Neely's story regarding homelessness in Austin. Neely outlines the problem and what is being done regarding shelter, mental health services, funding and efforts being

made by the private sector. Also in this edition, Editor Jack Flagler compares Austin's homelessness concerns with those across the United States.

As we speak of growth in our community, along with population growth comes land development. In Editor Nicholas Cicale's front page story, he explains the Garza Ranch development. He reports on what is being planned for the project as well as a timeline and amenities it will offer to the community.

As the new 2019-20 school year ramps up, please be sure to be on the lookout for next month's Education Focus edition.



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ASK THE EDITOR



Nicholas Cicale
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ncicale@communityimpact.com

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

What is blue green algae?

Blue green algae is a type of bacteria that can grow and form blooms in warm, shallow, nutrient-rich lakes and rivers. According to the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, blue green algae blooms can produce cyanotoxins that can be harmful to animals and sometimes humans who drink it.

In early August, the city of Austin advised residents to keep their pets out of Lady Bird Lake after dogs died after swimming in the water. Clumps of blue green algae were found in the lake, with larger amounts located near Red Bud Isle park.

According to the city of Austin, it is uncommon for there to be algae in Austin lakes, and blue green algae in previous years has not shown any negative effects.

According to the city, symptoms animals can show after ingesting affected water can include foaming at the mouth, vomiting, diarrhea, stumbling, respiratory paralysis and sometimes death.

FEATURED STORIES

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Correction:

Volume 12, Issue 4

On page 12, the Stassney Lane bridge has not yet been demolished

On page 31, Geoffrey Tahuahua's name was misspelled.

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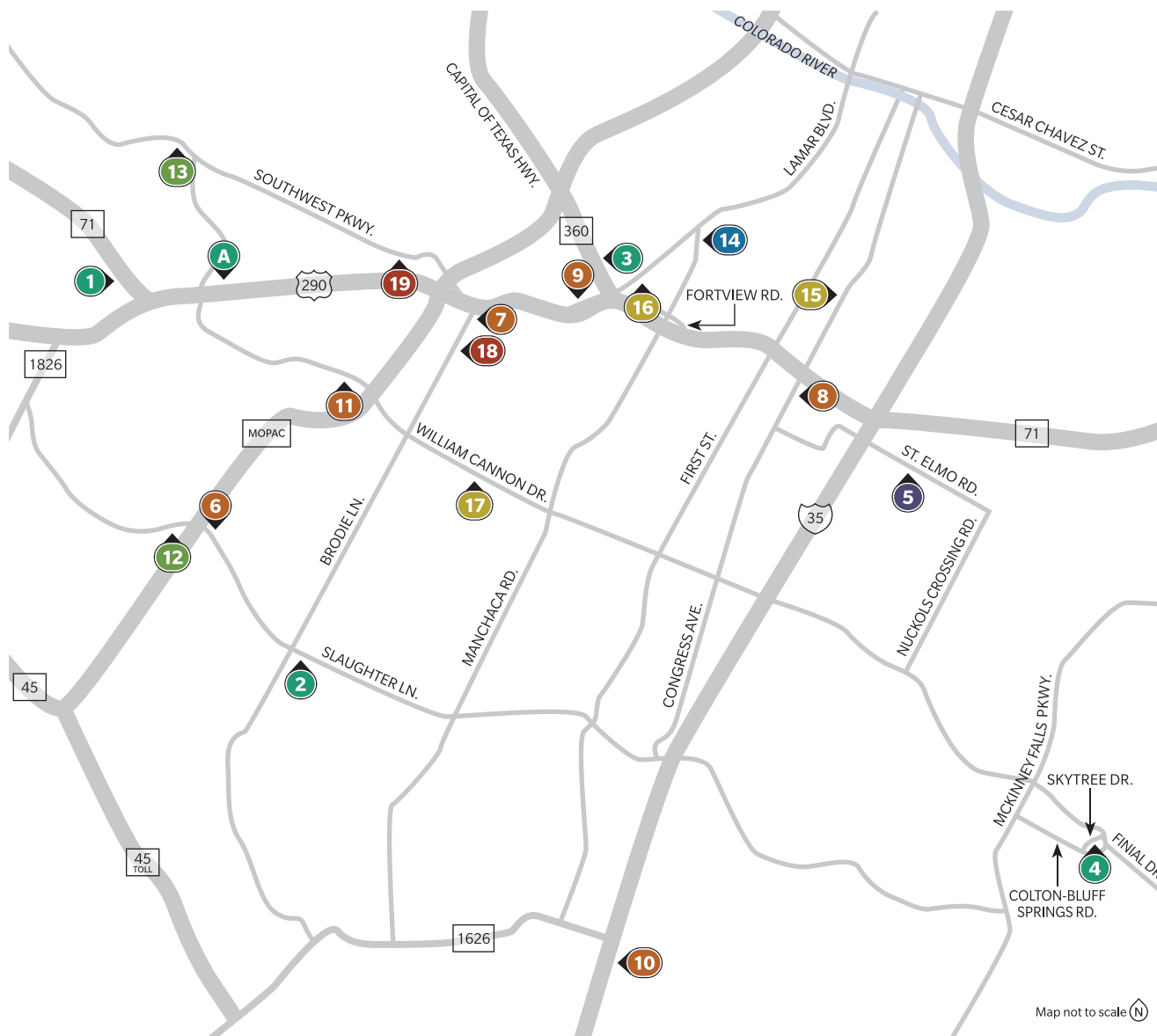
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IMPACTS

Businesses that have recently opened, are coming soon, relocating or expanding



NOW OPEN

- 1 All Star Frozen Treats**, a frozen yogurt shop, opened Aug. 2 at 7101 Hwy. 71, Ste. E7, Austin, near the Y at Oak Hill. The store also offers gelato, sugar-free and dairy-free options, according to the business's website. 512-829-1455. www.allstaratx.com
- 2 Blackerby Violin Shop** opened a new location July 30 at 3401 W. Slaughter Lane,

Austin. Like Blackerby's original location at 1111 W. Anderson Lane, the new shop plans to sell stringed instruments, sheet music, bows and accessories as well as offer instrument rental, repair and maintenance. However, the new location will strictly operate as a rental service until a grand opening this fall, when the full range of sales and services will become available. 512-284-8879. www.violinshop.com

- 3 Realty One Group** opened its new Austin office this spring at 4021 S. Capital of Texas Hwy., Ste. C, in the Brodie Oaks Shopping Center. The company has a Buda office with about 60 agents, and the new location will allow it to expand its services and add about 200 agents. 512-537-5205. www.realtyonegroupprosper.com
- 4** The Easton Park community opened **The Union** amenities center, 7804 Skytree

Drive, Austin, at the beginning of July and held a grand opening celebration July 27. 512-580-7278. www.eastonparkatx.com

COMING SOON

- 5 Ram Windows**, a Texas-based manufacturer and distributor of windows and doors, will open a new industrial location at the South Tech Business Center at 2101 E. St. Elmo Road, Austin. An opening date has not yet been announced. 512-739-1040. www.ramwindows.com

ANNIVERSARIES

- 6 Backspin Bar and Grill's** original location at 5000 W. Slaughter Lane, Ste. 206, Austin, is celebrating 10 years of business in August. Owned by Trey and Brooke Mathis, Backspin offers burgers and sandwiches; salads; traditional appetizers including wings; Sunday brunch; and beer and cocktails. The business expanded in 2018, adding a second location at Belterra Village in Dripping Springs. 512-282-9206. www.backspinsportsbar.com
- 7 The Brodie Homestead**, a wedding venue located at 5211 Brodie Lane, Sunset Valley, celebrates five years of operation in August. Centered around a renovated barn built in the 1940s, the event venue opened in 2014 and includes seating for over 300 people and 48 on-site parking spots. 512-439-2981. www.brodiehomestead.com
- 8** South Austin-based shop **McSpadden's Tire & Automotive** will be celebrating 20 years serving the South Congress area in September. The automotive shop—which is owned by Raymond and Dianne McSpadden—offers oil changes, tire rotations and alignments, emission inspections and repairs to brakes, air conditioners, transmissions, belts and more. The South Austin shop is located at 4241 S. Congress Ave., Austin. McSpadden's also operates shops in North Austin, Bee Cave and Buda. 512-623-7582. www.mcspaddenautomotive.com
- 9** Household staffing agency **Mom's Best Friend**, 4544 S. Lamar Blvd., Ste. 300, Austin, celebrates its 25th anniversary Aug. 26. Mom's Best Friend provides nannies, sitters and "nanny managers," who perform additional household tasks beyond the parameters of child care. The Austin-headquartered



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agency also has offices in Dallas, Houston, Chicago and Vail, Colorado. 512-346-2229. www.momsbestfriend.com

10 Opera Cafe & Coffeehouse celebrated its fifth anniversary at 11215 S. I-35, Ste. 127, Austin, on Aug. 13. The local coffee shop provides coffee drinks, breakfast, sandwiches and desserts to residents in Onion Creek and the surrounding area. It is owned by Aliya Amanzholova and Anas Jawish. 512-296-2755. www.operacafeaustin.com

11 The Texas chapter of **The Recording Academy**, which hosts the annual Grammy Awards, celebrated its 25th anniversary at a July 18 gala. Founded in 1994, the chapter encompasses members across all music industry fields and genres at both the local and national levels. Its office is at 4301 W. William Cannon Drive, Ste. B-150, Austin. 512-328-7997. www.grammy.com

NEW OWNERSHIP

12 BurgerFi's Circle C Ranch franchise, located at 5701 Slaughter Lane, Ste. B-150, Austin, reopened July 29 under new ownership, according to the restaurant's Manager Gabriela Ramirez. The restaurant, which had closed earlier in the year on a temporary basis, is now owned by Debi Haq. The national burger chain's menu includes burgers, veggie and chicken sandwiches, hot dogs and sides, such as fries and onion rings. 512-527-3033. www.burgerfi.com

13 Texas-based dine-in theater chain **Moviehouse & Eatery** has been acquired by Mexican theater company Cinépolis, according to a July 26 statement. Despite the change, Moviehouse & Eatery will operate independently. Moviehouse & Eatery currently operates two locations in Austin—one at Lantana Place, 7415 Southwest Parkway, Bldg. 7, Austin, which opened in summer 2018, and the other in the Four Points area. 512-572-0770. <http://sites.themoviehouse.com/lantana>

EXPANSION

14 The owners of **Zero Gravity Institute**, a flotation spa, acquired the space next door and opened Zero Gravity Yoga and Wellness at 2919 Manchaca Road, Ste. 104A, Austin, in mid-June. Husband-and-wife team Carol and Kevin Johnson

COMPILED BY **OLIVIA ALDRIDGE**
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plan to use the studio space for mindfulness classes—such as yoga, tai chi and meditation—as well as for workshops and speaker series. 512-707-1191. www.zerogravityinstitute.com

RELOCATIONS

15 Austin Community Wellness relocated to 2900 S. Congress Ave., Ste. 104, Austin, from 1711 Fortview Road, Austin. The practice is led by husband-and-wife team Sarah and Shane Duke and offers massage and chiropractic services. Sarah said the move will allow the practice to go from a shared space to its own location. 512-507-5672. www.austincommunitywellness.com

16 Goodwill Central Texas relocated its Lamar Oaks location earlier this summer to a larger space that includes a boutique section at 4001 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin. The store was previously located at 2800 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin. www.goodwillcentraltexas.org

17 Impact Family Church, formerly World Harvest Outreach Church, relocated to 2909 W. William Cannon Drive, Austin, on July 21. The church has met as an organization at Clint Small Middle School for the past seven years and purchased its new facilities from the Jubilee Christian Center. Services will be held at 10:30 a.m. Sundays. 512-444-5550. www.impactatx.org

CLOSINGS

18 Charming Charlie, a women's accessory and jewelry chain, announced July 11 it would close all 261 of its stores by the end of August after filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. Included in the closure is a Sunset Valley location at 5207 Brodie Lane, Ste. 230. 512-899-9575. www.charmingcharlie.com

19 A Subway sandwich location closed this summer at 4601 Southwest Parkway, Ste. 106, Austin. The store's closure is permanent, according to a sign posted on the door of the storefront. www.subway.com

FEATURED IMPACT—NOW OPEN



Pioneers Nutrition, a nutrition club and cafe with offerings such as protein coffee, healthy shakes and antioxidant-boosting teas, is now open at 6330 W. Hwy. 290, Austin. The business officially opened its doors July 2 and celebrated with a grand opening event July 20. 832-993-6255. www.facebook.com/pioneersnutrition



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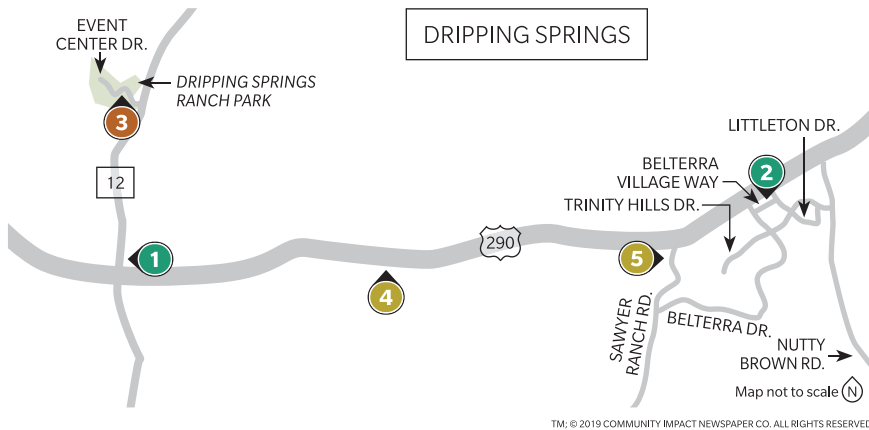


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NOW OPEN

1 Austin Regional Clinic opened ARC Dripping Springs on Aug. 19 at 27760 RR 12, Bldg. 1, Dripping Springs. The new clinic offers general family medicine, pediatrics and lab services. 512-829-9118. www.austinregionalclinic.com/clinics/arc-dripping-springs

2 Ginger Sushi opened a new location in the Belterra Village shopping center July 29 and celebrated a ribbon cutting Aug. 2. Located at 164 Belterra Village Way, Ste. Y600, Austin, the eatery serves traditional sushi items as well as sushi tacos, burritos, burgers and pizza. 512-520-8535. www.gingersushi.com

