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# CRESTVIEW

## NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

### NEWSLETTER

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MAY 2019

#### EVENTS CALENDAR

**Saturday, May 4:** Violet Crown Spring Festival, 10 am to 5 pm at Brentwood Park. Free admission. For more information, visit [www.facebook.com/VioletCrownFestival](http://www.facebook.com/VioletCrownFestival).

**Saturday & Sunday, May 11 – 12 and 18 – 19:** West Austin Studio Tour (WEST). For more information, visit <http://west.bigmedium.org>.

**Monday, May 13:** Crestview Neighborhood Association Meeting. 7:00 pm at the Crestview United Methodist Church, 1300 Morrow St. **Agenda:** Officer elections and discussion of issues of interest to the community. See article below for more information on officer elections.

**Wednesday, May 15:** Last day to file a property tax protest with TCAD. For more information, visit <https://www.traviscad.org>.

#### CNA Officer Elections

Elections for officers of the Crestview Neighborhood Association will be held at the CNA meeting on Monday, May 13 at 7 pm, at the Crestview United Methodist Church, 1300 Morrow St.

Executive Council positions up for election include President and Treasurer, both for a two-year term. Four additional Executive Council positions, Place 1 through Place 4, will be up for election for a one-year term. The current positions of Vice-President, Secretary and Newsletter Editor have a year remaining in their two-year terms.

To be eligible for office, one must be a paid CNA member. To be eligible to vote for CNA officers, one must be a paid member at least seven days prior to the election on May 13, meaning that their dues must be paid by May 5, 2019.

#### Howdy Neighbor!

By Mike Lavigne, CNA President

If you are reading this after May 4th, hopefully you'll have gone over to the Violet Crown Festival and soaked up some neighborly fun last Saturday. That really is a special event that not every neighborhood gets to enjoy. It's literally one of the reasons we moved here, and I'm always grateful for all the volunteers that put so much time and effort into creating community that we can all revel in.

#### Pork Chop

Well, we lost one. District 4 Council Member Greg Casar and a handful of urbanists led a secret and last minute amendment to the recent transportation ordinance to get rid of the traffic abatement at Morrow and Lamar. CM Casar and his supporters regularly refer to our neighborhood as wealthy elites who want to keep them out. If you are reading this and are a wealthy elite, be sure and ask me for my Venmo the next time you see me!

Unfortunately Greg Casar and the Mayor have just put the families along Morrow, Gault and other side streets in danger so they could get their shortcut. We will work with Council Member Leslie Pool's office (district 7) to try and get more sidewalks and traffic abatements in the road to make it a little safer.

*See Neighbor, continued on page 2*

#### Proposed City Demolition Permit Rules Fall Short of Safety Goal

By David King, Past President, Austin Neighborhoods Council

Asbestos and lead-based paints were commonly used in single-family homes, apartments, and condos constructed prior to 1978 in Austin and cities throughout the US. Many of these homes, apartments, and condominiums in Austin are being demolished, potentially exposing the public to asbestos and lead paint contaminants. The *Community Impact Newspaper* recently reported that: "Since 2010, Austin has seen 7,310 demolitions, 4,346 of which have been single or two-family homes,

*See Demolition, continued on page 3*



#### Soccer at McKalla Place? At what cost?

In February, the Clerk of the City of Austin certified a petition signed by more than 29,000 local voters proposing a new city ordinance related to the use of publicly owned land for sports stadiums. In all likelihood, Austin voters will vote on the ordinance in November, and it could determine the fate of the proposed pro soccer stadium at McKalla Place near the Domain. One of the most important issues the new ordinance would resolve is whether the new stadium would be on the hook to pay property taxes.

