



What's News

A Disaster Loan Outreach Center is open in Williamson County for residents, despite FEMA denying a disaster declaration. The center will allow residents to apply for loans to assist in the repairs for flood damage. | 30

Preview the 2011 Texas Legislature, as the session begins in January. The preview will look at upcoming hurdles for the Legislature, including a \$28 billion projected budget gap and redistricting plans. | 31



Cedar Park Fire Chief Chris Conneally accepted an award for the Teen Advocates for Community Safety program that was recognized at a recent Cedar Park

City Council meeting for receiving the 2010 National Citizen Corps Achievement Award. | 13

Crystal Falls Golf Course suffered flood damage from Tropical Storm Hermine, requiring extra funds to fix several holes and a spillway. | 13

Cedar Park Council trying to position city for the future

Story Highlights

- City captures look at retail market
- New retail construction low for region
- Retail vacancies among highest in Central Texas
- Council optimistic for end of recession

By Victor O'Brien

As the Cedar Park City Council readies the city for the next 10 years, a retail analysis has given council members reason to be both concerned and optimistic about the future.

Larry Holt, economic development specialist, presented a retail space analysis to council members in October as part of an ongoing assessment of how the city stacks up within the region.

Councilman Mitch Fuller requested it to better understand the future impact of city revenue caps. Declines in sales and

property taxes helped prompt a 45 cent property tax rate increase per \$100 valuation passed by the council in September.

"I think that any great city, like Cedar Park, is always assessing itself and re-assessing itself. It's important to adapt to the economic environment we're in," Fuller said.

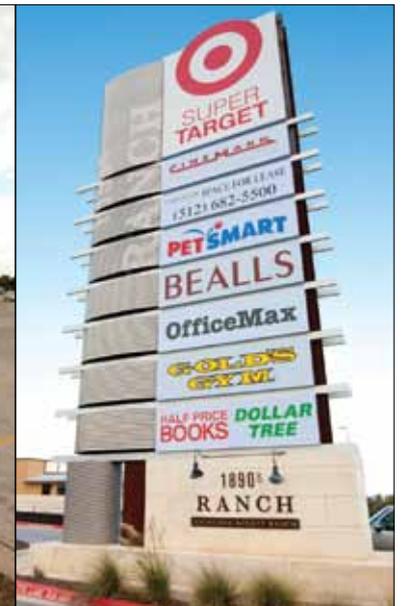
What the retail analysis showed, Fuller said, is a mixed bag that kept him pessimistic about tax revenue, but optimistic about the Cedar Park Center, Schlitterbahn and the ability of leaders to make the right choices as the city enters a crucial point in deciding its future.

Future in flux

Fuller said the city must make careful choices about wastewater, roads, public safety and parks



Retail areas along Bell Boulevard have struggled, but received a boost when Big Lots moved into Cedar Park Plaza. In contrast, FM 1431 and 1890 Ranch Shopping Center have thrived in a down economy.



because each choice could either help or hinder future councils and saddle residents with higher taxes to pay debt.

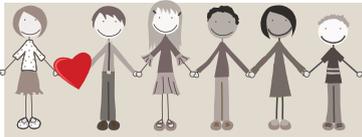
"We are better off than most, but this is the decade in which Cedar Park will be built out. We

have to make very good decisions, be cognizant of the future and be realistic," Fuller said.