ANNIVERSARIES

3 The Hays County chapter of the **Texas Master Naturalist** celebrated 20 years in the community with an event on Aug. 10. Master naturalists are "dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas" in a community through projects, trainings and volunteer opportunities, according to the group's website. The Hays County chapter has trained 684 individuals over its 20 years, and has 210 active members, according to a proclamation approved by Dripping Springs City Council on July 9. Local projects include the construction of a bird blind at Dripping Springs Ranch Park, 1042 Event Center Drive, Dripping Springs, where the Aug. 10 community event took place. www.haysmn.org

EXPANSIONS

Drive a Senior Central Texas has expanded services to Dripping Springs, and celebrated with a ribbon cutting hosted by the Dripping Springs Chamber of Commerce on July 25. The business, which matches seniors with volunteer drivers to assist them with transportation needs, operates throughout the region and serves seniors from West Lake Hills to Circle C and other surrounding areas. 512-364-6501. www.driveasenior.org/ctx

RELOCATIONS

4 The Pizza Cave announced July 11 on Twitter that interior demolition had been completed at the restaurant's original location, 110 W. Hwy. 290, Dripping Springs, in preparation for a relocation to 2690 E. Hwy. 290, Ste. 100, Dripping Springs. Construction began Aug. 1 at the new store, and a representative from the restaurant said to expect a fall opening. www.thepizzacave.com

5 Premiere Dance Center is set to move to a new facility at 13834 Sawyer Ranch Road, Dripping Springs, on Sept. 3. The 10,000-square-foot facility will replace Premiere Dance Center's original facility at 9217 W. Hwy. 290, Austin. Like the original location, the Sawyer Ranch Road center will offer a range of classes, including ballet, hip-hop, jazz, tap, tumbling and Pilates. Classes are available to all ages, beginning with children age 18 months. 512-301-7475. www.premieredancecentertx.com

COMPILED BY **OLIVIA ALDRIDGE AND NICHOLAS CICALA**

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AUG. 15- SEPT. 2 AUSTIN RESTAURANT WEEKS
VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Restaurants across Austin join in the annual Austin Restaurant Weeks benefiting Central Texas Food Bank. Participating eateries offer prix fixe meals (\$20-\$50), drink specials (\$12) and other special options with a portion of proceeds going to the food bank. South Austin participants include Nicolaza's and Hideaway Kitchen & Bar. Various times, prices and locations. www.austinrestaurantweeks.org

COURTESY S. MAULDEN



AUG. 31 WINE TASTING
CAMP LUCY

Every Saturday, Camp Lucy hosts a one-hour wine-tasting class guided by sommelier Clint Carter. Carter coaches guests through wines from various regions. Light, complimentary food is provided. 3-4 p.m. \$50. 3509 Creek Road, Dripping Springs. 512-894-4400. www.camplucy.com

COURTESY AL GAWLIK PHOTOGRAPHY



SEPT. 21-22 PECAN STREET FESTIVAL
SIXTH STREET

Enjoy food, local musical acts and family activities while visiting craft vendors at the annual fall Pecan Street Festival on Sixth Street in downtown Austin. The biannual festival is named for Sixth Street's original name. 11 a.m.-10 p.m. (Sat.), 11 a.m.-8 p.m. (Sun.). Free. Sixth Street between Brazos Street and I-35, Austin. www.pecanstreetfestival.org

COURTESY PECAN STREET FESTIVAL

AUGUST

28 A MILITARY FAMILY EVENING
Easterseals Central Texas Veteran Family Services hosts a kids activity day for veterans and their families at the Dripping Springs location of Austin Java. Parents should bring identification confirming their veteran status with them. 6-8 p.m. Free. Aus-

tin Java, 3799 Hwy. 290, Dripping Springs. 512-829-5314. www.austinjava.com

31 TAKE YOUR KIDS TO THE HIVE
The Hive continues its kids Saturday morning music series. Children's music group The Cowabunga Dinosaurs perform, and parents can enjoy special \$3 mimosas. Breakfast, coffee, beer and wine

are also available. 9 a.m.-noon. Free. The Hive, 10415 Old Manchaca Road, Austin. 512-212-1091. www.hiveaustin.com

SEPTEMBER

01 EXPERIENCE DEEP EDDY VODKA
The Austin Tour Co. and Deep Eddy Vodka partner on Sundays for The Deep

Eddy Vodka Experience. Participants board a bus at Parlor & Yard downtown for a BYOB trip to the Deep Eddy Vodka tasting room, where complimentary cocktails await. 1 p.m. \$25. Parlor & Yard, 601 W. Sixth St., Austin, and Deep Eddy Vodka Tasting Room, 2250 E. Hwy. 290, Dripping Springs. 512-994-3534. www.deepeddyvodka.com



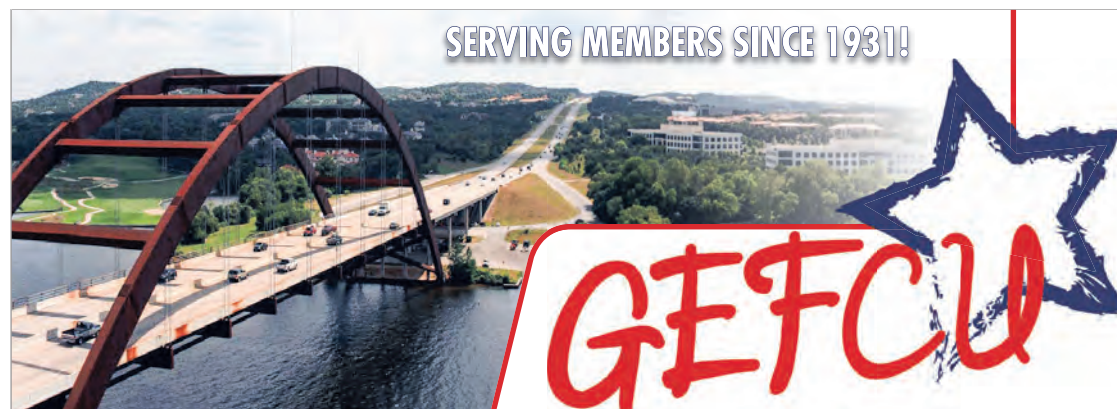
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03 NEW COMEDIANS STAND UP AT THE INSTITUTION THEATER

The Institution Theater hosts an introductory standup comedy workshop for adults—little or no standup experience preferred. Co-median Brently Heilbron will lead the class, focusing on improv skills and developing a “unique comedy voice.” 7-10 p.m. \$40. 3800 Woodbury Drive, Austin. 512-895-9580. www.theinstitutiontheater.com

06 SEE HISTORY IN PICTURES

The Pound House Historical Farmstead hosts the Picture History Exhibit Showcase from the farmstead’s private collection. Attend the opening’s wine and cheese reception and check out daguerreotype, tintype, snapshots and more types of photos taken as early as 1903. 6-7:30 p.m. \$5. 570 Founders Park Road, Dripping Springs. 512-858-2030. www.drpondfarmstead.org

06 TAKE YOUR KIDS FOR A CLIMB AT CRUX ON PARENT’S NIGHT

Crux Climbing Center hosts a four-hour guided play session for kids ages 4-10, giving parents a chance to have a night out. Kids can climb, play and eat pizza. 6-10 p.m. \$35

and up. 121 Pickle Road, Ste. 100, Austin. 512-931-3911. www.cruxclimbingcenter.com

14 CELEBRATE FRIED CHICKEN

For fans of chicken, the Austin Fried Chicken & Hot Wing Festival is a day to rejoice. The festival will feature live music and entertainment and a range of uniquely flavored chicken for sampling. Noon-7 p.m. \$10 (general admission). Palm Park, 601 E. 3rd St., Austin. www.friedchickenandhotwings.com

18 SUPPORT LOCAL GREEN THUMBS

Hays County Master Gardeners host their annual plant sale at the Dripping Springs Farmers Market, featuring perennials, herbs and local climate-friendly Texas Superstar plants. 3-6 p.m. Free. 160 E. Mercer St., Dripping Springs. 512-393-2120. www.txmng.org/hays

21 GO OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS

Vista Brewing hosts the Outside City Limits Festival with live music and family-friendly activities, as well as local beer, wine, cider and food from a variety of vendors. Noon-9 p.m. \$15 and up. 13551 FM 150, Driftwood. 512-766-1842. www.vistabrewingtx.com



SEPT. 28 OPEN CONGRESS TEXAS TRIBUNE FESTIVAL

Part of the annual Texas Tribune Festival, Open Congress offers a day of free programs open to the public in tents located along Congress Avenue. Panelists include current and former politicians, members of the media and entertainers. Topics discussed will include health care, Texas education, the 2020 election, the recent Texas Legislative Session and local politics. Other events during the three-day Texas Tribune Festival are held at locations across downtown Austin from Sept. 26-28, and are available to those who purchase general admission passes. 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Free. Congress Ave. south of the Texas Capitol. <https://festival.texastribune.org>

GET CULTURED FOR FREE

September brings opportunities for free visits to Austin’s many museums.

SEPT. 21: Smithsonian Free Museum Day

Museums across the United States participate in this annual occasion, opening their doors to visitors for free. Several Austin museums will participate, including the Neill-Cochran House Museum, Mexic-Arte Museum and South Austin’s own Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. Interested visitors can download a ticket to use at any one participating museum during that location’s open hours. www.smithsonianmag.com/museumday

SEPT. 22: Austin Museum Day

Austin’s local version of Free Museum Day includes even more participants. In 2018, over 45 museums in the city took part, including the Umlauf Sculpture Garden and the South Austin Museum of Popular Culture. See the full list of participating locations at www.austinmuseums.org/museumday.



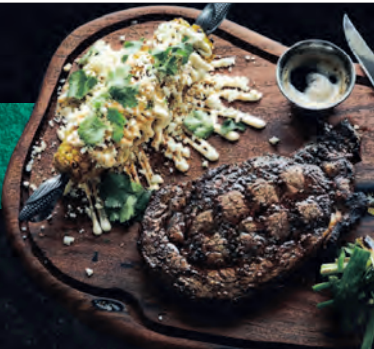
Find more or submit events at communityimpact.com/event-calendar. Event organizers can submit local events online to be considered for the print edition.
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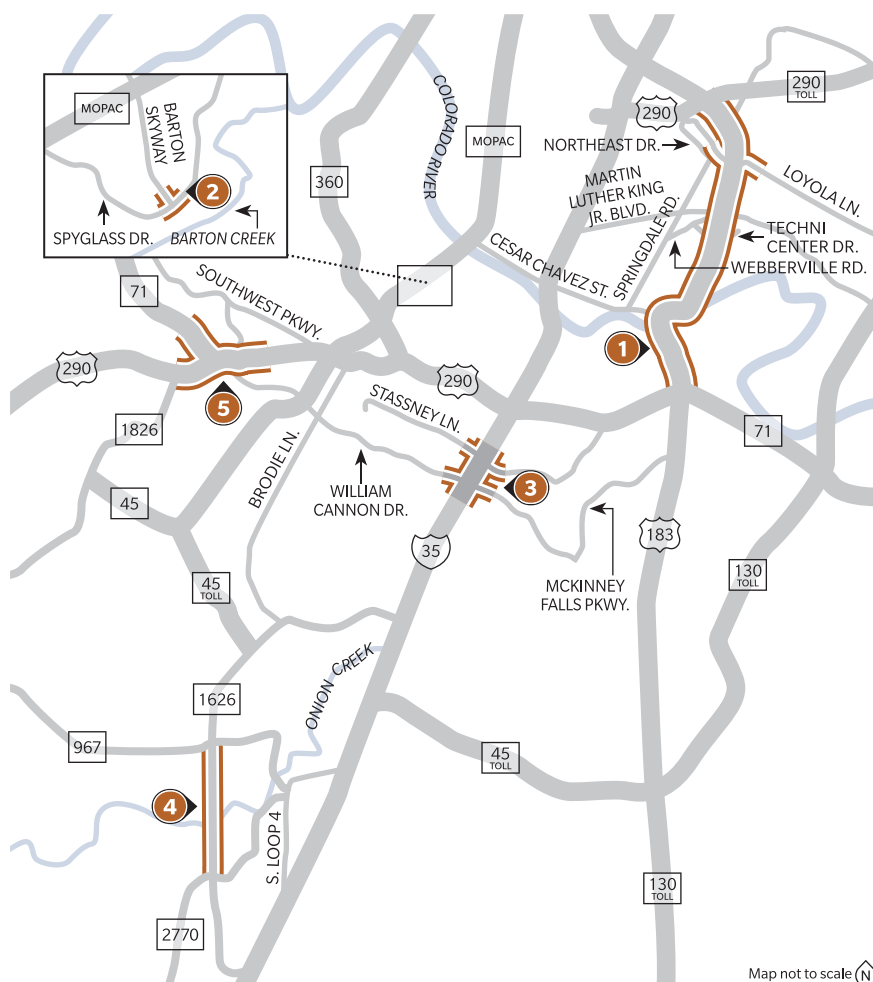
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ONGOING PROJECTS

1 US 183 South toll project

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority opened new toll lanes on northbound and southbound US 183 between Hwy. 290 Toll and Techni Center Drive in early August.

Timeline: May 2016-late 2020

Cost: \$743 million

Funding sources: Mobility Authority, Texas Department of Transportation, Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act funds

2 Barton Skyway and Spyglass Drive intersection improvements

The Austin Transportation Department and Austin Public Works implemented upgrades to Barton Skyway and Spyglass Drive intersection in July. The projects improve safety with new crosswalks, increased visibility of lane markings and improved signage.

Timeline: completed in July

Cost: approximately \$40,000

Funding source: city of Austin

3 Stassney Lane and William Cannon Drive bridge construction at I-35

The Stassney Lane bridge will be demolished by the end of August, according to a TxDOT new release. Construction of a new bridge will take about six months to complete. Previously,

the bridge was scheduled to be demolished earlier this summer.

Timeline: July 2016-early 2020

Cost: \$79 million

Funding source: Proposition 1 funds

4 FM 1626 South project

Work continues on Phase 2 of the FM 1626 South project in Hays County, geared toward improving the roadway between FM 2770 and FM 967. According to a July 16 press release, the demolition of the Mustang Creek and Onion Creek bridges has begun.

