Dear Lost Creek Resident,

Lots of things are going on in Lost Creek as we prepare for annexation by the City of Austin on December 31, 2015. In this issue, there are some short articles intended to keep you informed of any changes and improvements in the services we provide to you. The MUD sends many notices and emergency information to our residents via email and eblasts to save time and money. Mailing letters costs about $1,000 for material and postage and we request you send your email to office2@lostcreekmud.org to ensure you are on the list. All emails are kept strictly confidential.

Sincerely,
Lost Creek MUD Board of Directors

New Landscape Watering Schedule

Lost Creek has adopted the City of Austin’s watering schedule, effective April 15, 2012. We would have preferred to have phased this implementation over a longer time period as we prepare for annexation on December 31, 2015, but the exceptional drought has Lost Creek uniting with the majority of other Central Texas communities that use the City of Austin’s watering schedule.

Join with us to conserve our limited water resources. The new Lost Creek watering schedule has three tiers as follows:

**Stage 1** - May through September, two (2) days per week watering schedule, unless superseded by Stage 2 or 3 below;

**Stage 2** - When water supplies in the LCRA reservoir system reach 900,000 acre feet of water or less, one day per week watering schedule;

**Stage 3** - When water supplies reach 600,000 acre feet of water or less, outdoor watering is permitted with a hand held hose or bucket only

Lake levels are currently above 900,000 acre feet, which will trigger the Stage 1 watering schedule — twice a week watering — effective April 15, 2012.

**Stage 1 Watering Schedule**

Designated outdoor water use days are:

- Commercial and Multi-Family customers may water on Tuesdays and Fridays
- Single family homes have two (2) watering days per week:
  1. Odd addresses: Wednesdays &/or Saturdays
  2. Even addresses: Thursdays &/or Sundays
  3. Watering by sprinkler or irrigation system is allowed on an assigned day only before 10 a.m. or after 7 p.m.
  4. Hand watering is allowed anytime

Please adjust your watering to no more than the maximum allowed two (2) days per week schedule as indicated above to avoid penalties and potential loss of service for noncompliance. We also ask that you keep this new schedule in mind when planting new landscaping or lawns and that you install a rain sensor on your sprinkler that turns off your sprinkler when it is raining.

Sidewalks in Lost Creek

The Board has been working for some time to install sidewalks within the District that will fill some of the gaps and provide out-of-the-street pedestrian access to local parks and school bus stops. We held a Public Forum January 17, 2012, at the Lost Creek Country Club and, based on the feedback we received from residents, we have reduced the scope of the sidewalk project and are currently only reviewing the following sidewalk additions that are generally on our major streets that are over 40 feet wide:

- **Lost Creek Blvd.** – new sidewalks on the North side from Quaker Ridge to Mauna Kea
- **Quaker Ridge** – missing sidewalk connections
- **Whitemarsh Valley Walk** – missing sidewalk connections
- **Cape Coral Loop** (Quaker Ridge continuation) – missing sidewalk connections
- **Augusta National** – missing sidewalk connections – this is not a 40 foot street but it is a connector street to our trail system and a popular shortcut between Lost Creek and Whitemarsh Valley
- Other streets with missing sections: Front Royal; Sedgefield; and on Trevino on the northeast side, a two-lot connector to Lost Creek Blvd.

See [www.lostcreekmud.org](http://www.lostcreekmud.org) for a sidewalk map.

The engineer’s cost estimate for the above sections is $883,451, of which one-half would be shared by Travis County. Keep in mind that we are still studying the various locations and there has been no approval to move forward with construction. The sidewalk plan has to meet all ADA sidewalk pedestrian and roadway engineering standards and attain approval by Travis County.

The original sidewalk plan discussed at the January 17th public forum was far more comprehensive than the list above. The original plan was prepared to determine the approximate cost for widespread sidewalks in order to present a dollar figure to Travis County for the November 2011 Transportation Bond Election. Our sidewalk project was part of the bond measure and passed for an amount up to $500,000, to match our $500,000 commitment. This million-

The dollar total has been published several times and has upset some Lost Creek residents. This was a preliminary dollar figure for a comprehensive sidewalk plan so that a funding estimate could be delivered to the County for inclusion in the November 2011 Bond issue. We felt it was better to obtain more funding and pare if needed, rather than seek less and neglect worthy sections because there was not enough financing.

Unless the MUD receives unified requests from residents on a particular street to build sidewalks, it is unlikely that the scope will expand beyond the list above. Furthermore, the board is committed to minimize impact within the community and not to destroy any substantial tree landscaping or established retaining walls if the project moves forward. This means that sidewalks will not be constructed on one section of Whitemarsh Valley Walk, as one example, because of a large live oak growing within the sidewalk alignment.

There is a safety argument for sidewalks on all of our streets that no one would disagree with, but this argument has to be weighed with the neighborhood needs, construction constraints, cost and aesthetics. Part of Lost Creek’s appeal is that it does not look like a typical modern subdivision. One of our neighbors put this in perspective at the public hearing by saying that although he had elementary school age children that catch the bus on Lost Creek Blvd., his family moved here without sidewalks in place and without the expectation of sidewalks being built.

