



LOST CREEK Municipal Utility District

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EBLAST and for posting on District website

September 18, 2015

Subject: Lost Creek Boulevard Sidewalks

Dear Lost Creek Resident,

The Lost Creek Municipal Utility District Board of Directors has recently considered and voted on two related sidewalk projects along Lost Creek Boulevard in response to an April 2015 accident at the intersection of the Boulevard and Whitemarsh Valley Walk resulting in a cyclist fatality. Immediately after the accident, there was public discussion of the safety of that intersection given the sharp curve of the Boulevard. After investigation, Travis County sent the District a list of action items to be implemented by the County for the Boulevard, including:

- additional signage (which has been installed very recently);
- in coordination with the property owner, tree trimming on the northeast corner lot of the intersection (which has been done);
- selective enforcement by the Travis County Sheriff's Office of speed limits and recklessness by skateboarders;
- possible installation by the District of a radar speed reminder sign under a licensing agreement with the County (which the District has been advised it cannot legally do under its statutory powers); and
- a crosswalk at a to-be-determined location across the Boulevard.

On the last item, with input from the District on common pedestrian routes through Lost Creek and along the Boulevard, Travis County Safety Engineer Joe Hall formally selected a crosswalk location at Cypress Point North in his June written report.

Proposed Projects

To encourage pedestrians to use the new crosswalk and avoid crossing at the Whitemarsh Valley intersection, the Board voted at its July 21 public meeting to proceed with sidewalk improvements along the north side of the Boulevard from the new crosswalk at Cypress Point North to Whitemarsh Valley Walk ("Part A"), with total estimated construction costs of \$58,600.30. Sidewalks would be constructed in the Travis County right of way only, and would be ADA compliant, five feet in width and would go around and avoid obstacles such as large stone mailboxes.

Following public input about the need to encourage pedestrians traveling up the Boulevard to cross at a location with better sight lines, the Board voted at its July 29 public meeting to proceed with sidewalk improvements along the north side of the Boulevard from Whitemarsh Valley Walk to Augusta National ("Part B"). Part B would also accommodate school bus stops on the Boulevard. This vote was conditioned on the District's financial obligation for Part B not exceeding \$50,000 based on budget considerations, although estimated construction costs for all of Part B are \$106,662.71.

Travis County matching funds, discussed more below, may be available for part or all of the costs of Part A and/or Part B, but this is not yet clear and may depend, in part, on timing of the construction relative to annexation of the District by the City of Austin.

The first step for the sidewalk projects is preparation of plans for the projects. The Board has authorized engineering for Parts A and B, at a cost of approximately \$19,202. After completion of the plans, the Board will vote whether to solicit bids for Parts A and B and, once bids are received, vote again whether to accept a bid and award a contract. Those votes will occur at future Board meetings, which are posted, after receipt of information from Travis County regarding the availability of matching funds.

Previous Sidewalk Projects

In 2012, the passage of a Travis County bond election provided a source of 50-50 matching funding for Lost Creek sidewalk installations. The District and Travis County entered into an interlocal agreement providing for the County to reimburse 50% of sidewalk project costs incurred by the District. Given this opportunity, the District considered undertaking a large-scale sidewalk project. The proposal included sidewalks on the north side of the Boulevard from the four-way stop to the low water bridge and along Whitemarsh Valley, a portion of Quaker Ridge, and certain other locations throughout the District at a total estimated cost to the District of approximately \$453,631.

After taking public input in several ways, the Board conducted a non-binding referendum in September 2013, where each Lost Creek household voted on whether the District should (1) construct the entire project; (2) not construct the project; or (3) install sidewalks along the proposed stretch of the Boulevard. Of 1,250 Lost Creek households, 452 voted against the project, 100 voted for the project, 59 voted for sidewalks along the Boulevard, and the remainder of Lost Creek residents (approximately 639 households) did not cast a vote.

After consideration of the referendum results and other feedback, the Board decided not to proceed with the large scale project improvements. Instead, the Board authorized installation of the following limited sidewalk improvements:

- a stretch along a blind curve on Whitemarsh Valley Walk near a District greenbelt entrance; and
- at and around the four-way stop on the Boulevard and Quaker Ridge to allow for additional crosswalks and accommodate a school bus stop.

The District's share for these improvements was approximately \$42,500. Consideration of additional improvements was triggered by the April 2015 fatality.

Additional information regarding the sidewalk project is available on the MUD website under "Hot Topics." If you have questions about this project or any other project or topic, please contact any Director or contact General Manager Tom Clark at 512-327-6243 gm@lostcreekmud.org. You are also welcome to attend future meetings of the Board of Directors. Thank you for the opportunity to serve Lost Creek.

Sincerely,
Lost Creek Municipal Utility District