Timeline: 2016-TBD

Cost: \$35.3 million for the south phase

Funding source: Pass-Through Finance Program Agreement funds

5 Oak Hill Parkway project

Two lawsuits were filed in July against the Oak Hill Parkway project, a proposed 12-lane highway that aims to improve mobility near the Y at Oak Hill. The lawsuits question the project's environmental review and ask for the project's scope to be adjusted.

Timeline: projected to begin in 2020

Cost: \$545 million

Funding sources: city of Austin, TxDOT

All information on this page was updated as of 8/2/19. News or questions about these or other local transportation projects? Email us at swanews@communityimpact.com.

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Work resumes on MoPac South toll project

BY AMY DENNEY

An indefinite hold on the MoPac South toll project has been lifted, and work can resume on developing the project in South Austin.

This project could add one or two toll lanes in each direction on MoPac between Cesar Chavez Street and Slaughter Lane. The total cost is estimated to be between \$435 million and \$540 million, and construction could begin in 2023.

From February 2016 to mid-2019, the MoPac South project was on an indefinite hold pending two issues.

The first was a lawsuit that attempted to stall the project because it had not been studied together with the SH 45 SW and MoPac Intersections Project at Slaughter and La Crosse Avenue. A court ruled in favor of the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority in July 2018.

Additionally, a moratorium was implemented in late 2017 on toll projects statewide after the governor weighed in that no money from voter-approved propositions 1 and

7 could be comingled on projects with toll elements. Area toll projects, including US 183 North, have slowly been resuming since the moratorium was lifted in July.

With the hold on the project lifted, the Mobility Authority is able to resume work on the schematic design and environmental study to assess the project's impact.

Justin Word, the Mobility Authority's director of engineering, said the agency will be able to use most of the work that was completed before the hold on the project.

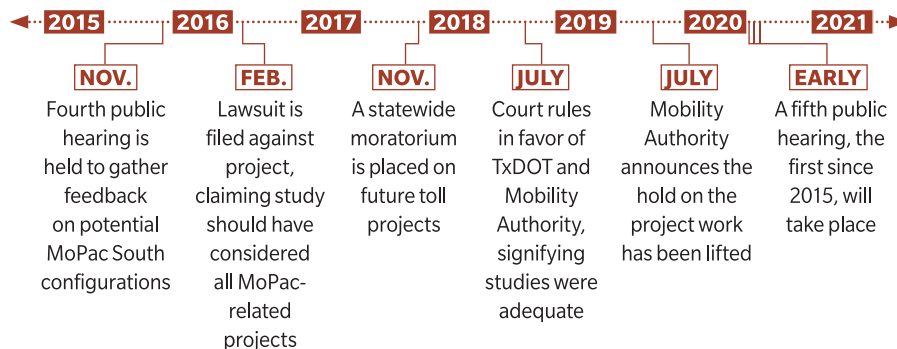
"Some traffic counts and those sort of things get stale very quickly, so we'll redo that," he said at the agency's July 24 board meeting. "The bones of the schematic work are there, so we can reuse that."

Mobility Authority staffers will meet with representatives from the Texas Department of Transportation and other stakeholders to refine the project schedule, design and cost estimates.

A fifth public hearing on the project is slated for early 2020.

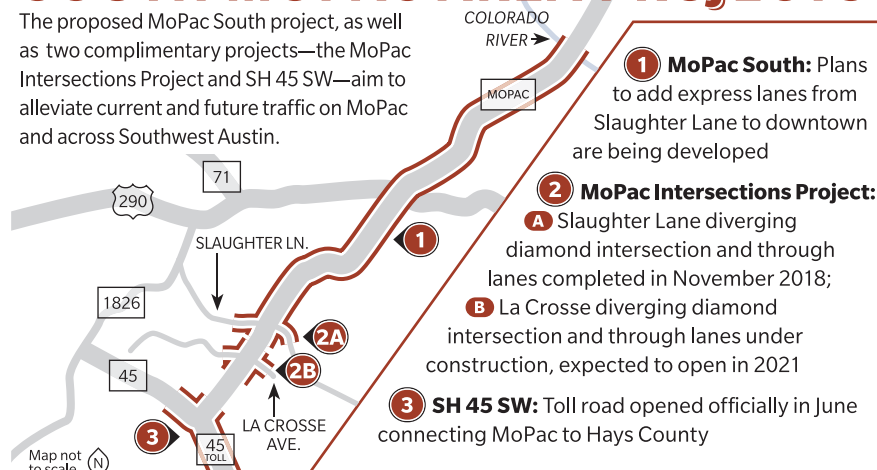
HALTED PROGRESS

Although public hearings and open houses were held throughout 2015 to gather public feedback about proposed options to expand MoPac South, progress stalled beginning in 2016. A new public hearing is scheduled to take place in early 2020 as planning of the project has resumed.



SOUTH MOPAC AREA PROJECTS

The proposed MoPac South project, as well as two complimentary projects—the MoPac Intersections Project and SH 45 SW—aim to alleviate current and future traffic on MoPac and across Southwest Austin.



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BuildSoccer and the Marbridge Foundation partner on new 20-acre youth soccer complex

BuildSoccer, a nonprofit dedicated to improving youth sports facilities in Austin, announced June 24 it had signed a long-term lease on the property of the Marbridge Foundation in South Austin, with plans to develop a six-field soccer park complex. Marbridge, a residential community for adults with cognitive disabilities located at the intersection of Brodie Lane and FM 1626, sits on 200 acres of land, approximately 20 of which will be occupied by the soccer park.

“[The partnership] exposes our greater community to the Marbridge mission,” said Becca McPherson, vice president of development for the Marbridge Foundation.

While a portion of Marbridge’s acreage has been leased to groups such as BuildSoccer for recreational use in order to support Marbridge’s funding in the past, the development is a first for the facility.

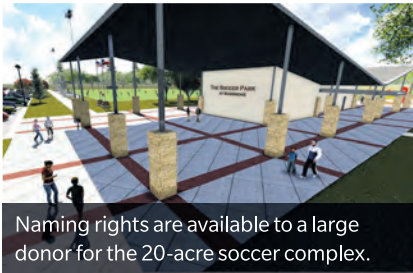
Marbridge’s partnership with BuildSoccer fits in with a “grand strategic plan” that Marbridge has developed in order to use its resources and foster more connections with the community, according to McPherson. She said the park would create opportunities for Marbridge residents as well as soccer-playing youth, allowing them to train to work field maintenance, landscaping and concessions.

In the future, Marbridge residents will also have the chance to form a Marbridge Foundation Special Olympics soccer team, McPherson said. Marbridge and BuildSoccer also plan to host a chapter of The Outreach Program for Soccer, which serves special needs youth.

“We definitely want it to be a good, synergistic relationship,” BuildSoccer President Christie Ciccarello said, adding she had the idea to partner with Marbridge after her own children played at a San Antonio soccer complex built by an organization that served that city’s special-needs community.

Ciccarello said she was also motivated by the lack of lighted soccer parks in the Austin area, causing families like hers to spend extended hours in the car going to and from games and practices.

BuildSoccer also announced it was seeking funding, inviting the public to make contributions toward the estimated \$5 million project. Ciccarello said the organization is especially seeking a large donor interested in acquiring naming rights for the



Naming rights are available to a large donor for the 20-acre soccer complex.



Work on the six-field complex will commence after an initial round of fundraising.



Both area youth and Marbridge residents will use the future fields.

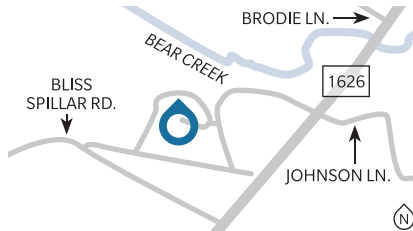
complex. Existing donors include Major League Soccer team Austin FC’s philanthropic arm 4ATX Foundation, which contributed \$10,000. Austin’s second division team, Austin Bold FC, is also supporting the project by donating a portion of its ticket sales from its July 27 game to BuildSoccer.

Construction of the soccer park will take around two and a half years to complete once initial fundraising allows work to commence, Ciccarello said.

Address: 2310 Bliss Spillar Road, Manchaca

Timeline: TBD

Size: 20 acres



New MedtoMarket facility in St. Elmo provides lab resources and workspace for medical professionals

MedtoMarket, an Austin-based medical innovation company, has moved into a new, 31,683-square-foot facility in the St. Elmo district of South Austin. The company, which previously operated out of Brackenridge Children’s Hospital, marries M2M Element—a coworking space for medical professionals—and M2M Labs—a lab innovation space—in its new facility. MedtoMarket’s grand opening took place June 8.

“Our vision was to create this super-ecosystem for medical innovation,” said Dr. Aaron Ali, an anesthesiologist who co-founded MedtoMarket eight years ago. Ali also serves as CEO of MedtoMarket.

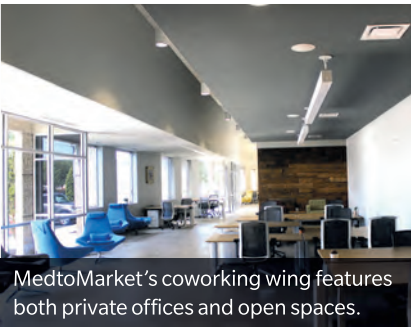
According to Ali, MedtoMarket’s new location is the first privately owned facility of its kind. When designing the facility, Ali said the MedtoMarket team drew inspiration from the workspaces of tech companies such as Google. He said he envisioned the facility as a place where medical professionals who are typically “siloe” into different spheres of the health care industry—hospitals and universities, for example—could have natural interactions that would spark ideas and collaboration.

“The biggest thing is having this open platform where anybody can come into our facility and use it, and be able to work on different products, procedures and techniques together,” Ali said. “We don’t care if you’re A&M or UT, Seton or St. David. Come and use the facility.”

The M2M Labs facility includes research and development labs, a lecture hall and theater where viewers can see through to a 20-station training and bioskills lab facility.

Organizations that have used the facility so far include Travis County EMS, which has hosted training seminars at M2M Labs. In addition to hosting established companies and organizations, Ali said MedtoMarket aims to provide space for startups in the life sciences, where they can both test new products and receive entrepreneurial mentorship through the coworking wing.

The coworking sector of MedtoMarket includes both reserved offices for individuals and companies and “hot desks,” work stations in open areas that are available to any M2M Element member.



MedtoMarket’s coworking wing features both private offices and open spaces.



Dr. Aaron Ali is CEO and co-founder of MedtoMarket.

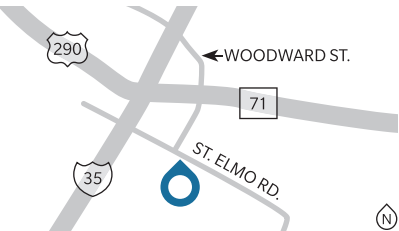


MedtoMarket’s new facility includes a lecture hall for special events.

Address: 2101 E. St. Elmo Road, Bldg. 1, Ste. 100, Austin

Timeline: Dec. 2018-June 2019

Size: 31,683 square feet



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City of Austin, Travis County prepare budgets for new 3.5% property tax revenue cap

BY EMMA FREER

In June, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed into law a bill that will limit local governments from raising property tax revenue more than 3.5% year over year—excluding new construction and debt obligations—without triggering an election.

Previously, local governments were able to raise property tax revenue up to 8%—known as the rollback rate—before voter approval was required.

“When you look at what the law actually does, it’s pretty simple,” said Jacob Asmussen, Central Texas bureau chief for conservative group Empower Texans. “If a local government wants to raise your taxes more than 3.5%, they have to ask you.”

But local officials said the cap, when it takes effect in fiscal year 2020-21, will provide little relief to property owners while causing major cuts at the city and county, whose largest expenses are public safety and the criminal justice system.

Both sides agree on one point, at least. “The revenue cap ... changes everything,” said Deece Eckstein, intergovernmental relations officer for Travis County.

IMPACT TO PUBLIC SAFETY

As in most cities, public safety is Austin’s largest expense. Police, fire and EMS made up nearly 70% of the city’s operating budget in fiscal year 2018-19.

Council members have also approved a series of additional investments. In June 2018, they voted to build five new fire stations in underserved areas by 2023 at a total estimated cost of \$86.4 million. In November, council members approved a four-year \$44.6 million contract between the city of Austin and the Austin Police Association, a labor union that represents Austin Police Department officers.

That same month, City Manager Spencer Cronk said he intended to incorporate APD Chief Brian Manley’s staffing plan—which recommends 123 new officer positions—into future budgets.

Funding for both the contract and the staffing plan, however, was based on an assumed rollback rate of at least 6%, per city staff.

“[The cap] will make it harder for us to hire additional police, fire and other personnel as the City continues to grow and tougher to absorb annual cost increases in

wages, rents and insurance premiums,” a city spokesperson said via email.

City staff are working to balance the budget before the cap takes effect to account for these commitments, which may include revising labor agreements, the spokesperson said.

APA President Ken Casaday said he is not worried about the current contract.

“The city’s continuing to spend a massive amount of money on homeless issues and housing,” he said. “So we certainly don’t expect to see a lot of changes [to public safety funding].”

Both Casaday and Austin Firefighters Association President Bob Nicks said they are concerned about future spending.

“Sometimes people take public safety for granted,” Nicks said. “If things are going well, then that’s a big part of the budget, and we just cut [public safety] back.”

But cuts can prove dangerous when demand for public safety services is high, such as during a wildfire or the series of bombings in Austin last year.

“When you start cutting things out, you reduce your capacity to flex and multiply yourself when you have a bigger event,” Nicks said.

LOSS OF FLEXIBILITY

Travis County is different from the city of Austin both in that it relies more heavily on property tax revenue—which made up 70.6% of its general fund in FY 2018-19, compared to 47.1% of the city’s—and it operates a smaller budget.

Over the last 30 years, the county’s median revenue growth rate has been 3.72%, which is fairly close to the new cap, Eckstein said.

But the county has approached the 8% rollback rate three times in that period—in 1993, 2000 and 2009—following recessions.