The proposed ordinance requires voter approval of any agreement that allows a professional sports team to use public land tax-free, an arrangement that Austin's elected officials are attempting to enter into with California billionaire Anthony Precourt. Precourt is the former operator of a Major League Soccer (MLS) team based in Ohio, and the City of Austin has proposed giving his

*See Soccer, continued on page 5*

# CRESTVIEW

## NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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### CNA Contact Information

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[www.crestviewna.com](http://www.crestviewna.com)

CNA General Meetings are held the second  
Monday of every month at 7:00 PM at the  
Crestview United Methodist Church,  
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Treasurer: [joincrestview@gmail.com](mailto:joincrestview@gmail.com)

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### Neighborhood Email Groups

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Neighbor, continued from page 1

## State Politics

The Legislature has been busy, and like many who live in our neighborhood, my day job means spending a fair amount of time participating in the sausage making that is Texas government. There aren't as many bills aimed at us this year, as they have their hands full with larger issues. However, they are considering severely capping the amount that the city can raise your property taxes without voter approval. The liberal in me cries foul, understanding that public safety and schools need whatever we can get to them. But then I hear Mayor Adler complaining about it out of one side of his mouth while he gives away land to billionaires and allows the city to go on a spending spree buying land in places like Hays County. So which is it? Maybe a little belt tightening and property tax oversight isn't the end of the world.

There is also a bill in the Senate that would end the ability of cities like Austin to give away land, like they are doing with the soccer stadium, without the blessing of the other taxing entities (AISD, county) they robbed in this deal.

It has been nice seeing some new faces at our Neighborhood Association meetings lately. I try to keep them relatively short and informative but we want to get to everyone's questions and concerns so it is a fine line to balance sometimes. Please let me or any CNA officer know if there is something you would like to see on the agenda.

That's all I've got today. It is the busy season. Thanks for all the encouragement and we will keep fighting those that seek to divide us. I love this neighborhood!

## Land Development Code Update

As the Newsletter goes to press, the city council is set to vote on giving directions to the city manager regarding the revision of Austin's land development code. Two elements of that discussion will critically impact core neighborhoods like Crestview. The first issue deals with the quantity of additional housing proposed, and the second issue centers around where that density will be located. The ambitious Housing Blueprint goal is to create 135,000 new housing units within the next 10 years. However, the council is considering revising the code and zoning maps to allow for 3 times that number, over 400,000 units. In addition, it's proposed that 75% of the new housing capacity be located within ½ mile of transit priority networks such as Burnet Road and North Lamar Blvd. Ironically, the city's demographer, Ryan Robinson, stated in a recent *Statesman* article that he expects to see declining growth in the city of Austin "as it falls victim to circumstances that usually plague big metropolitan regions, such as traffic, congestion and gentrification."

In addition to exaggerating the number of new housing units needed and locating the majority of those units in a small portion of the city, the city is also indicating that the guidelines in the current code that were put in place to balance the demands of growth with the quality of life will be reduced or eliminated. Those protections include compatibility standards, setback requirements, height limitations, off-street parking, commercial use prohibitions, and many others. On top of everything, the city doesn't have a plan on how to provide and pay for the infrastructure needs that would accompany their plan, such as adequate drainage to prevent flooding and new schools for an expanded student population.

In the same *Statesman* article as mentioned above, it was reported that the growth rate in Travis County was 1.7% last year, compared with Williamson and Hays counties with 3.8% and 3.9% population growth, respectively. At that rate, the county's population would double in 45 years. With the development of Midtown Commons over the past five years and all of the new duplexes that have been built in Crestview during that same time, the housing supply in our neighborhood has nearly doubled, contributing our share of growth for the next 40 years. Often repeated by Austin's real estate and development interests is the statement that Austin needs to "accommodate" growth. Crestview has contributed its share. In reality, the city seems to be promoting growth, and by reducing or eliminating elements of the land development code that have long benefited our neighborhoods, the city risks the loss of something truly special.



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according to city numbers as of February 4.”

Exposure to asbestos is known to cause aggressive lung cancer in adults, and exposure to lead-based paint is known to cause irreversible brain, kidney, and central nervous system damage, particularly in unborn babies and children.

Unlike peer cities Seattle and Portland, Austin does not require owners of single-family homes or small apartment and condo complexes with fewer than 5 units built before 1978 to be tested for asbestos or lead paint. Seattle requires property owners to conduct asbestos surveys prior to demolition, remodel, or repair of their homes and properly abate asbestos contaminants. Portland requires property owners to provide asbestos surveys and lead-based paint reports prior to demolition, remodel, or repair of their homes and properly abate asbestos and lead contaminants.

