

# Construction projects congest areas of campus

By **Jenara Kocks**  
Staff writer

Students returning to the A&M campus from summer vacation will be greeted by cement mixers, backhoes and steel poles.

Although University officials say construction projects on campus are running on schedule, some projects are not completed.

Guy Cooke, assistant manager of the facilities construction division of the A&M Department of Facilities Planning and Construction, said construction has been hectic this summer because of the many ongoing projects. Cooke said the most complicated area of construction was Main Campus.

"Our big thing was central (Main) campus shutdowns," Cooke said. "We were anxious to get those done."

### EVANS LIBRARY

Workers connected a pedestrian bridge from the fourth floor of Evans Library to the new library building in mid-July.

Construction work on the library complex will continue in the fall.

Cooke said construction workers will continue to use Spence Street and the sidewalk between Harrington Tower and the Academic Building to make deliveries to construction sites.

"The area around Spence Street and Cushing Library will still be congested this fall," he said.

Cooke said the four projects associated with Evans — the study complex, computing center, parking garage and renovations to Cushing — should be completed during next summer.

### KYLE FIELD AND REED ARENA

Cooke said expansion of Kyle Field will begin after the last home football game this year and will be completed in May 1999. He said construction on Reed Arena should be finished in Spring 1998.

### BLOCKER BUILDING

The west entrance of the Blocker

Building was closed this summer while the sidewalk in front of the building was being repaired.

Les Swick, assistant director of Physical Plant, said he hopes one side of the west entrance of Blocker will be open for the first day of classes. If one side is not completed, students will be able to enter the building only at its side or north entrances.

"The area around Spence Street and Cushing Library will still be congested this fall."

**GUY COOKE**  
ASSISTANT MANAGER,  
FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION

Swick said pedestrian traffic and water beneath the concrete surface caused the concrete in front of the building to fracture and become a safety hazard.

Swick said poor soil was one reason water kept getting under the concrete. He said workers had to excavate two feet of soil from in front of Blocker and replace it with other soil to be compacted.

Swick said the west entrance should be open by the second week of September.

Melissa McConnell, planner and estimator at the Physical Plant, said several pear trees next to Blocker also were removed this summer. She said the trees were too big for the area in front of the building.

### ENGLISH ANNEX

The English Annex was demolished in mid-August.

Dick Williams, associate director for facilities at Physical Plant, said the building was torn down because it was in "total disrepair" and was used only occasionally to distribute yearbooks.

### GEORGE BUSH PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

Cooke said the academic building of the George Bush Presidential Library will open Sept. 2, and the building will be dedicated Sept. 9. The library will open in November.

### WEST CAMPUS ROADS

Tom Williams, director of Parking, Transit and Traffic Services, said some roads on West Campus which were closed to motorists during the summer will be open for the fall semester.

"We're very excited about everything being completed," Williams said.

Williams said that during the summer months, Olsen Road from Bush Drive to Joe Routh Boulevard was expanded to two lanes each way and lighting and more medians were added to the road.

Williams said John Kimbrough Road on West Campus, which also was closed this summer, reopened Aug. 29.

The circle drive in front of the West Campus Library was converted into a bus stop with lights, trash cans, benches and covered areas.

Williams said students now will be able to catch buses from the West Campus Library bus stop.

### LUBBOCK STREET

Tom Williams said Lubbock Street from Bizzell to Coke streets will be open to students moving into the Commons this week and at the beginning and end of each semester. However, the road will be closed to through traffic the rest of the year. Lubbock Street will be open to people parking in staff, faculty and handicap parking lots in that area. Tom Williams said people also will be able to drive down Lubbock Street to enter the library parking garage once it opens.

### ROSS STREET

Dick Williams said the north side of Ross Street will remain closed this year until officials at the Physical Plant can secure



Workers remove soil in front of Blocker after compacting caused sidewalks to fracture.

STEW MILNE/The Battalion

funding to repair the road.

He said the Physical Plant was not expecting the "total failure" of this road, so the department did not budget for its repair.

Dick Williams said erosion of dirt underneath the street left air pockets under the asphalt. The combination of air pockets under the asphalt and traffic flow has caused the asphalt to break.

He said this type of erosion can sometimes be caused by leaks in utility lines, but the cause of the erosion beneath Ross Street is not known.

Dick Williams said Physical Plant officials will request money from the Board of Regents in September to rebuild Ross because the street has become a safety hazard.

If the Physical Plant receives the money for the street repairs, the process of formulating a solution and finding a contractor to do the job will begin, Dick Williams said.

### TEXAS AVENUE

The Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) is continuing to widen the mile-long stretch of Texas Avenue from University Drive to Do-

minik Street.

Pat Williams, area engineer for TXDOT, said widening the road by 20 feet is a "slow and tedious process."

Williams said workers are scheduled to remove existing pavement this week.

"After they have cleared this critical point (removal of pavement), then the project will move more quickly," Williams said.

Williams said the \$4.8 million project should be finished in late spring or early summer 1998.

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