Economic downturns increase local government costs in two ways, Eckstein said. First, they typically correspond with a dip in new construction, which is a reliable source of new property tax revenue. Second, they increase demand for county services, such as utility assistance and—because crime tends to rise when the economy is bad—jails.

With the rollback rate at 8%, Travis County has been able to take a “just-in-time” approach to its budgets, Eckstein said, eschewing the need to build a

CONSIDERING the cap

A bill signed into law in June limits local government entities from raising their property tax revenue more than 3.5% year over year without triggering an election. Conservative state lawmakers argue revenue caps are necessary to ease homeowners’ tax burdens, but local officials say the effect on their budgets will be crippling.

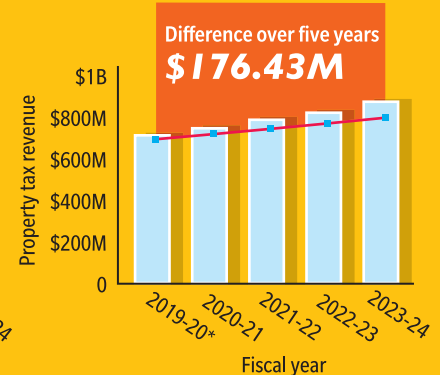
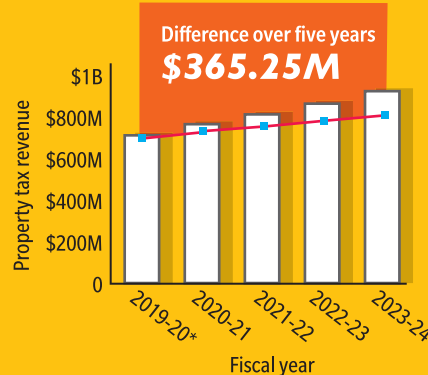
Projecting REVENUE

Property tax cap at 3.5%

City of Austin | Revenue growth at 6.7%

The city of Austin has raised its property tax revenue an average of 6.7% over the last five years. In Travis County, staff estimate future revenue growth at a rate of 5.1% annually.

Travis County | Revenue growth at 5.1%

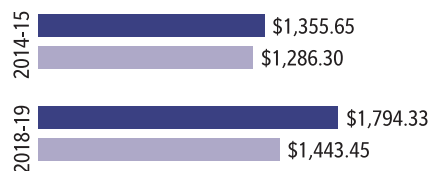


* TAX CAP WILL NOT TAKE EFFECT UNTIL FY 2020-21

Take-home SAVINGS

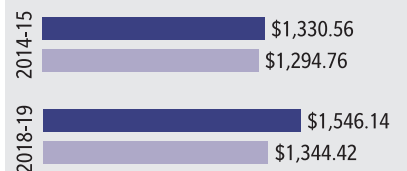
City of Austin Travis County

Tax bill in the city of Austin before exemptions



Hypothetically, if the rollback rate had been 3.5% for the past five years, the owner of a median-value home in Austin would have saved 5.3% on his or her total city and county tax bill.

Tax bill in the city of Austin before exemptions, had a 3.5% cap taken effect



Estimated savings OVER 5 YEARS **\$768.71**



\$407,400

The median value of an Austin home



\$102,455

The median home value in the city of Austin has increased by this amount since 2014.

SOURCES: CITY OF AUSTIN FY 2018-19 APPROVED BUDGET, CITY OF AUSTIN CITY OF AUSTIN FY 2019-20 BUDGET TIME & OUTLOOK, TRAVIS COUNTY FY 2018-19 APPROVED BUDGET, TRAVIS COUNTY INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS 86TH TEXAS LEGISLATURE POST-SESSION SUMMARY/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

large reserve because there is the option to raise revenue in times of crisis. “But that sort of flexibility is going to be gone now,” he said.

WHAT’S AHEAD

The city and county are developing their budget proposals for FY 2019-20, the last year the rollback rate will be 8%. In the short term, the cap could cause higher taxes.

“The perverse effect of what the Legislature has done is it has sped up some of the investments we intended to make in

a phased approach so that we can shove them in ... this year’s budget, knowing that we will be seriously curtailed in at least the next two budget cycles,” County Judge Sarah Eckhardt said at a Commissioners Court meeting June 18.

The Legislature reconvenes in 2021, but Eckstein said it is unlikely the cap will be reconsidered.

“There’s still going to be a little ideological, hardcore [group] out there that’s going to say, ‘Three-and-a-half [percent] wasn’t low enough. We should have gone for two-and-a-half.’”



Cathleen Wenger, Financial Consultant; Myron Jordahl, Wealth Advisor;
and Melissa Knippa, Wealth Advisor

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District begins search for Superintendent Bruce Gearing's replacement

DRIPPING SPRINGS ISD Following the July 25 news that DSISD Superintendent Bruce Gearing would leave the district to take on the superintendent role at Leander ISD, the DSISD board of trustees kicked off the search process for a new superintendent by selecting Texas Association of School Board's Executive Search Services as the third-party firm to lead the search, the same firm that identified Gearing for DSISD.

The Aug. 2 vote came after a July 30 meeting at which the board heard proposals from TASB ESS and Education Solutions & Services' Search Services.

According to a press release sent after the Aug. 2 meeting, interviews for the interim superintendent role were held Aug. 15, under the guidance of TASB ESS.



The board of trustees heard pitches from two third-party search firms July 30.

The board also voted to appoint Joe Burns, the former principal of Dripping Springs High School who retired at the end of the 2018-19 school year, as part-time interim assistant superintendent for learning and innovation, temporarily replacing Nicole Poenitzsch, who previously held the role. Board President Carrie Kroll said the position would be filled on a permanent basis once a superintendent has been hired and can oversee the selection.

Walnut Springs Elementary relocation to continue despite petition, change in district leadership

DRIPPING SPRINGS ISD The district has reaffirmed plans to relocate Walnut Springs Elementary School to the campus of Dripping Springs Middle School after over 500 community members signed a petition challenging the plans.

From July 23 to Aug. 2, the district solicited community feedback on design for the new, 850-student facility, a project of DSISD's \$132 million 2018 bond program. During that time, a Change.org petition circulated titled "Say NO to a combined DSMS/WSE," demanding a halt to the project because "there is no educational proof that a combined elementary/middle school model is effective."

The petition points to the departure of Superintendent Bruce Gearing as a motivation for the petition's timing.

However, the district released a statement rejecting the idea that a discontinuation of the project would be considered.

"The school community's hard work resulted in a proposal that was packaged, communicated and subjected to community approval through the bond election process," read the statement. "This decision will be honored by the district and by the Board of Trustees as elected representatives of our community."

Construction on the project is set to begin in June 2020.

Master plan draft shows future district changes

AUSTIN ISD Trustees were presented with a draft of the district's 2019 Facilities Master Plan on Aug. 12. The plan outlines recommendations to better provide programs to the entire district through facility renovations, program realignment and community partnerships.

The plan will be up for board approval in October.

The vote will go alongside a vote on the district's school changes plan, which will lay out the closing, consolidating and rezoning of schools to better use district resources.

According to Operations Officer Matias Segura, the Facilities Master Plan is being updated to acknowledge needs were not being met through the 2017 bond.

"Now while we're engaging in this school changes process, the idea is here over the next several months [the two plans] will begin to converge," he said. "We'll have a really good understanding of what our future facilities will be, assuming ultimately both get approved by the board."

SOUTH AUSTIN RECOMMENDATION: BURGER ACTIVITY CENTER

Expand the center to include a multipurpose space with a gym, a fine arts auditorium and professional development space while renovating baseball fields and the football stadium.

DATE TO KNOW

SEPT. 6

Austin ISD is scheduled to

release its school changes plan on Sept. 6. The plan was previously scheduled to be released in August but was delayed to allow the district to consider public feedback gathered over the summer.

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

AUSTIN ISD The district is in the process of relocating its headquarters to 4000 S. I-35, Austin. District departments began moving Aug. 12 from the Carruth Administration Center—located at 1111 W. Sixth St., Austin—to the new site and will continue to do so one by one through Oct. 4, according to the district's website. AISD sold the Carruth Administration Center in 2017 and purchased the former Southfield building as a replacement. District board meetings will still be held at the old Carruth Administration Center Board Auditorium until November, when meetings will start being held at the new building.

AUSTIN ISD The district agreed to a contract with Vida Clinic on Aug. 12 to expand mental health services to 16 new campuses during the 2019-20 school year. According to Vida Clinic, the company is now serving 43 schools.

AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The college district's board of trustees approved proposing a not-to-exceed property tax rate of \$0.105 per \$100 of taxable value for fiscal year 2019-20 at an Aug. 6 meeting. The maintenance and operations rate remains at \$0.09 per \$100 of taxable value, a rate that has remained unchanged for more than a decade, while the debt service rate increased from \$0.0148 to \$0.015, per the proposal.

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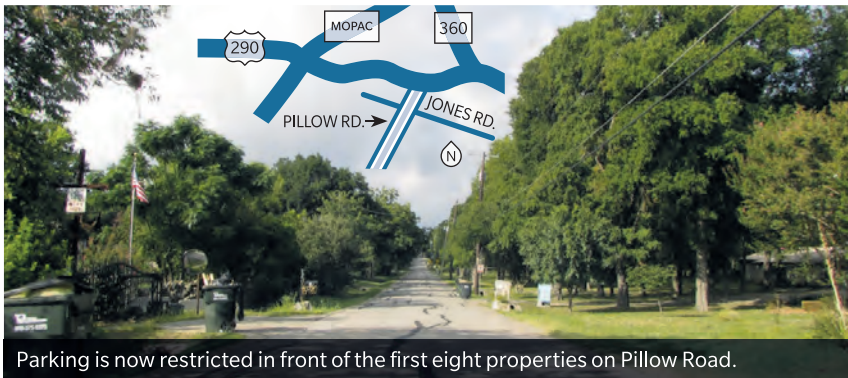
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Sterner parking restrictions placed on Pillow Road

SUNSET VALLEY An almost 10-year dispute about parking regulations on Pillow Road in Sunset Valley may have come to a conclusion July 16, when City Council voted to prohibit parking on both sides of the first 585 feet of the road south of Jones Road at all times.

The change comes after over 60% of impacted residents said they supported stricter restrictions on their portion of the road. Pillow is a narrow, two-lane road adjacent to Sunset Valley Elementary School. South of the Jones Road intersection, where restrictions were placed, Pillow is primarily a residential road without sidewalks. Through the new restrictions, residents are eligible for up to three parking passes for guests.

City Council approved lighter parking restrictions for the road in 2018, restricting parking to one side of the road during school start and release hours. However, concerns from residents remained, including a lack of pedestrian safety and emergency access for first responders, and a history of vehicles blocking residential driveways.

Most past residential complaints related to parents parking on the road to pick up and drop off students at the elementary school. Other complaints, however, have targeted two properties in particular, both of which were against

stricter regulations. One, the Little House of Love, is a church operating out of 1 Pillow Road that has had guests park on Pillow, although it encourages parking on the other side of Jones. Similarly, residents have complained of vehicles parking to use a Little Free Library located at a different residence.

Police Chief Lenn Carter said there is a safety concern with parking on Pillow. However, he felt the new restrictions did not address the issue.

"In an ideal world when looking at this as strictly a public safety issue, I would say no parking on the road at all, both sides of the street," he said. "That's because a large emergency vehicle would have a tough time getting through there if cars are parked parallel."

Councilmember Marc Bruner, who voted against the 2018 motion because he thought restrictions were too weak, said while he wanted to see a more comprehensive long-term solution in the future, he considers the new rules better than what was previously in place.

However, he also felt the restrictions might not solve ongoing arguments between residents on Pillow.

"There are going to still be debates and issues between the residents of the street that, I would hope, courtesy and common sense help solve," he said.

Travis County pushes pause on future economic incentive agreements due to new revenue cap

TRAVIS COUNTY Travis County commissioners voted 4-1 to pause accepting new applications for economic incentive agreements, in keeping with the county's updated budget goals and economic-development strategy, which prioritizes local small businesses, in light of the recently passed property tax revenue cap by the Texas Legislature.

"We simply cannot afford to give preferential tax treatment to our wealthiest corporate citizens, or prospective wealthy corporate citizens, under a 3.5% revenue cap," County Judge Sarah Eckhardt said.

Currently, the county oversees seven economic incentive—or tax rebate—agreements. Since 2008, the county has rebated almost \$75 million to the seven companies with which it has incentive agreements, according to a brief by county staff. Companies include Simon Properties, the developer behind the Domain; Apple; Samsung; and Fotowatio Renewable Ventures Solar Farm.

Commissioners and staff have pushed the county to explore non-property tax revenue streams to help offset the loss to property tax revenue anticipated once the 3.5% cap takes effect.

Travis County brings on new census program manager ahead of 2020

TRAVIS COUNTY Following Travis County's commitment last year to take on a leadership role in the region's upcoming census effort, staff introduced Census Program Manager John Lawler at a July 30 Commissioners Court meeting.

Lawler—who has experience in campaign organizing at the local level in Austin, including with the Keep Austin Affordable Coalition and as a staff member for Austin City Council Member Greg

Casar—will be the first person to serve in the role. His tenure will run through September 2020.

The temporary census program manager position is the product of an agreement between the county and the city of Austin to energize and coordinate census outreach and education efforts locally. While funded by both, the position will be located within the county government.

The county received 48 applications for the position.

The upcoming 2020 census is likely to have a major effect both at home and across the country. One analysis cited by Intergovernmental Relations Officer Deece Eckstein estimates for each person missed in the census count, the local community loses \$1,500 in federal funding annually.

It is anticipated Texas could gain an additional two or even three U.S. House districts as a result of population growth. Census data will also be used to redraw congressional districts at the federal, state and local levels.

SENSING THE CENSUS

The county has hired an employee to oversee the coming census survey.

2020 new census is expected

48 applications received for the position

\$1,500 in federal funding lost per person missed in census

SOURCE: TRAVIS COUNTY/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER




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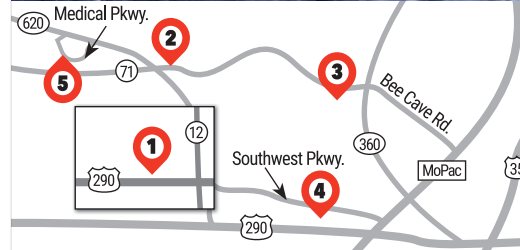
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Release of Austin's new land-development code draft expected by Oct. 4

AUSTIN According to a timeline released by Austin City Manager Spencer Cronk's office in late July, Austinites can expect to see the first draft of a new land-development code and revised zoning maps by Oct. 4.