An audit released in August 2017 by the City Auditor identified significant issues with the City’s demolition permit process. On December 14, 2017, the City Council passed a resolution directing the City Manager to conduct stakeholder meetings and propose changes to address the issues revealed in the audit. The Council resolution established the following goals for a redesigned demolition permit process: 1) appropriate reviews take place prior to demolition activities, 2) appropriate safety measures are in place prior to demolition activities, and 3) adequate notification is given to interested parties.

The Development Services Department (DSD) conducted stakeholder meetings and identified the following proposed rules for the demolition permit process:

- Establish a demolition contractor registration process to verify contractor qualifications and filter out bad actors.
- Require on-site pre-demolition meetings between staff and applicants before demolition permits are released.

- Require notification of demolition permit applications to adjacent properties.

Acquiescing to pressure from land developers and home-builders, DSD decided not to recommend rules that require testing for asbestos or lead paint for demolition permits for single-family homes and apartments or condo complexes with fewer than 5 units. DSD staff indicated that the administrative process for changes to demolition permit rules does not require a public hearing or approval by the land use commission or City Council. DSD staff disclosed that the administrative rules process will begin in June and new rules may be adopted by the end of this year.

Please urge your City Council member to support DSD’s proposed demolition permit rules and:

- Require property owners to survey for asbestos and lead as a precondition for submitting applications for permits to demolish, remodel, or repair single-family homes and apartment and condo buildings with less than 5 dwelling units built prior to 1978.
- Require surveys to be performed by individuals or firms that hold Environmental Protection Agency lead and asbestos certifications.
- If asbestos or lead contaminants are identified by a survey, require property owners to properly abate, mitigate, and remediate asbestos and lead contaminants.

#### Temporary Relocation of Fire Station 16

The Austin Fire Department is planning renovations at Station 16, located at 7000 Reese Lane. While the renovations work is underway, AFD plans to locate a temporary trailer and fire truck a few blocks southeast at Ryan Drive and Justin Lane (the site of the Austin Energy yard). This temporary arrangement will begin in July, and will be completed by Spring 2020. It is not expected that these plans will impinge on the redevelopment schedule for the Ryan Drive parcel.



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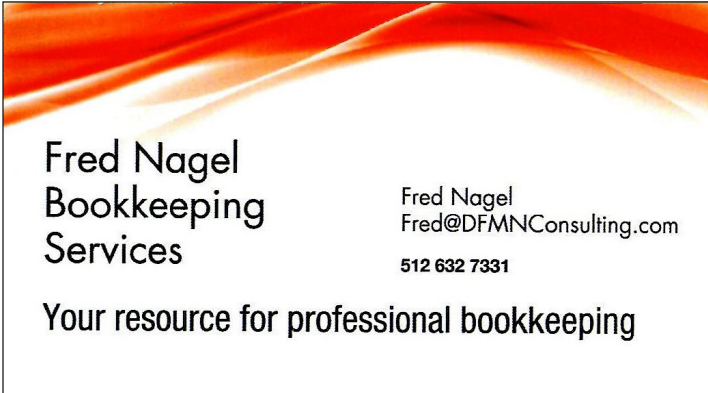
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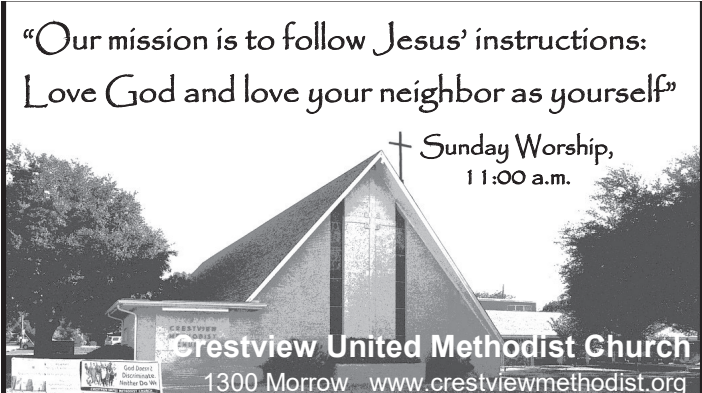
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† Sunday Worship,  
11:00 a.m.