Councilman Matt Powell said the closer the city comes to build

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What's Inside



2010 Volunteer Guide outlines how and where to give back to the community during the holiday season and year-round. | 18

A guide to holiday displays in Cedar Park and Leander outlines places to take the whole family to enjoy holiday lights. | 29



The Thank You Quilters show appreciation for the men and women who serve this country by making quilts for wounded soldiers at Darnall Army Medical Center at Fort Hood. The group made a delivery of more than 100 quilts Dec. 9. | 14

What's Online

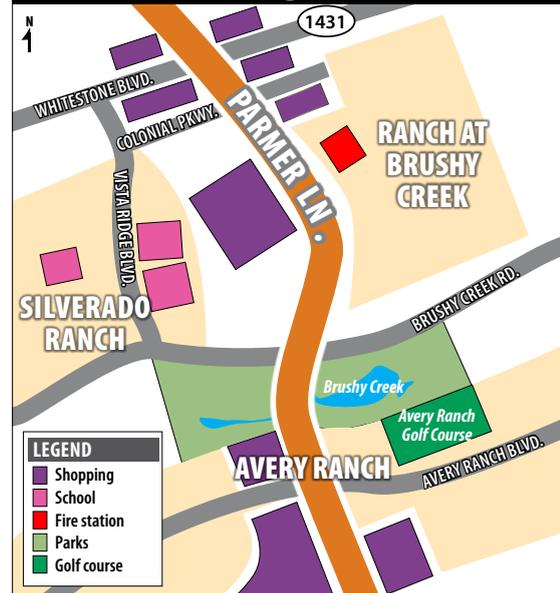
www.impactnews.com

The Humane Society of Williamson County is seeking emergency funding from citizens after a well water pump failure caused extra expenses. more.impactnews.com/10825

Shopping, amenities and schools make Parmer Lane in Cedar Park popular for residential development

Growth and expansion planned for Leander's Ronald W. Reagan Boulevard when utilities are in place

PARMER LANE growth and amenities



What makes Parmer Lane a preferred corridor?

Nick Moulinet of Bury & Partners, said roads and markets are defined most desirable and most preferred, depending on their accessibility to major cities, strength of school district and proximity to shopping and amenities. Parmer Lane is a preferred corridor because it is close to Austin, in Leander ISD and close to shopping centers.

By Jenn Rains

The stretch of Parmer Lane that runs through Cedar Park has changed dramatically in the past 15 years, going from a two-lane road to a bustling corridor surrounded by developments.

Parmer Lane, the eastern-most corridor of Cedar Park, began as a roadway in the 1990s with one lane in either direction just east of Cedar Park. Soon after it was built, commercial and residential developments began breaking ground along it, leading to expansion that caused Texas Department of Transportation to revisit the road. By 2001, TxDOT added more lanes in either direction.

Today, Parmer Lane, or FM 734, is no longer on the outskirts of the city but is one of Cedar Park's denser areas.

"It has become a major corridor, with high traffic volume," said Amy Link, senior planner for Cedar Park. "It has easy access to major areas and growing shopping centers."

One thing that made Parmer Lane a popular road is its convenience to Austin, Cedar Park Senior Planner Emily Barron said.

She cited north-south corridors outside Austin, such as MoPac and US 183, as other

roadways that have seen booming expansion because of their proximity and access to downtown Austin.

Not only have commercial and residential developments sprung up along Parmer Lane, other amenities have appeared within close distance, including schools, running trails, a fire station and parks.

"This is what's known as a [desirable] corridor, because it is a preferred location, with great schools and prices. It's just a great value," said Nick Moulinet, director of business development for Bury and Partners. The firm consults on projects along the roadway.

Only a few commercial elements near the intersection of FM 1431 and Parmer Lane are still available for development. The rest of the roadway is nearing build-out, Link said.

Residential success

One aspect of development that has been successfully growing along Parmer Lane is residential real estate.

Avery Ranch is one of the cornerstone developments along the road that has seen growth and expansion over the years. The

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Parmer Lane

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subdivision is an 1,800-acre master-planned community built by Waterstone Developments.

The community is nearing build-out, with only one area of development left in the community, said John Avery, whose family sold the land to developers to build the community.

Waterstone has two other projects in the works, Pearson Place and Avery Station, near Parmer Lane on Avery Ranch Boulevard.

John Avery is the developer of another community along Parmer, the Ranch at Brushy Creek, which has seen rapid development.