The new timeline marks the first news about the city's ongoing effort to

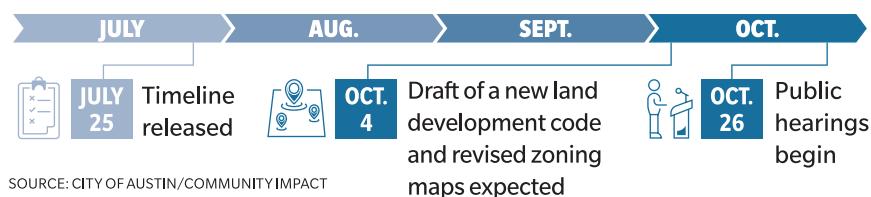
rewrite its land development code—the rules governing what can be built and where within Austin's bounds—since City Council provided policy direction for the effort in May.

Public hearings on the new code and zoning maps are scheduled to begin by Oct. 26, with a first vote

from City Council planned for “early [December]” according to the timeline.

The city has been working to rewrite its land code since 2012, when the community, in drafting the city's 30-year comprehensive plan dubbed Imagine Austin, agreed an overhaul was needed in order to manage its rapid growth and create a walkable, accessible and sustainable place. The last major revision happened in 1984. CodeNEXT, the city's most recent attempt at a rewrite, lasted about six years and cost \$8.5 million to organize before being discontinued in fall 2018.

Land-development plan timeline



SOURCE: CITY OF AUSTIN/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

Austin Fire Department set to build new station serving Sunset Valley

AUSTIN The Austin Fire Department presented to Sunset Valley City Council on Aug. 6 the details of a future fire and emergency medical service station planned for W. Hwy. 290 to serve Sunset Valley and Southwest Austin neighborhoods such as Travis Country.

AFD Division Chief Palmer Buck said the station will be located at 5408 W. Hwy. 290, Austin, with the station built

on the property's front lot. The department is ready for the design phase of the project, with a groundbreaking expected for June 2020 and substantial completion of the station in July 2021, he said.

“At this point the station is looking to be built as a four-bay station,” Buck said. “We’re still working through with the five stations we’re building [across the city] what will be in [the bays], but it will absolutely have an ambulance and a fire engine at that station.”

The new station is expected to improve response times in and around Sunset Valley, said Ronnelle Paulsen, AFD's administrative services assistant director.

Sunset Valley was one of many areas in the South Austin region that has historically had poor response times. The station is one of five Austin City Council directed the department to build in a May 2018 resolution to improve service.

Below standard

The standard for fire converges is for 90 percent of calls to be responded to in 8 minutes or less. The following 2017 data shows response times in Sunset Valley and Travis Country.

SUNSET VALLEY 10:21

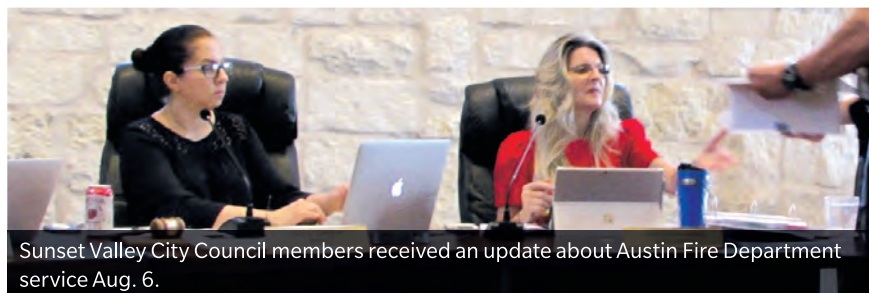
90% of responses within 10 minutes, 21 seconds

TRAVIS COUNTRY 11:47

90% of responses within 11 minutes, 47 seconds



SOURCE: CITY OF AUSTIN/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER



Sunset Valley City Council members received an update about Austin Fire Department service Aug. 6.

NUMBER TO KNOW

\$62.7M

Austin City Manager Spencer

Cronk proposed a \$62.7 million budget for homeless programs for fiscal year 2019-20, which, if approved, would set a new high-water mark for homelessness spending in the city's history.

CITY HIGHLIGHTS

AUSTIN The city's clerk estimates 24,481 Austin voters signed a petition proposing a law that would send current plans to expand the city's convention center to a public election. City Council on Aug. 8 called a referendum and to place the measure on the Nov. 5 ballot as Proposition B.

SUNSET VALLEY The city announced July 29 through a city press release that a monthslong search for a new city administrator had concluded with Sylvia Carrillo-Trevino accepting the position. Carrillo-Trevino will take the reins from interim City Administrator Sara Wilson in September, according to the release. She has over 20 years of experience in public administration and service, chiefly in local government. She joins Sunset Valley's staff from a contract position as development manager of Odessa. Previously, she served as city manager of Aransas Pass and assistant city manager of Corpus Christi.

DRIPPING SPRINGS City Council postponed action regarding the Mark Brown Wedding Venue development until September. The city placed a stop work order on the Driftwood-area development in June after residents voiced concerns about changes to the project's scope and size since being approved in 2018. City staff determined that month that the project being build did not match the original plans that were submitted.

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Hours: Thu.-Fri. 4-9 p.m., Sat. noon-9 p.m., Sun. noon-6 p.m., closed Mon.-Wed.

Year founded:
2018

Key features: craft cocktails and beer from Treaty Oak Ranch

Restaurant offerings



2 CHIEF'S BBQ

7811 S. First St., Ste. 104, Austin

512-444-2333

www.chiefsbbq.com

Hours: Sun.-Wed. 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m., Thu.-Sat. 10:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m.

Year founded:
2002

Key features: a kids menu and lunch specials including burgers

Restaurant offerings



JOE WARNER/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

3 COURSON'S BBQ

The Warehouse Billiard Bar, 509 Ben White Blvd., Austin

512-507-7458

www.coursonsbbq.net

Hours: Tue. 11 a.m.-midnight, Wed.-Sat. noon-midnight, closed Sun.-Mon.

Year founded:
2017

Known for: barbecue served on spicy cornbread waffles

Food truck offerings



NICHOLAS CICALA/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

4 DONN'S TEXAS BBQ

7001 Oak Meadow Drive, Austin

512-288-4060

www.donns-bbq.com

Hours: Mon.-Sat. 5:30 a.m.-9 p.m., Sun. 6 a.m.-8 p.m.

Year founded:
1986

Key features: offers a full breakfast menu as well as tacos and burgers

Restaurant offerings



5 DO-RITE BBQ AT GRACELAND (formerly Stubb's Bar-B-Q)

Graceland Grocery, 8600 W. Hwy. 290, Austin

512-792-9778

www.facebook.com/doritebarbecuegraceland

Hours: 11 a.m.-9 p.m. daily

Year founded:
2018

Key features: live music and a playscape for kids

Restaurant offerings



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GABRICK BARBECUE

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Year founded:
2019

Specialty meats: pork belly burnt ends, seasonal meats

Catering offerings



6 GORDO'S TORTAS & BBQ

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512-507-2602

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Hours: Mon.-Fri. 7 a.m.-4 p.m., Sat.-Sun. 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Year founded:
2004

Known for: barbecue burritos, tacos, tortas and bowls

Food truck offerings



7 THE GREEN MESQUITE BBQ

9900 I-35, Austin

512-282-7100

www.greenmesquitebbq.com

Hours: Sun.-Thu. 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri.-Sat. 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

Year founded:
1988

Known for: mesquite smoked wings

Restaurant offerings



8 LEROY AND LEWIS BARBECUE

121 Pickle Road, Austin

512-945-9882

www.leroyandlewis.com

Hours: Wed.-Sun. 11 a.m.-9 p.m., closed Mon.-Tues.

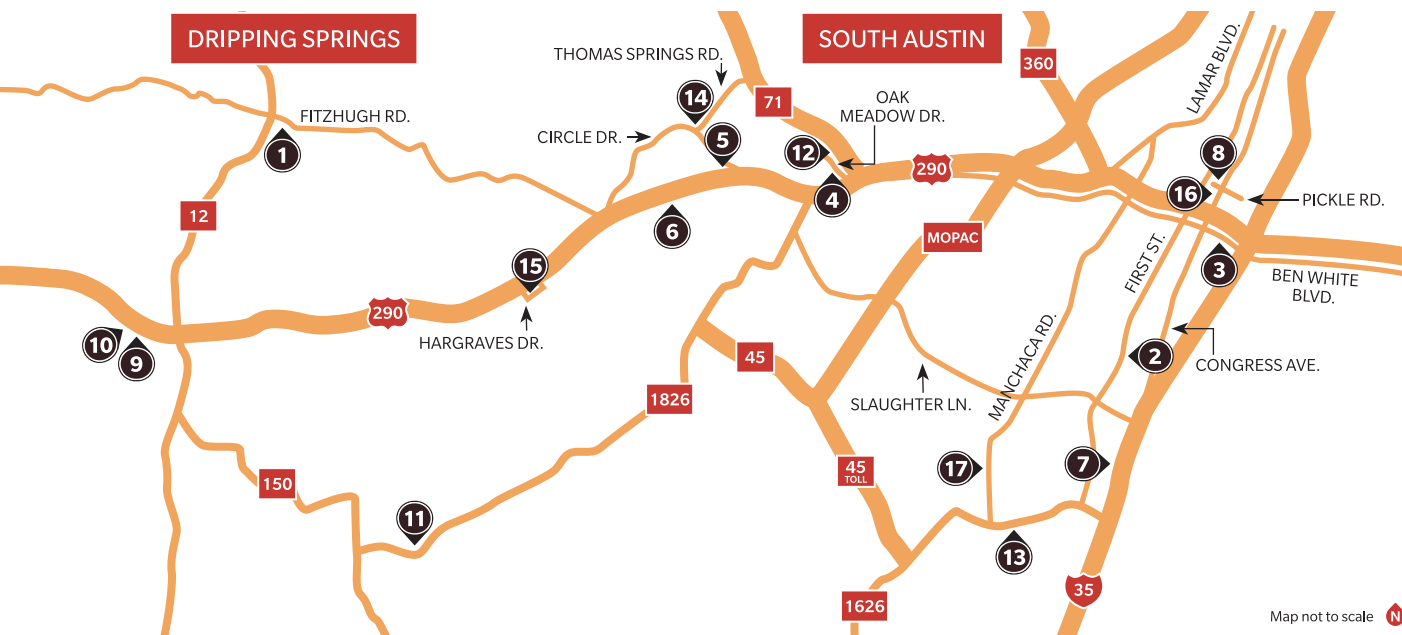
Year founded:
2017

Specialty meats: beef cheeks, hog and barbacoa

Food truck offerings



NICHOLAS CICALA/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER



9 **PIG PEN BBQ**

1005 W. Hwy. 290, Dripping Springs
512-858-0060
pigpen-bbq.com
Hours: Thu.-Sat. 11 a.m.-6 p.m.,
closed Sun.-Wed.

Year founded:
2004

Signature item: Piggytail
Cupcake iced in the
pink-frosted likeness of a pig

Food truck offerings





10 **RAILROAD BAR-B-QUE**

1111 W. Hwy. 290, Dripping Springs
512-858-0450
www.rrbqq.com
Hours: Mon.-Thu. 10:30 a.m.-8 p.m.,
Fri.-Sat. 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

Year founded:
1982

Signature item: Stuffed baked
potato loaded with chopped
beef, cheese and sour cream

Restaurant offerings







NICHOLAS CICALEZ/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER



COURTESY SALT LICK BBQ

11 **SALT LICK BBQ**

18300 FM 1826, Driftwood
512-858-4959
www.saltlickbbq.com
Hours: Mon.-Sun. 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

Year founded:
1967

Known for: classic pit
barbecue with bison, pork and
beef ribs

Restaurant offerings





12 **SLAB BBQ & BEER**

7101 W. Hwy. 71, Austin
512-243-8000
www.slabbarcueuristoraustin.com
Hours: Mon.-Thu. 11 a.m.-9 p.m.,
Fri.-Sat. 11 a.m.-10 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

Year founded:
2006

Signature item: The Donk, a
1-pound, multimeat sandwich

Restaurant offerings





13 **SLOW POKES BRISKET SHACK**

Manchaca Springs Saloon, 737 FM 1626,
Manchaca
512-436-1016
www.slowpokesbrisketshack.com
Hours: Mon.-Sat. 11 a.m.-11 p.m., closed Sun.

Year founded:
2015

Known for: small menu with
emphasis on brisket and ribs

Restaurant offerings





14 **SUNDANCE BBQ**

8116 Thomas Springs Road, Austin
512-507-9693
Hours: Mon.-Sat. 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., closed Sun.

Year founded:
2012

Specialty meats: Boudin Ca-
jun sausage and Korean-glazed
smoked chicken

Food truck offerings





15 **THE SWITCH**

166 Hargraves Drive, Ste. G100, Austin
512-212-7211
www.theswitchdripping.com
Hours: Tue.-Thu. 11 a.m.-8:30 p.m., Fri.-Sat.
11 a.m.-9:30 p.m., Sun. 10:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m.,
closed Mon.

Year founded:
2018

Known for: Cajun-style food
with a Sunday brunch menu

Restaurant offerings





16 **TEXAS RANCH BBQ**

3632 S. Congress Ave., Austin
512-998-2615
www.texasranchbbq.com
Hours: Mon.-Sun. 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

Year founded:
2017

Signature item: burnt-end
brisket

Food truck offerings







NICHOLAS CICALEZ/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

17 **VALENTINAS TEX MEX BBQ**

11500 Manchaca Road, Austin
512-221-4248
www.valentinastextmexbbq.com
Hours: Wed.-Mon. 7:30 a.m.-9 p.m.,
closed Tue.

Year founded:
2013

Signature item: The Real Deal
Holyfield, a brisket breakfast
taco with an egg, bacon, beans
and potato

Food truck offerings







COURTESY THE SWITCH

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BUSINESS FEATURE

Co-owners Karen and Kent Killough sit under one of Vista Brewing's heritage trees.