Other attendees at the public hearing pointed out that the underlying safety issue might be solved via traffic control such as road humps and stop signs. Some said that effective placement of new crosswalks and handicap access might be all that are needed to effectively use Lost Creek Boulevard’s existing sidewalks, which extend from Loop 360 to Turtle Point. Residents who walk in the neighborhood pointed out that
Sidewalks  continued

many existing sidewalks are problematic due to vegetation overgrowth and from mailboxes blocking most of the walkway causing them to walk in the street rather than on the adjacent sidewalk.

At Board meetings subsequent to the sidewalk public hearing, many residents have expressed their opinions both for and against sidewalks. At the March Board meeting, three homeowners said that we need a sidewalk on the west side of Lost Creek Blvd. between Mauna Kea and the Barton Creek bridge, which is not in the current scope, so that no one on the north side would have to cross the Blvd. to access the creek or the Lost Creek Country Club. The counterpoint is that this section would be constructed within the existing street alignment by repurposing the lanes on that section of Lost Creek Blvd. This realignment is necessary to avoid a significant rock cutback and installation of a retaining wall on the west side of Lost Creek Blvd. The engineer estimates that this section of sidewalk, using the lane-narrowing plan, would cost $115,000.

The Board is taking under advisement all of our neighbor’s suggestions and is committed to balancing these positions. Please come to any Board meeting at 6:30 p.m. and share your valuable opinion as at each meeting the first item on the agenda is to hear comments and feedback from our citizens. Or feel free to send an email to all of the members of the Lost Creek MUD Board of Directors or our General Manager, Tom Clark, at gm@lostcreekmud.org.

Lost Creek Entry Median Landscaping

The MUD has engaged a landscape architect to design revisions to our entry median and the MUD-maintained areas along Lost Creek Blvd. We are planning these revisions for the following reasons:

- The entry to Lost Creek should be attractive and serve as an example of Central Texas native landscaping.
- We cannot predict at what level the City will water, maintain or illuminate the median after annexation. Additionally, the City endorses a “dark sky” initiative that restricts the use of certain types of outdoor lighting.
- The Lost Creek Neighborhood Association may not have the funds available for maintenance, watering and illumination after annexation and the improvements are intended to minimize future financial impact to the Lost Creek community.
- Many of the existing light bollards and electrical system, installed many years ago, have been hit by cars and are in need of replacement.

We asked two landscape designers for a plan that:

- Uses xeriscape, drought-tolerant plants that can survive with minimal irrigation.
- Is easy to maintain with minimal maintenance.
- Does not harm the existing trees.
- Incorporates timeless Central Texas design elements.
- The Lost Creek Home and Garden Club are also on the MUD’s committee to relandscape the median.

We want to get the project moving this year so that any new plants will have time to adapt in the event irrigation ceases after annexation. The rough plan is to install hardscape and utilities during the summer then add the plants in the fall or early next year. This will give the plants three years to establish themselves prior to annexation. We are also looking at alternatives to the current bollard lighting system, such as path lights, flood lights or a mix of lighting to illuminate trees and landscape rocks to light the median for night drivers. The smaller lights are less expensive to install and replace when damaged. We are currently testing the effectiveness of these lights in a short section of the median at the center of the curve. Take a look and let us know what you think.
Oak Wilt Remediation

Many residents have asked the MUD to help with oak wilt remediation and tree replacement. Every MUD Board member is in favor of such assistance for obvious reasons. Unfortunately, the MUD is prohibited by statute to spend money for improvements to private property. If there is an oak wilt outbreak on MUD property we will take the necessary measures to halt its spread.

The Texas Forest Service has an Oak Wilt Assistance Program that provides training, assistance and advice on identifying, treating and stopping the spread of oak wilt. This information is available on their website located at www.texasoakwilt.org/Assistance/assistance.html. LCNA has a representative to help with identifying possible oak wilt problems. Please contact Jennifer Lamm at: jenniferlamm@yahoo.com.

Neighborhood Resident Survey

In November and December 2011, Lost Creek conducted a Resident Survey. Residents had the option to fill out a paper survey or to complete it online. Of the 1,243 families living in Lost Creek, 184 completed the survey representing a 15% response from District residents. The full survey is available on our website located at www.lostcreekmud.org.

A summary of the comments and the surveys received centered on six recurring topics or issues repeated in the responses received that we are working to address. The six topics were deed enforcement, recreation, financial resources, sidewalks, Firewise, and some miscellaneous items.

Deed Restriction Enforcement

The overall general response was that deed covenants were adequately enforced (39%), however, a large percentage of the responses (41.7%) had no opinion. New property owners with less than these years residency stated they were not provided a copy of deed covenants when purchasing their homes (47%). If you do not have a copy of your deed covenants, copies are provided on our website, www.lostcreekmud.org.

