

Bryan says computer key to road repair

by Michael Larkin
Battalion Reporter

Street repairs in Bryan will be more efficiently handled if the city installs a computer system to establish priorities for repairing streets, the city's municipal services operations manager says.

The City of Bryan Traffic Division is considering installing a computer system that would facilitate street repair and maintenance, said Ed Iltschner, operations manager of the municipal services department which oversees the Traffic Division.

He said that a pavement management system known as PAVER can help maintain Bryan streets by establishing a priority system. The computer could tell city officials which streets need to be repaired.

PAVER, costing more than \$69,000 to install, would be a joint project between the Municipal Services Department and the civil engineering department of Texas A&M University, Iltschner said.

The University would help develop the computer program for PAVER and provide graduate students to help gather information, he said. While analyzing Bryan's 250 miles of streets, the students would record data on street conditions and road compositions.

Using this information, PAVER could tell maintenance crews which streets require immediate repair, Iltschner said. Currently,

Bryan depends on individual complaints to fix streets.

In a move to improve service, the Bryan street department was reorganized as the Traffic Division on Oct. 1.

The Traffic Division divides the city into three maintenance and repair districts. Each district has an operational supervisor and trained crew.

Within the Traffic Division, there are three sections to support the maintenance districts: drainage maintenance, concrete repair and traffic.

The drainage maintenance section is responsible for maintaining and repairing the drainage system in Bryan. This is the first time that an individual section has been set up for that purpose, Iltschner said. A foreman and nine personnel make up the section.

The concrete repair section is assigned to the repairing and maintaining of gutters, streets, sidewalks and any other city structure made from concrete, Iltschner said. A foreman and five personnel make up the crew.

Finally, the traffic section is responsible for the installation and maintenance of signs, lights and markings. A superintendent and five crew members are assigned to the section.

Iltschner said the reorganization will help Bryan maintain its streets better. Since each district has its own distinct crew, a feeling of responsibility will be instilled within the crew, he said. Crew members will develop an affinity

and a knowledge for the district that a temporary crew would not have, Iltschner added.

Although the changes may help improve streets, the city still faces an uphill battle to repair its streets.

Because of rising costs, an inadequate tax base and other needs, the city tends to ignore street repairs, Iltschner said. One of the problems is a lack of street user fees. There is no way to charge people for the use of streets, he said.

As a result, numerous potholes can be found in Bryan. Potholes, which are caused by traffic and water, cost about \$50 to \$100 each to repair. The cost to repair the potholes includes the use of materials, labor and equipment, Iltschner said.

Although the Traffic Division is not responsible for the major reconstruction of streets, Iltschner cites the following two projects as examples of high costs.

The current Villa Maria Project, which stretches about one mile from Knoll Lane to Briarcrest Drive, is costing Bryan \$2 million. The project includes the construction of a four-lane street with a continuous left-turn lane.

The other project, which is on Finfeather Road and similar to the Villa Maria Project, will cost about \$1.5 million.

In order to repair its streets, the city of Bryan allots the Traffic Division an annual budget of approximately \$1.7 million.

Harvey Road to change

Left-turn lane is planned

by Tammy Jones
Battalion Reporter

To remedy the high accident rate on the Harvey Road section of Highway 30, the State Highway Department is planning to add a left-turn lane and lower the speed limit on the road, City Engineer John Black said.

Near the end of November, the Waco Paving Co. signed a contract to overlay the section of Highway 30 to add a center left-turn lane. The overlay will form five lanes without widening the highway, Black said.

"This left-turn lane is great even though there will no longer be a shoulder, but that still leaves us with the high speeds and high accident rates," he said.

Last spring, College Station city engineers began an effort to

convince the State Highway Department that some improvement must be made because of the unusually high accident rate on Highway 30, Black said. The engineers have done studies on speed limits and the increase in the amount of traffic in the last two years.

The results, Black said, were not positive. The studies show that in the last year the average daily traffic on Harvey Road has increased by 52 percent beside Culpepper Plaza and by 33 percent beside Post Oak Mall.

The accident rate for Harvey Road is six times higher than the state average for an urban area.

"Since March, there have been 116 accidents, with 70 persons having to be taken to the hospital with injuries," Black

said. "Compared to the previous 12 months' 124 total accidents and 79 injuries, this year will have much higher rates because of the Christmas traffic that is just beginning now."

College Station engineers found that the high speeds, along with the lack of a left-turn lane on Harvey Road were a major cause of the accidents.

Black said the engineers asked the State Highway Department to reduce the speed limit by 10 miles per hour in the congested areas. The state department conducted another study and agreed that the speed

limit should be reduced, but by five miles per hour, Black said.

"The differences of opinion have not been worked out, but we have gone ahead and requested that the limits be reduced at least seven miles per hour if not 10," Black said. "This leaves us somewhat helpless because the state has the final say so in the issue since Highway 30 is a state highway, even though we are the ones that know the city."

The Texas State Highway Department also has made plans to install traffic lights on Harvey Road at Highway 6.

Now you know

United Press International
An expectant mother, diagnosed as carrying twins, inexplicably produces but a single baby. The other child has disappeared without a trace. This phenomenon, known as the "vanishing twin" in Europe, may be far more commonplace than ever expected.

The December issue of Science Digest reveals that vanishing twin episodes first came to light only in the past few years when

ultrasound allowed doctors to peek into the womb and see multiple pregnancies very early in gestation. What they found, with startling frequency, was that one member of the fetal pair suddenly stops developing in the first trimester and is reabsorbed into its mother's tissues.

Obstetricians Louis Keith and Helain Landy of Northwestern University Medical School have begun combing case histories to determine the frequency of such episodes.

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P&Z commission approves sign for church

by Shelley Hoekstra
Battalion Reporter

The College Station Planning and Zoning Commission Thursday night granted permission to the College Station Baptist Church for the replacement of a sign.

Pastor Kenneth Griffith said that the church's present sign has been in use since 1973, when the church first was founded. The church has expanded both in membership and building size since its opening. Griffith said that with the expansion of the church, an expanded sign was in order.

A 19-foot cross will be the focal point of the new sign.

In other business, the commission:

—approved permission for a 40 children daycare center located in apartments #601 and 603 of the Plantation Oaks Apartments at 1501 Highway 30.

—authorized the rezoning of a 37.06 acre tract of land located at the southwest corner of the intersection of West Luther and Wellborn to a planned industrial district.

—passed preliminary plans

for Shenandoah Subdivision, located on the southwest corner of Highway 6 and Barron Road.

—agreed to reconsider a parking lot plan for a two story

office building located on University Drive and Forest Drive

when landscape plans had been added to the parking lot plan.

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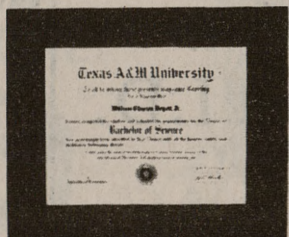
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