Vista Brewing

BY NICHOLAS CICALÉ

Owners embrace nature in property and products

Co-owners Kent and Karen Killough said they aim to make Vista Brewery a place people come for experiences. While beer fanatics are drawn to the brewery for its rotating selection of creative beers, they said people stay to explore the grounds, listen to music and eat food ordered from the onsite grill.

Vista Brewery is located on a historic 21-acre Driftwood property that includes 650 heritage trees and is surrounded by a stone wall built in the mid-1800s, Kent said.

Other than the brewing facility, the property features an indoor taproom, an outdoor beer garden with a stage, a grill serving housemade foods, a playground, a farm and orchard, and an apiary. The business is family- and dog-friendly and also hosts private and public events, Karen said.

"What we really wanted to showcase was the outdoors and the beautiful Hill Country," she said. "We wanted to build a place with good food and drinks, where you can bring your kids or your dog and relax."

Construction of the 10,000-square-foot facility, which opened in April 2018, required the removal of 16 trees, Kent said. About 95% of the wood from those

trees was reused within the brewery to create countertops, tap handles, serving trays and benches, he said.

Preserving and using what is available on-site is an important aspect of the Killoughs' vision. Vista Brewing sells products using honey from its apiary and prepares food with ingredients grown at its farm. Water to make the beer is drawn straight from the Edwards Aquifer using an on-site well.

Brewer Pat Korn creates an ever-changing menu of beers for the taproom, including lagers, pale ales and pilsners. Some beers are limited releases, such as the Merriwether, a hefeweizen made using dandelions and other plants foraged from the property this spring. Others, like the award-winning Dark Skies black pilsner and Adair Kolsch, are menu staples, Kent said.

"Dark Skies is really quickly becoming a cult favorite," Kent said. "It's literally a pilsner, but we have a special malt that makes it black and taste like a porter."

Specialty varieties also include wine barrel-aged brews, in which beers are aged in barrels picked up from Hill Country-area wineries, Karen said. With local barrels, grains, wheat and water, it is "truly a local product," she said.



Seating is available inside the taproom and across the brewery's 21-acre grounds.

PHOTOS BY NICHOLAS CICALÉ/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

UN-BEER-LIEVABLE CHOICES

Vista Brewing's best-selling product is actually its beer flight, served on a wooden tray made out of trees formerly at the brewery site. The following shows beers with their alcohol by volume listed.




Beers are made in traditional silos, and some are aged in local wine barrels.

Vista Brewing

13551 RM 150, Driftwood
512-766-1842
www.vistabrewingtx.com
Hours: Thu. 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri.-Sat. 11 a.m.-10 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-9 p.m., closed Mon.-Wed.





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DINING FEATURE



Spoon + Fork's pineapple fried rice, served with chicken, green onions and cashews, is a customer favorite.



Spoon+Fork is family-owned by Thana Trepetch, her husband Timothy and her mother, Mona Tapaneeyakul (left).



Panang salmon avocado is a curry dish with pan-seared salmon, coconut milk and bell pepper.

PHOTOS BY OLIVIA ALDRIDGE/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

TEASPOON TIME



In addition to a range of specialty hot teas, Spoon+Fork sells classic iced Thai tea with coconut milk.

Bangkok:

green tea with coconut, lemongrass, ginger and vanilla

Jasmine: smells like a jasmine flower

Ginger: a spicy herbal tea with lemon

Japanese Sencha: green tea with a citrusy, "roast" flavor

Darjeeling: citrus, apricot and plum flavors

Winter White Earl Grey: white tea floral and lemon bergamot flavors

Spoon + Fork Thai Kitchen

166 Hargraves Drive, Ste. B200, Austin
512-599-5428

www.spoonandforkkitchen.com

Hours: Sun.-Thu. 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri.-Sat. 11 a.m.-10 p.m.



Spoon + Fork Thai Kitchen

Family-owned restaurant introduces Belterra community to new tastes

BY OLIVIA ALDRIDGE

Thana Trepetch, co-owner of Spoon+Fork Thai Kitchen, said that for her, food has always been connected to family.

"I grew up in a big extended family [where] everybody cooks, and we always have food on the table," she said.

Trepetch, originally from Bangkok, has both Thai and Chinese family members. She said when her family celebrated holidays, including Thai and Chinese new years, the whole family cooked together, making some of the same dishes served at Spoon+Fork today, such as Panang curry and Thai fried rice.

Offering food is also a gesture of welcome for guests and strangers in Thai culture. Trepetch said she wants her customers to feel welcomed, too, including diners with dietary needs like veganism and gluten sensitivity.

Trepetch lived in McKinney, where she and her husband, Timothy, started Silk Road restaurant, before moving to Austin. They began looking for opportunities to start an Austin-area

eatery after the move. Trepetch said the development of Belterra Village, where the restaurant is located, created the opportunity to open Spoon+Fork, which she co-owns with her husband and her mother, Mona Tapaneeyakul.

Trepetch said many of their customers are unfamiliar with Thai cuisine, and that makes visits to the eatery an educational experience, introducing them to classic Thai dishes such as pad Thai, Thai basil curry and specialty stir-fries.

"People [in the Dripping Springs area] consider us something new," she said. "In other areas of Austin, like downtown, people might be more familiar with the food already, but around here we take it as a challenge to introduce people to a new kind of cuisine."

Education, Trepetch said, continues with the restaurant's name, which is a reference to the utensils most popularly used to consume Thai food—with a spoon in the right hand, and a fork in the left.

She said that other customers who may have enjoyed Thai cuisine in the

past often ask why certain ingredients are different than what they are used to.

"If you try one restaurant, and you like it, you might have a perception that is the authentic Thai dish, and that every Thai dish is going to be like that," she said.

Authenticity, however, Trepetch said, has more to do with perception than hard-and-fast rules. Because it can be hard to access ingredients in the United States that are easy to come by in Thailand, Trepetch said some degree of improvisation is always required.

Trepetch said she and her husband find inspiration by traveling and exploring other cuisines, such as on a recent trip to Peru. Comparing food sampled abroad to offerings in Texas, Trepetch said they note the differences in ingredients and learn about practical substitutions for classic ingredients.

"Even in Thailand, I grew up eating a dish which might be the same or different depending on the part of Thailand," Trepetch said. "Because it's so spread out, you know—just like the U.S."

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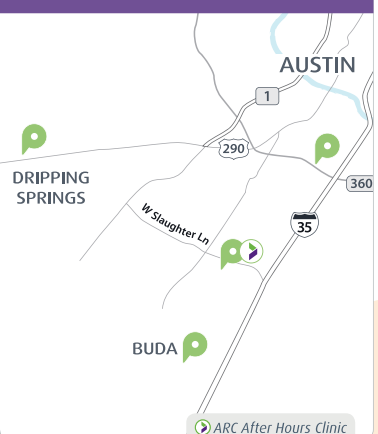
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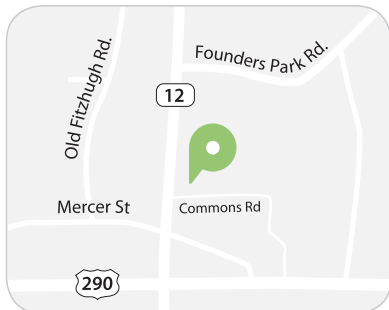
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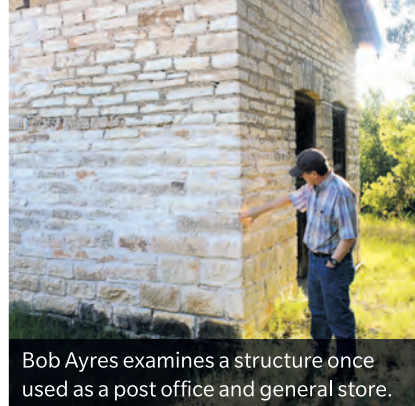
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HISTORY



Bob Ayres, a Shield Ranch co-owner and president and CEO of the Shield Ranch Foundation, stands at the area used as the El Ranchito campground.



Bob Ayres examines a structure once used as a post office and general store.



Over six miles of Barton Creek run through Shield Ranch.



Three generations of the Shield-Ayres-Bowen family celebrated 80 years at Shield Ranch this year.

BY OLIVIA ALDRIDGE

Shield Ranch

One family celebrates 80 years of ranching and conservation in Austin

Situated off Hamilton Pool Road within Austin's city limits lies Shield Ranch—6,800 acres of conserved land, flowing creeks and long-standing historical structures. The property is owned by the Shield-Ayres family, who decades ago made the decision to commit the land to the goal of conservation.

The Shield-Ayres family committed 93% of the property to conservation easements in 1998 and 1999, according to Robert “Bob” Ayres, a co-owner of Shield Ranch and president and CEO of the Shield Ranch Foundation. Easements such as those Shield Ranch has with the Nature Conservancy and the city of Austin allow ranchers to preserve ownership while giving over development rights.

“I like to say with the conservation easements we sort of protected the ranch from ourselves,” Ayres said.

The city of Austin has sought easements in order to protect groundwater in

the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone, like on Shield Ranch, where over 6 miles of Barton Creek runs.

This year, Shield Ranch celebrated its 80th anniversary, following the development of a new master plan for programming facilities in 2016. The Shield-Ayres family, including Ayres' sister, Vera Ayres Bowen; their mother, Patricia Shield Ayres; and several grandchildren, also established a mission dubbed Shield Vision 2020. It focuses on what they want for the ranch's future—to “educate, inspire and transform.”

“I think the reason for it is we all have such a connection to the place,” said Ayres, who recalls time spent on the ranch as a child when it was owned by his grandparents, who purchased the first 5,400 acres of the property in 1938.

Ayres said conservation of the ranch protects not only land, but also the history found in long-standing agricultural

infrastructure and buildings. Additionally, he said the easements protect sensitive species found on the ranch, such as the endangered golden-cheeked warbler.

The education piece of the Shield Ranch vision is exemplified by El Ranchito, a camp hosted at Shield Ranch in partnership with El Buen Samaritano and Westcave Outdoor Learning Center. At El Ranchito, youth campers learn the values of stewardship, sanctuary and community while exploring the ranch. According to Ayres, new facilities are planned for the campground area, which will allow programming to expand.

As a reminder of the values the Shield-Ayreses seek to live out on Shield Ranch, an illustration from the family's 2016 visioning session sits on the wall of the dining room in the family's original farmhouse. Scrawled across a rendering of Barton Creek reads, “The ranch nurtures us; we nurture the ranch.”

SHIELD RANCH AT A GLANCE

Shield Ranch's 6,800 acres feature a variety of wildlife, vegetation, hydrologic and geographic features.



Vegetation: The most common trees on the property are the Ashe juniper and the plateau live oak. One of the Shield-Ayres family's conservation practices is to keep the Ashe juniper population under control.



Wildlife: A plethora of species make their home at Shield Ranch, including the endangered golden-cheeked warbler.



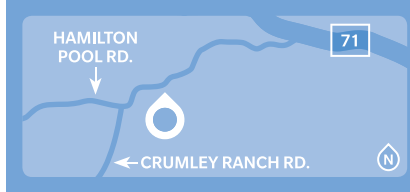
Water: Shield Ranch comprises 10% of the Barton Creek watershed, with over 6 miles of the creek running through the property.



Geology: Glen rose limestone runs under Shield Ranch. The vegetative land above is called the Edwards Plateau limestone savanna and woodland.

Shield Ranch

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The changing identity of Austin's homeless

While it has grown since 2015, Austin's homeless population has also shifted in identity. Chronic homelessness has grown, while the portion of those with mental illness and without income has fallen.

KEY ● 2015 ● 2016 ● 2017 ● 2018

THE POPULATION

Austin's Ending Community Homelessness Coalition, or ECHO, tracks various details about the city's homeless population.

CONTINUED FROM 1

Adler says he has worked with the Navigation Center for years to find housing and can finally see "the light at the end of the tunnel."

"I'm outdoors completely," Adler says. "I've got a little tent under the bridge. I've been moving back and forth. It depends on which cop's on duty sometimes. And every move means you're gonna lose some of your stuff."

Despite Austin City Council's June 20 decision to loosen public camping laws, the city's public works department has continued with cleanups of encampments under overpasses. The cleanups oblige campers to gather what belongings they can into drawstring bags.

Adler says he has been subject to cleanups like this "more times than [he] can count."

Experts say Austin's homeless population is expanding, and more people are staying homeless longer, leading to a public outcry and a deepening health crisis among the city's most vulnerable residents.

A DEEPENING CRISIS

Since 2015, Austin has seen a notable rise in the rate of chronic homelessness—cases in which

an individual has experienced homelessness for more than a year or on four separate occasions in three years. In 2015, 22% of the homeless population were chronic cases; in 2018, the chronically homeless made up 54% of the homeless population, the Austin-based Ending Community Homelessness Coalition, or ECHO, reported.

Local government has historically been slow to respond to an issue that has centered in the community's consciousness. While the unsheltered homeless population grew by hundreds between 2015 and 2018, the city gained only 21 shelter beds, according to ECHO. Austin's development boom has not produced much deeply affordable housing—available to those earning under 60% of the area's median income—and the waitlist for public housing vouchers has grown to at least three years.

However, Austin has taken an aggressive approach in 2019. The city brought in the National Alliance to End Homelessness to consult on solutions, purchased its first new shelter space since 2004 and is turning the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless into a housing-focused facility. City Council passed laws

to incentivize deeply affordable housing and decriminalized public camping—a move that drew widespread attention.

However, city leaders said local government cannot carry the load alone, and that the issue demands a full community effort, from the nonprofit to the private sector.

ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS

Clem Hollingsworth, 32, has experienced homelessness for 12 years, and since January has camped across the street from the ARCH. He has three priorities: finding water, finding a bathroom and obtaining a public housing voucher.

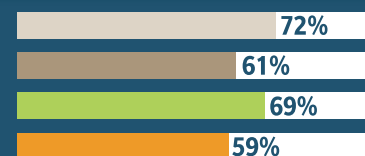
"We need more restrooms and water fountains," Hollingsworth said while standing in the heat. "I don't want to become a sex offender [by urinating in public]; I just want to piss."

Number of people who experienced homelessness

The number of people who experience homelessness for any amount of time in a year has increased.