Financial

When asked how to pay for improvements and upgrades, responses suggested using user fees to pay for items and 52% strongly agree to keep property taxes low. Using user fees to pay for an expensive amenity like a sport court is not practical because it’s hard to control access and collect a fee and if it were to pay for itself, the fees would be enormous. On the other hand, the District is committed to maintaining and lowering its property tax rate of $0.17 per $100 property value and will strive to lower the tax rate in the upcoming budget.

Firewise

There were several comments and concerns about the condition and amount of underbrush in the greenbelts with specific concerns about wildfire mitigation and the threat of fires. The District recently surveyed the entire greenbelt to locate property pins so it can prepare a comprehensive plan to more aggressively remove and clean brush from the greenbelts in the next three years prior to annexation.

Recreation

Several comments and the largest percentage of responses (47.8%) indicate additional property should be acquired for recreational purposes, such as a pavilion, sport court and/or trailhead. Some respondents (36%) indicated that additional funds should be spent to improve existing parks, upgrade parks and install exercise equipment. Several respondents indicated the District should install low maintenance landscaping and keep or enhance the seasonal decorations. The District has researched purchasing additional properties for trail heads and a sport/basketball court but this is problematic because very little property is available in Lost Creek that is not already developed and under the Annexation Agreement with Austin; we would be required to seek Austin’s approval in order to purchase additional property so it is a work in progress.
Miscellaneous Topics

- One responder stated that the District needs a Limited District after annexation by the City of Austin. A Limited District would better maintain property values, parks and facilities and enforce deed covenants. The District has initiated transition meetings with the City of Austin to receive feedback of the City’s plans for amenities such as local parks and the community meeting room located at the District’s offices – more to follow on this issue in subsequent newsletters to keep you informed.
- Another responder stated that they would like to see additional and more current information on the annexation status on the District’s website and the survey indicated that 45% of new property owners were not provided information about annexation when purchasing their homes. Existing information on the website is current because nothing has changed since the Annexation Agreement was executed in 2009 and we are still on schedule to be annexed by the City of Austin on December 31, 2015.
- Several important but minor items were mentioned by some responders. These are:
  1. Replace District signage – A plan to replace and/or upgrade the signs is in progress
  2. Watering schedule is confusing and not the same as the City of Austin – A previous article in this newsletter provides details of recent changes in our watering schedules to coincide with the City’s schedules that will take effect April 15, 2012.
  3. Do not expand WiFi in the parks. – Ok, we won’t.

In summary, Lost Creek takes your feedback very seriously. We listened to your comments in the survey and received your feedback concerning the sidewalk program and are in process of responding to your concerns and attempting to improve our service to you.

THE LAST WORD

As has been traditionally done in the past and with annexation by the City of Austin approaching, the Board unanimously decided recently to rotate officers to allow others to serve in the various officer positions to allow for a wider exchange of ideas, direction and leadership for the District.

Other News of Interest

» Online Bill Pay is here! You can now pay your water bill online with a credit card on our website located at www.lostcreekmud.org.

» Wastewater Averaging – we recently completed wastewater averaging to recalculate your wastewater bill. Please review your bill and call us if you have any questions.

» Vendor and Contractor advertisement signs – if you are remodeling or constructing a home improvement, please note that it is a violation of the deed covenants to display a vendor or contractor advertisement sign.

» ACC approval and MUD permits – make sure to submit any home improvement or remodeling projects to the LCNA Architectural Control Committee and secure the appropriate permits from the MUD.

» Non-emergency Sheriff Department contact – if you need to report or need non-emergency assistance from the Sheriff’s department, call 974-0845, extension 3, for the direct line to dispatchers.

» New MUD Website – the name is the same but our website is completely recope. We just completed the first of two phases in upgrading our website. You can access current drought conditions, weather, watering restrictions, pay your water bill, and a lot more. In fact, we now have an official Lost Creek neighborhood rain gauge which you can access on our website. Take a look at www.lostcreekmud.org.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you,

Lost Creek MUD Board of Directors
Steve Veregg, President
Nancy Naive, Vice President
Gary Sertich, Secretary
Preston Doege, Treasurer
Eric Castro, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer

April 2012 www.lostcreekmud.org
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Vice President  Nancy Naeve
Secretary       Gary Sertich
Treasurer       Preston Doerge
Asst. Sec.-Treasurer  Eric Castro

ABOUT LOST CREEK MUNICIPAL
UTILITY DISTRICT

Lost Creek Municipal Utility District is the local government serving more than 1,250 families in the Lost Creek neighborhood by providing drinking water, wastewater, solid waste collection, deed restriction enforcement, beautification and recreational services.

Have a question about your deed restrictions? Are you concerned that a neighbor may not have applied for and/or received the required ACC (Architectural Control Committee) approval prior to beginning the new construction or remodeling project that is currently underway (or about to commence)? Has that fence been approved?

For these and any other questions or concerns that you may have regarding deed restriction enforcement in Lost Creek, please contact Tanya Emmons via email at lostcreek@pinnacletexas.com, by phone at 512-795-8461, by fax at 512-795-8463, or online at www.pinnacletexas.com (Residents link).