"I think there are several factors [leading to the growth]," Avery said. "We've got a spill-over from Avery Ranch because we're getting the benefit of the move-up buyers on this corridor."

Move-up buyers start with smaller, less expensive homes and then buy larger homes as their economic situation improves and their family grows.

"Couple that with the fact that Cedar Park is a desirable city to live in, and that's why we are seeing success," he said.

The Ranch at Brushy Creek has 200 lots under construction in three sections, with 700 additional lots to be built after that, Avery said. The subdivision will have about 1,700 homes at build-out.

"It is one of the fastest growing residential areas right now," Barron said of The Ranch at Brushy Creek.

The next step

With the residential element in place along Parmer Lane, the commercial aspect has followed. Daycare services, doctor's offices, restaurants and convenience stores dot the available land fronting the road.

"Rooftops always drive retail," Moulinet said. "The houses come

first, and then you start to see commercial and retail, which is what happened here."

A stretch of roadway between Colonial Parkway and FM 1431 continues to grow as new shopping centers are being built.

Link said other commercial businesses, such as Kwik Kar, are in various stages of building at the intersection.

With Cedar Park landlocked by the cities of Austin, Leander and Round Rock, few areas of the city have the available land to build and expand. Parmer Lane has been one of those areas over the past decade, making it an attractive place to build, Avery said.

"The houses come first, and then you start to see commercial and retail, which is what happened here."

—Nick Moulinet
Bury & Partners,
director of business development

As for future growth, Link said there continue to be inquiries about different parcels in the area.

Another residential development, Caballo Ranch, is under construction just north of FM 1431 on Ronald Reagan Boulevard, and has about 50 homes completed, said Dan McFall, developer of the community.

"We're going to continue to sell lots to builders," McFall said. "It's all predicated by home and lot sales, but we're continuing to move forward."

With the anticipated building of Schlitterbahn Waterpark on FM 1431 to the east and development along Ronald Reagan Boulevard in the north, Parmer Lane could continue to become a major corridor.

Comment at more.impactnews.com/10754

Growth on RONALD REAGAN BOULEVARD

Rancho Siena

- Development began 2005.
- First model homes breaking ground now.
- DR Horton and Ryland Homes are builders.
- 1,584 lots at build-out.

Source: Bill Gunn

Sarita Valley Ranch

- Water and wastewater lines being built.
- Construction to begin when infrastructure is in place.
- To feature single-family, retail and multi-family.

Source: City of Leander

LISD Middle School

- Construction should be complete in 2011.
- School to open for the 2012-13 school year.
- Will be Leander ISD's eighth middle school.

Source: Leander ISD

Cold Springs

- Development began 2004.
- First homes broke ground in 2008.
- CenTex Homes the primary builder
- 400 lots at build-out

Source: CenTex Homes

Caballo Ranch

- Development began 2006.
- First homes broke ground in 2008.
- 50 houses complete; 423 lots at build-out
- Commercial element at entry way

Source: Dan McFall

Ronald Reagan Boulevard, an extension of Parmer Lane north of FM 1431, was built by Williamson County and is the largest eastern corridor in the City of Leander.

Residential developments along Ronald Reagan Boulevard began in 2005 with the Cold Springs subdivision.

Today, the stretch of road is rolling hills and trees, but a few years ago it was expected to explode with growth. It

has suffered two setbacks: lack of utilities and a failing housing market.

"This corridor, four years ago, was about the hottest real estate there was," Nick Moulinet of Bury & Partners said.

He said when utilities are in place, developments should follow.

Jim Bechtol, Leander development services director, said, "Utility expansion will open this area. Ronald Reagan is an

attractive road. It's new and has a wide median and creates a very attractive thoroughfare for development."

The Reagan and FM 2243 Ltd. Group is building a water line to the intersection of FM 2243 and Ronald Reagan Boulevard, while the city is building a wastewater line to the area that should be completed by June 2011, said David Hutton, Leander planning director.

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