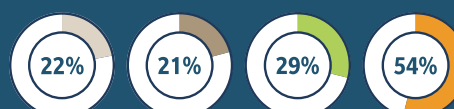
Became homeless in Central Texas*



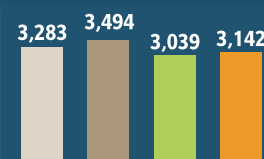
*THESE STATISTICS ARE TAKEN FROM A SAMPLE SIZE, RANGING FROM 140-460 RESPONDENTS.

Experience chronic homelessness

By definition, the chronically homeless have experienced homelessness continually for at least a year, or on four separate occasions over the last three years.



Became homeless for the first time*

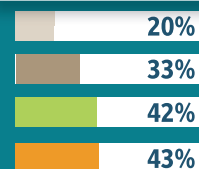


*TAKEN FROM SAMPLE SIZES RANGING FROM 4,409 TO 5,040

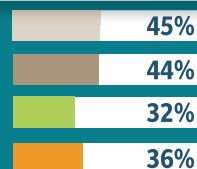
THE CIRCUMSTANCES

People experiencing homelessness in Austin are more likely to be employed and less likely to report a mental health issue than four years ago.

Earn an income through employment



Report a mental health issue



Hollingsworth said people often donate water cases to the crowd outside the ARCH. Public bathrooms are more limited, but there are a few options. As for a public housing voucher, if Hollingsworth is lucky, he could receive one in three years.

Demand in Austin for publicly funded housing programs like Section 8 has jumped by one-third over five years, said Mike Gerber, president of the Housing Authority of the City of Austin, which assists more than 20,000 Austinites. Last fall, when HACA

opened up the waiting list for the first time in three years, he said it rejected 17,000 of 19,000 applications due to capacity constraints.

Pressure on local public housing programs—funded mostly by the federal government—mounts as Austin becomes more desirable, but Gerber said such programs have suffered from a "historical underinvestment" from federal and local entities.

This deepens the threat posed by situations such as eviction, said Fred Fuches, an attorney at Texas Rio Grande Legal

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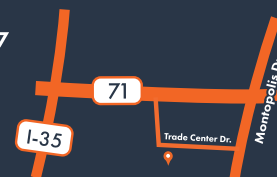
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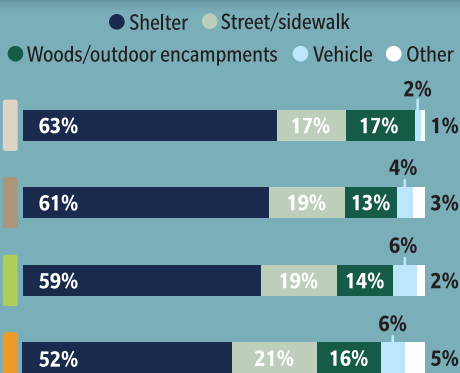
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HOUSING SUPPLY ISSUES

Slow construction of deeply affordable housing paired with long waitlists in public housing has increased the length of unsheltered homelessness.

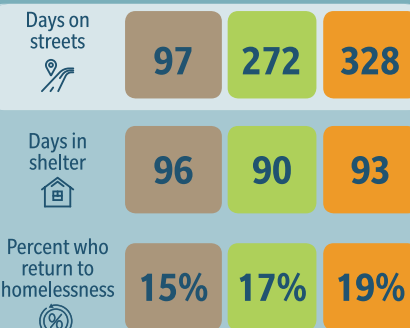
Sleeping locations*



*NUMBERS TAKEN FROM EACH YEAR'S POINT-IN-TIME ESTIMATES, RANGING FROM 1,832 TO 2,147

Longer time on the streets

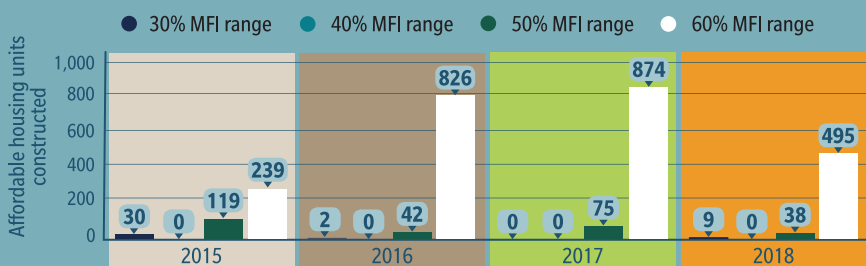
The average length of time people are homeless before reaching a shelter has spiked.*



*DATA NOT COLLECTED FOR 2015

Deeply affordable housing construction

Deeply affordable housing is defined as affordable for those between 30%-60% of the median family income, or MFI. Between 2015-18, only 315 units were built in the 30%-50% MFI range.



SOURCES: ENDING COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS COALITION, AUSTIN HOMELESSNESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM, AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

Aid. Fuches said affordability issues and limited resources for the poor make the threat of post-eviction homelessness greater in Austin, with a years-long waitlist for public housing and a 94% occupancy rate on rental units. Fuches said in Austin, it is "very, very hard" to find a home after eviction.

A lack of mental health services also creates difficulties, said Darlynn Cardona-Belier, director of adult behavioral services at Integral Care, which

provides the county's homeless with mental and behavioral health services. She said slow re-housing rates leave the homeless on the streets longer, exacerbating trauma.

"When you're out on the streets for a very long time, your system is on overdrive," she said. "Individuals are exposed to a lot of trauma over and over again. It becomes difficult to manage."

Integral Care has expanded its homelessness-focused staff from 5 to 100, but Cardona-Belier said

they remain overwhelmed. Since 2014, Integral Care's client base has spiked nearly 50%.

A COMMUNITY PUSH FORWARD

Examples of success driven by community partnerships already exist. Alan Graham, CEO of nonprofit Mobile Loaves and Fishes, which has multiple mobile access points in South Austin, credits his team and a bevy of private donations for the construction of Community First Village. The master-planned

community in East Austin has permanently housed more than 200 homeless individuals.

As for efforts in South Austin, Mark Hilbelink, Sunrise Community Church's pastor and a leader of the Navigation Center, said in July that his organization had connected over 400 people to housing in the four years the center has operated. The center's partnerships include nonprofits, health care providers and the Travis County Precinct 3 Constable's Office, which sends a court clerk to the center several days a week to help oversee operations as part of the Constable's Outreach Program, or CORP.

CORP, a program unique to Precinct 3 in South Travis County, was developed by Constable Stacy Suits and Deputy Drew McAngus in February 2017. The program's other arm is run by McAngus, who travels the precinct, often with a social worker from Integral Care, making contact with homeless South Austinites and engaging them with resources. Over the past year, McAngus connected with over 170 people on average monthly.

Suits' requests for funding to expand CORP across other precincts have been rejected. He plans to keep asking.

Bill Brice, vice president of investor relations with the downtown stakeholder group Downtown Austin Alliance, said the private sector is better suited to help than the government, free of cumbersome red tape and budget limitations.

"The private sector recognizes we can't rely on the local government to solve this," he said. "We need to figure out a game plan."

Likewise, Hilbelink said he

thinks leadership from faith-based communities is a relatively untapped resource, one that the city should welcome. Hilbelink has expressed skepticism of the city's approach to homelessness, pointing to a tendency to divorce housing from humanitarian resources and calling the council's recent discussions "housed people having conversations with housed people."

The city is planning for a 100-bed shelter on Ben White Boulevard near South First Street and Manchaca Road, close to Sunrise. Hilbelink said City Council's assertion that the shelter will have an integrated care model similar to Sunrise's is dubious, because third-party organizations will see it as an ineffective use of resources.

"What's going to happen is that those people are going to come here," Hilbelink said. "For whatever the pieces are that they can't pull off at that shelter, they're going to come here."

Brice, however, said much of the discussion in the private sector is around funding emergency shelters. He said short-term solutions merit consideration.

This is where the wider community may come in. When City Council voted to purchase the South Austin tract for the new housing shelter, a majority of neighbors who publicly weighed in objected to the shelter. Mayor Steve Adler told the public that if Austin was to make serious progress on homelessness, similar resources would need to be built across the city, and neighbors would need to do their part.

PART 2 OF THE SPECIAL REPORT
CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

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Austin between ends of national spectrum on homelessness

While some US cities see a worsening problem, others find effective solutions

BY JACK FLAGLER

Since Austin City Council passed two ordinances related to homelessness in June, the issue has dominated the local political conversation.

The city lifted bans on homeless individuals camping, sitting and lying down in certain public areas. Gov. Greg Abbott tweeted June 23 that Texas would override those ordinances. Austin Mayor Steve Adler then defended the rules, responding that Austin's plan "innovates to succeed where other cities are failing."

On Aug. 8, City Council created a local government corporation to address homelessness, a nonprofit that will act on behalf of the city and have more funding resources available.

While Austin may have seemed like the epicenter of the homelessness issue this summer, data shows that the severity of the issue in Austin aligns with the national average.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, about 17 of every 10,000 U.S. residents were homeless in 2018. Travis County had 17.5 homeless individuals per 10,000 residents counted on a single night in January 2018, the highest ratio in Texas but far lower than Los Angeles—53.44 homeless per 10,000—and King County, Washington, which includes Seattle—55.34 homeless per 10,000.

But not every American city

is struggling to contain the problem. Community Solutions, a national nonprofit that works to find effective solutions to homelessness, has certified 12 communities as achieving "functional zero" with certain segments of their homeless populations, meaning those communities have fewer homeless people than they can permanently house in a single month.

Calvin Streeter is a professor at the University of Texas Steve Hicks School of Social Work. His research has included work with the National Homelessness Social Work Initiatives, a program that prepares students for careers helping the homeless.

"There's a tendency for people to think, 'We don't know what to do about this problem,'" Streeter said. "We have a lot of evidence-based solutions ... but it requires resources and political will."

SEATTLE'S GROWING ISSUE

In early July, Adler visited Los Angeles and Seattle to learn more about local efforts to improve transportation and homelessness issues.

Adler met with mayors in both cities as well as homeless service providers. In Seattle, Mayor Jenny Durkan told Adler home prices in Seattle six years ago were similar to Austin's

today. According to her office, Seattle rents have increased 57% since then, amplifying an affordability crisis that has contributed to homelessness.

"Their challenges are now so big, they're hard to get a handle on," Adler said. "So we really want to try to get ours handled before we get to that place."

Jon Scholes, president and CEO of the Downtown Seattle

Association, said as homelessness has spread from downtown to the entire city, the term has become shorthand for issues ranging from opioid abuse to crime to lack of mental health services.

"In some ways we need to stop talking about it as homelessness. That framing has been used by some interests to oversimplify the set of issues we face and to prescribe a solution that's convenient to them,

that's narrow and that won't affect the broad set of issues," Scholes said. Chloe Gale has been working with the homeless for more than 20 years. Today she is the co-director of Reach, a Seattle homeless outreach program.

In the 1990s, Gale said, homelessness was tied to issues such as alcoholism for which Seattle could build effective systems. Today, she said, the number of homeless individuals has increased so rapidly that the chance to build new systems has passed.

Gale said most homeless people have simply "fallen off the bottom rung" into poverty. Data from King County's 2019 point-in-time count backs that up: 84% of the area's homeless reported that they lived in the county before becoming homeless.

Still, Gale said Seattle homeless service providers have the skill and ability to house the homeless. The key—as city leaders have echoed in Austin—is finding the necessary resources.

"This is not a Seattle problem or Austin problem or even a U.S. problem," Gale said. "[T]he entire western developed world is facing this."

Homelessness in America: Complex, challenging, solvable

America's homelessness challenge ranges from communities such as Seattle—which has fewer residents than Austin yet four times the homeless population—to those such as the similarly-sized Bergen County, New Jersey, that have ended chronic homelessness.

A UNIFIED APPROACH

A decade ago, Bergen County, New Jersey, was facing an increase in its chronically homeless population—or those who have been homeless for more than a year or experienced homelessness four times or more in the course of three years.

The county, which has a population similar to Austin's, put together a 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness, including an \$11 million county investment in the construction of a 20,000-square-foot Housing, Health and Human Services Center focused on permanent housing for homeless individuals.

Julia Orlando is the director of the HHHSC. She said the key factors in success for Bergen County included strong leadership and political will from county and housing authority officials, a concerted effort to gather better data than the annual point-in-time count could provide and creating a by-name directory of every homeless individual.

All that led to better coordination and alignment of those working on the issue, from the housing authority to nonprofit organizations to faith-based institutions. Between 2010 and 2017, Bergen County cut its chronically

An average rate

Austin has the highest rate of homelessness in Texas, but remains behind other U.S. cities. The following numbers represent the number of homeless per 10,000 people in 2018.

Dallas and Collin Counties

11.5

National average

17

Travis County

17.5

Los Angeles County

53.44

SOURCE: NATIONAL ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

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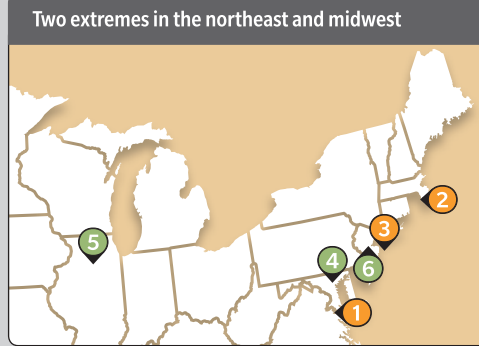
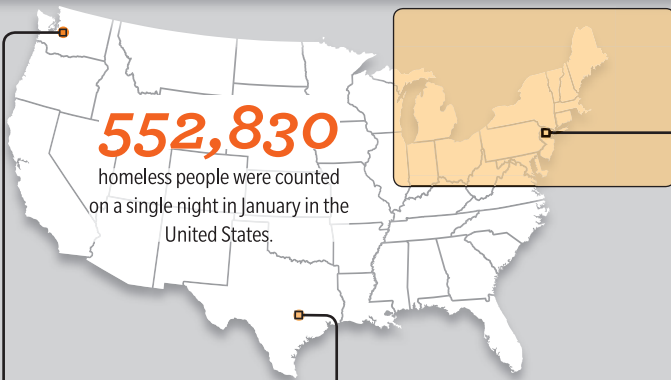
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Cross-country perspective

Organizations such as local governments, nonprofit housing providers, public housing agencies and more combine in different communities across the country to form a “continuum of care” program, which compiles homelessness data to submit to the federal government for funding. Those continuum of care programs can be built on the regional, county or city level.



