

State and Local

Closed streets on campus cause traffic flow problems

By Richard Williams
Senior Staff Writer

The closings of some roadways through Texas A&M because of construction work have added other minor inconvenience to the problem of traffic flow on campus.

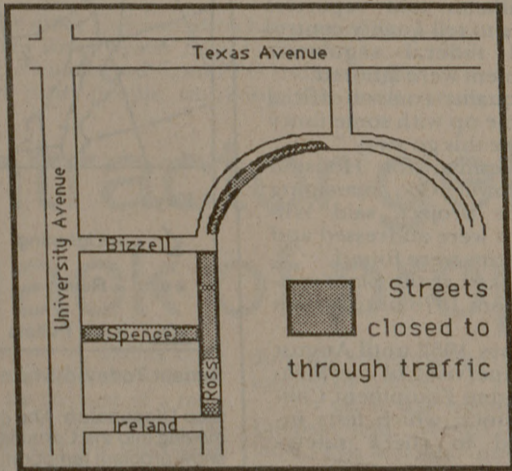
Construction projects have closed parts of Ross and Spence streets through motor vehicle traffic. Ross is closed from Ireland Street to Bizzell, and Spence Street is closed from University Drive to Ross Street.

Construction already has closed Spence Street from Ross to Lamar to through motor vehicle traffic.

Bob Wiatt, Texas A&M's director of security and University Police, said that section of Spence Street is to remain permanently closed to through traffic.

Cus Biering, a construction inspector for the Texas A&M University System, said the section on Ross Street will be closed to through motor vehicle traffic for roughly five or six more weeks.

The section of Spence Street temporarily closed might reopen for a short period of time in a month and a half, Biering said. However, that section of Spence is scheduled to again be closed to through motor vehicle traffic in roughly two months, he said.



Graphic by Susan C. Akin

Individuals who must use Spence Street to get to their parking spaces still will be able to do so, he said.

Construction also temporarily has closed the inside lane of Ross Street from Bizzell to Main

Drive. Traffic that normally would use the inside lane temporarily has been diverted to the outside lane. The outside lane now serves traffic traveling in both directions. The closures and diversions of traffic are necessary to allow the construction to take place and for safety reasons, he said.

Doug Williams, Bus Operations manager, said the closing of Ross Street has caused some delays in bus service, but he added it was only a minor inconvenience for the bus service.

"It's kind of disrupted the regularity of it," Williams said. "We just go down different streets now."

Bus Operations was not informed of the closure of Ross and Spence before it actually occurred, but that only caused minor problems for the buses, Williams said. Usually Bus Operations is informed of such closures and is able to plan around them, he said.

The closure of Ross Street has affected the intracampus bus routes more than the buses that run the off-campus routes, Williams said.

"It's primarily affected the intracampus buses," he said. "The off-campus schedule is affected to some degree because of the reducing of the street (Ross) to two way, but we're still getting by the best we can."

Mattox: Records of closed sessions must be detailed

AUSTIN (AP) — The certified agenda that governmental bodies must keep of closed meetings does not have to be a verbatim transcript of the session, but it must include more than a one- or two-word list of subjects discussed, Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox says.

Mattox added in an opinion released Tuesday that groups can avoid problems with the Texas Open Meetings Act by exercising their option to keep a tape of executive sessions, rather than a certified agenda.

"Ultimately, the question of whether a particular 'certified agenda' complies with the statute will be a fact question for the courts," Mattox said.

"Enough detail should be included (if a certified agenda is

used) to enable a district judge to determine whether the act has been violated," he said.

State law was changed by the 1987 Legislature to require governmental bodies to keep tape recordings or certified agendas of meetings that are legally closed to the public.

The act allows governmental bodies to deliberate secretly in some circumstances.

The added requirement was meant to ensure that the groups met the requirements when having secret meetings, Mattox said.

The new requirement does not apply to certain consultations between a governmental body and its attorney, Mattox said.

The opinion was requested by Robert Viterna, executive director of the Commission on Jail Standards.

Aide says Clements' intervention in agency choice was not political

AUSTIN (AP) — An aide says Gov. Bill Clements' intervention in choosing an advertising agency for the state's multimillion-dollar tourism account had nothing to do with politics.

The Republican governor's action reportedly jeopardizes the chances of a previously favored firm that has Democratic ties.

GSD&M, the advertising agency, was the consensus choice of a Texas Department of Commerce selection committee that heard presentations last month from five agencies vying for an estimated \$8 million-a-year advertising contract.

"All I know is that we pitched against everybody, and it seemed like from what everybody told me that we were the unanimous selection," Roy Spence, president of the Austin firm, said.

"Since then, things have changed radically, and I don't know why," he said.

Bill Lauderback, Commerce Department executive director, said the four members of the selection committee agreed that one company stood out after they heard the five firms' presentations on Dec. 8.

"I think it is fair to say that the general opinion was that this firm

made the best oral presentation," Lauderback said.

He declined to identify the committee's choice.

Sources told the Dallas Morning News that GSD&M was the firm that handled political advertising for Democrat Mark White's successful 1982 campaign, which unseated Clements as governor.

The agency also did advertising for Walter Mondale's presidential campaign in 1984 and has worked for State Treasurer Ann Richards and Land Commissioner Garry Mauro, both Democrats.

McCann-Erickson of New York

likely will be chosen when the Commerce Department board makes its decision public on Jan. 28, the unidentified sources told the newspaper in a story that was published Wednesday.

GSD&M, McCann-Erickson and Neal Spelce Communications, the company that now has the state's tourism account, repeated their presentations before the governor at his Capitol office.

Spelce said he had been told he wouldn't get the contract, while Spence of GSD&M said he believed he's out of the running.

Flight-attendant contract ends two-tier wage scale

FORT WORTH (AP) — American Airlines flight attendants have ratified a new contract eliminating a two-tier wage scale, union officials said Tuesday.

Kay Preston, a member of the American Association of Flight Attendants council, said 68 percent of about 6,000 union members voted to accept the contract.

The contract is set to run through 1992.

The Fort Worth-based carrier scuttled its controversial wage scale only hours before the union membership was to go on strike for two days during the Christmas holidays.

American said Tuesday it was "delighted" that union members ratified the six-year labor agreement, calling

the contract "one in which both sides can win."

"The new contract makes APFA members the best-paid flight attendants in our industry," the company said. "At the same time, it retains the market-rate wage concept."

The two-tier wage scale, which began in 1983, paid new employees less than veterans.

The new contract merges the two tiers over six years into a single market-rate scale in accordance with contracts previously negotiated with American pilot and groundworkers unions, company officials said.

Under the two-tier system, A-scale workers made an average of \$25,000 to \$27,000 a year, while B-scale employees averaged \$12,000.

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