King County (Seattle), Washington

2015	2019
2,117,125	2,233,163
10,047	11,199
47.56	50.15
37.54%	46.67%
62.46%	53.32%

In 2019, 7,797 homeless residents were counted in Seattle, more than **four times as many** as there were counted in Austin.

Travis County, Texas

2015	2019
1,180,173	1,248,743
1,832	2,255
15.52	18.06
36.4%	51.84%
63.60%	48.16%

As of January 2019 there were **1,086 unsheltered homeless** individuals in Travis County. **More than 40%** live in Austin's District 9 downtown.

Bergen County, New Jersey

2015	2019
938,255	936,692
340	271
3.62	2.89
90.29%	98.52%
9.71%	1.48%

In 2017, Bergen County became the country's first community to be certified by the federal government as ending chronic homelessness.

A broad spectrum

Although some U.S. cities, including Austin, have seen homelessness numbers spike, not everyone is searching for answers. National nonprofit organization Community Solutions defines communities that have reached “functional zero” as ending homelessness among a certain population and maintaining systemic change.

THE THREE MAJOR CITIES WITH THE HIGHEST RATES OF HOMELESSNESS

Continuum of care programs with populations of more than 100,000 in 2018

- 1 Washington D.C.**
99.49 homeless per 10,000 residents
- 2 Boston, Massachusetts**
91.92 homeless per 10,000 residents
- 3 New York City, New York**
91.24 homeless per 10,000 residents

THE THREE COMMUNITIES THAT HAVE ACHIEVED “FUNCTIONAL ZERO” FOR CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

- 4 Lancaster, Pennsylvania**
- 5 Rockford, Illinois**
- 6 Bergen County, New Jersey**

SOURCES: NATIONAL ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS, COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS BUILT FOR ZERO PROGRAM/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

homeless population by 96% and placed more than 1,100 homeless individuals in permanent housing, according to Orlando. In 2017, Community Solutions announced that Bergen County had ended chronic homelessness, meaning that homelessness is rare, brief and nonrecurring.

In the two years since, Orlando said her shelter is full most days. People will always fall into homelessness, but

she said the community has the tools to respond because it has agreed on an approach.

That alignment is not always easy, Orlando said, because different groups will have different perspectives on the issue. In the end, however, she said the motives do not have to be altruistic as long as the common goal is putting a roof over peoples' heads.

“What’s that concentric circle of what we all agree to? We

don’t want to see people on the street anymore,” she said.

Adler said Austin’s issue is not so much coordinating its resources the way Bergen County did, but finding sufficient funding for those programs and finding housing for the homeless.

“If they go into the shelter and into triage process, there has to be a home on the back side of it,” he said.

Jake Maguire, principal at

Community Solutions and co-director of its Built for Zero program, which operates in 71 communities across the country, said providing housing is the solution to homelessness, but there is more to the answer.

Even the communities that are able to pump dollars into their public housing systems cannot expect results without improving and organizing their systems, he said.

At a more fundamental level, Maguire said, there needs to be a mindset change that homelessness is an issue to be solved—not just managed or contained—and that those solutions are out there.

“There are 12 communities that have gotten to zero. You can’t tell me it’s impossible anymore,” Maguire said.

For more information visit communityimpact.com.

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Since fall 2017, when the Garza Ranch project broke ground on construction, a lot has been added to the site. These photos track the project's progress over time.



SITE BREAKDOWN



Total size:
34 acres



Office space:
400,000
square feet



Multifamily:
370 units



Hotel:
140 rooms



Natural space:
10 acres



Park:
2 acres



Parking:
three garages

SOURCE: BRANDYWINE REALTY TRUST/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

CONTINUED FROM 1

"The site has very significant visibility, and we wanted to make sure [the project] was visible, accessible and that we were creating something that will connect and be embraced by the surrounding community," Brandywine Executive Vice President Bill Redd said. "We weren't exactly sure what its components would be when we first started planning, but as it has developed what we have there is a nice mix of uses."

Total build-out of Garza Ranch is expected by the end of 2021, he said.

DEVELOPMENT DETAILS

Following the trend to create projects that combine elements of "live, work, play," Brandywine Realty Trust developed Garza Ranch to include living units, offices and recreational spaces. The office, hotel and multifamily aspects each are being designed to offer a product not typically found in South-west Austin, Redd said.

"Once [neighborhoods] understood what was going to be in Garza Ranch, they embraced the project because they thought it would provide needed services," he said. "If you go south of Loop 360 [on MoPac], there's a dearth of office product and hotels without our project."

Alexan Garza Ranch—the multifamily element of the project being organized by Trammell Crow Residential—is on schedule to open its first units to tenants in September, according to the community's leasing professional, Cody O'Dell. He said the community will be about 10% leased when opened, while construction will continue on the other wing of the

complex. All units should be ready for tenants by early 2020.

"We'll have one of the first mid-rise apartment buildings in the area," O'Dell said. "The location is prime and in proximity to everything, with short commutes and businesses in the area."

The development includes a mix of floor plans that range from 577-1,262 square feet, with rental prices from \$1,295-\$2,260, according to Trammell Crow Residential.



The first office building at Garza Ranch is on schedule to open in February, according to Redd. The building will be used as the Austin headquarters for SHI International, a global information technology products and services company.

Marketed as a boutique hotel, the Aloft hotel by Marriott is being developed by Pathfinder Development and is set to break ground this fall. With a construction timeline of about 12 months, Redd said the hotel should be complete by the end of 2020 or early 2021.

Garza 2—the second office building and final phase of Garza Ranch—could also break ground this fall. While no tenants are under contract, Redd said his team expects final permitting to be completed in September or October, with construction beginning soon after. Tenants could include one group that leases the entire building or multiple tenants that split the campus, he said.

"It's going to be a very visible four-story office building," he said. "It's a unique design and a little different than anything else we've built in town. It's a low-rise office and a class of office building you don't often see in the suburbs."

Although typical "live-work-play" developments have a specific commercial component to them, Garza Ranch does not. However, Redd said the hotel, when built, will have coffee, light fare and a bar available in the lobby, while SHI International will have an on-site dining area for employees.

Although plans are not finalized, Redd said Garza 2 could also include a restaurant if the right tenant comes along with interest, and food trucks could be added to the site in the future.

"Garza Ranch is going to really transform this area into a destination," O'Dell said. "Austinites will consider coming because of the walkability, the central commons area and services here."

NATURAL SPACES

Due to the project's proximity over the Edwards Aquifer, about 10 acres of the property is being preserved close to its natural state as green space for water retention and to reduce runoff.

An additional 2 acres will be used as a public park and gathering space located at the center of Garza Ranch called Garza Commons. The park is nearly complete and will open to the public this fall once Alexan tenants begin moving into the apartment complex.

The property is also located along the Violet Crown Trail, a 30-mile pedestrian path under construction south from Zilker Park in downtown Austin to Hays County. Redd said the trail will connect residents in the community to natural areas in South Austin. The trail also connects to "urban trails" and sidewalks along William Cannon.

"When we build these projects, the goal is not simply to do something that only benefits us or our partners, but benefits the entire community," he said. "We see the central commons as a place with public gatherings, concerts and for the community at large, and the trails as a way to embrace the surrounding environment."

EASE OF ACCESS

To mitigate the potential traffic impacts and added vehicles the development could bring, Redd said Garza Ranch has multiple access points, including two on the MoPac frontage road and two on Ben Garza Lane.

Garza Commons' connection to the Violet Crown Trail and urban trails also provides options for those working and living at the development to walk or bike to nearby retail and restaurant offerings on William Cannon.

"Everything you do in Austin, everyone is concerned as they should be with traffic and transportation impacts," he said. "We

BUILDING OUT GARZA RANCH

Construction began on the 34-acre Garza Ranch site in late 2017. The overall project is being developed by Brandywine Realty Trust, with other developers and designers focusing on specific aspects of the site. The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2021.



A GARZA 2

Four-story office building with tenants still pending

Developer: Page Architects

Size: 150,000 square feet

Status: finalizing permits; groundbreaking late fall; completion expected for late 2020 or early 2021



B SHI INTERNATIONAL

Office space reserved as a new Austin headquarters for SHI International

Developer: GSC Architects

Size: 250,000 square feet

Status: under construction; scheduled completion of February

C ALOFT SOUTH AUSTIN

Boutique hotel by Marriott with 140 rooms

Developer: Pathfinder Development

Size: 1.5 acres

Status: groundbreaking expected this fall, with a later 2020 or early 2021 completion



E GARZA COMMONS

Central gathering place and park open to the public

Developer: Brandywine Realty Trust

Size: 2 acres

Status: opening in September



D ALEXAN GARZA RANCH

370-unit apartment complex

Developer: Trammell Crow Residential

Size: 325,000 square feet

Status: opening in September; completion expected by early 2020

SOURCE: BRANDYWINE REALTY TRUST/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

did everything we could to provide multiple ways in and out of our project to assist in that issue.”

Some pedestrian accommodations adjacent to Garza Ranch are being developed by the city of Austin’s Corridor Program Office traffic through the 2016

Mobility Bond. According to the city, the bond funds improvements for William Cannon, including the creation of shared-use paths separated from the road by a buffer. New medians, improved turn lanes and new striping are also proposed near the MoPac intersection to reduce traffic

and improve safety. Construction could begin in 2021, according to the city.

“Once everything is complete, this is going to be a major hanging out and stopping point along the trails,” Redd said. “We’re very excited, and ultimately we view this project as accomplishing what

we hoped to achieve, which is a state-of-the-art, mixed-use project that would both enhance and be embraced by the overall community in Southwest Austin.”



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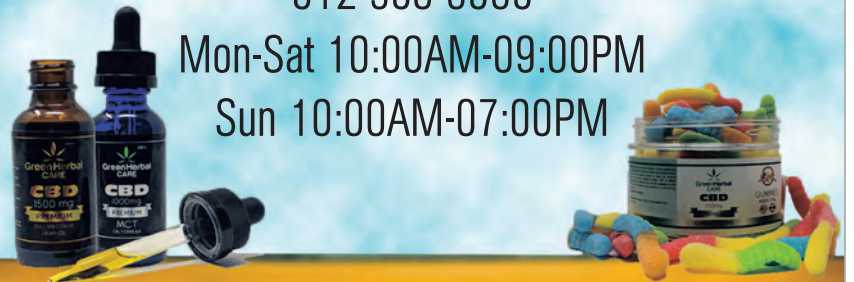

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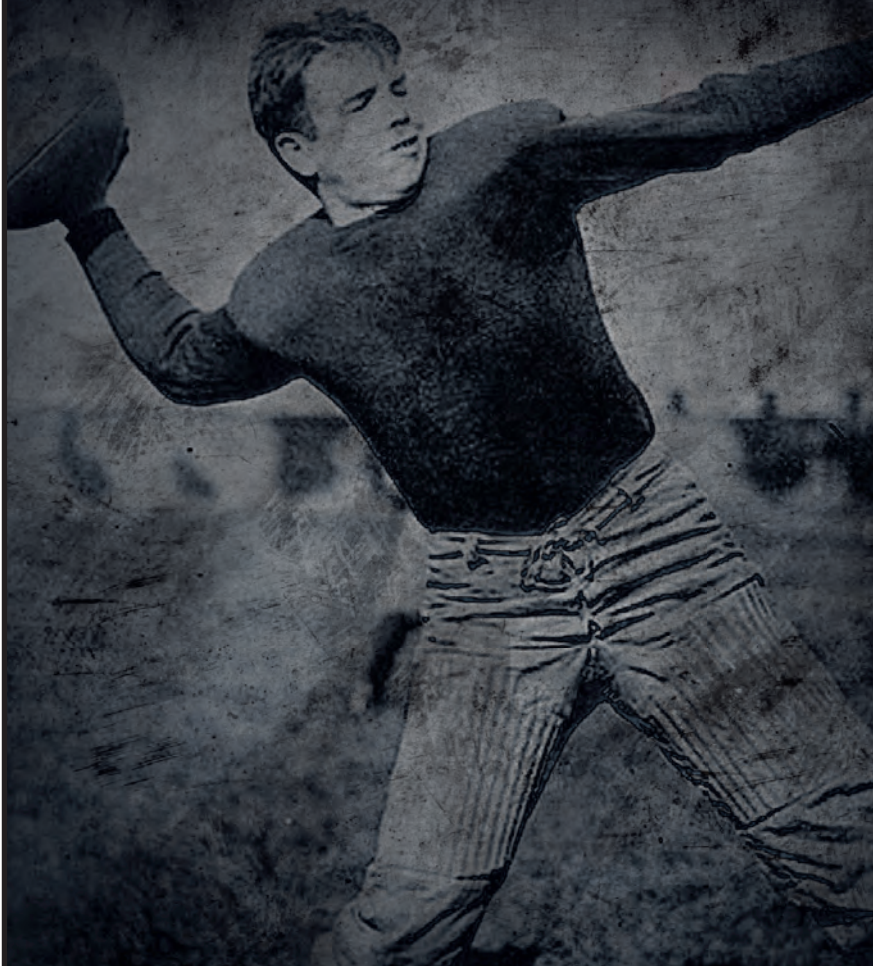
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SUNDAY

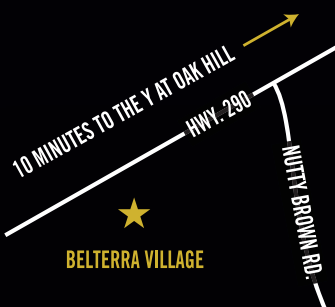
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AP0819

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Includes:

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*Any additional parts or services extra. Some exceptions apply. Cannot be combined with any other offer or discounts. Does not include waste disposal fee. Additional charge for Synthetic Oil. Expires 9/30/19

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\$15 OFF any repair over \$100

\$45 OFF any repair over \$300

\$75 OFF any repair over \$500

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AP0819

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Plus disposal fee. 5W30 Conventional Oil up to 5 quarts. Cannot be combined with other offers. Expires 9/30/19

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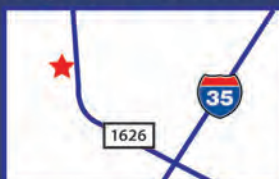
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