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## WEST and More

By Marilyn Querejazu

The WEST studio tour is right around the corner – May 11-12 and May 18-19. It is a self-guided tour of our Austin artists' creative spaces. It's free to visitors but not to the artists who participate. It takes talent, courage, patience and a not-trivial chunk of change to be part of WEST. So please follow the signs and support local artists during the 4 days (2 weekends) of WEST. See some art, meet a friend and find the perfect Mother's Day gift.

Maps are available at Austin Public Libraries and online at [bigmedium.org](http://bigmedium.org). The always gorgeous catalogue will be available at the Big Medium Gallery (5305 Bolm Rd #12, Austin, TX 78721). Before you head over there, give them a call at 512-939-6665 to make sure they have a copy for you.

There are 12 Art Happenings scheduled in coordination with WEST. Here are a few that are close to home:

**The Visual Arts Program at Lamar Middle School presents LamARTarama** - painting, drawing and sculpture by our talented young students. LamARTarama is an annual Spring fundraiser and showcase for the Lamar MS FAA Visual Arts Department. LamaARTarama is on the WEST tour Saturday, May 11th from 1-3 at Lamar in the Gym. All of the student work for competition (over 130 artists) throughout the year will be on display in a gallery like setting. Vendors will offer snacks, T-shirts, hats and stickers with the new Llama logo.

**The Austin Book Arts Center** opened a new studio at 5501 N. Lamar Blvd, Ste. C125 in April 2019. WEST visitors can drop in to enjoy refreshments and door prizes. Volunteers are onsite to lead demonstrations in bookbinding and letterpress printing. Attendees may print a keepsake or bind a book. ABAC is determined to preserve the traditional

crafts related to making books and ensuring books continue to be a relevant mode for communicating knowledge. Sounds good for anyone who enjoys holding a real book in your hands. Check here for information: <http://atxbookarts.org> (or just drop by)

**There's always more ...**

**Austin Film Society at The Linc** - Among several cool destinations at the Linc (aka Lincoln Center) is the Austin Film Society Cinema. Their calendar is packed with interesting/entertaining films and events. Make a night of it. [Austinfilm.org](http://Austinfilm.org)

On June 25 AFS presents a documentary to mark the birthdate of Catalan architect Antoni Gaudi – if you've seen any of his work you know its unique qualities. He added a whole new flavor to Catalan Modernism, especially the fantastic Sagrada Familia Cathedral in Barcelona. Read the summary here: [www.austinfilm.org/screening/antonio-gaudi/](http://www.austinfilm.org/screening/antonio-gaudi/)  
**Get on down the road, see some wildflowers, and ...**

**May 11, 2019 - Wimberley**, at the Square and around town. 4-7pm. The 2nd Saturday of every month Wimberley's fine art galleries keep their doors open late for the monthly Gallery Trail. Wimberley's fifteen participating galleries feature a wide spectrum of fine art from local and national artists.

**May 18-19, 2019 – Bertram Art, Herb and Wine Festival**, Bertram, at Flanigan's Texas Distillery & Winery, Railroad and Lampasas Streets. Sat: 10am-6pm & Sun: 10a-5p. Wineries, arts, crafts, live music and food vendors.

**May 25 & 26 -Port Aransas, Texas.** 13th Annual ArtFest sponsored by Port Aransas Art Center. Jerry McDonald Field, 113 Allister Road. Saturday 10am - 5pm & Sunday 10am - 4pm. 60 Artists



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company use of publicly owned land at 10414 McKalla Place rent-free for five years and for less than \$500,000 per year afterward and exempting it from all property taxes for a minimum of 20 years. The hope is that Mr. Precourt might build a stadium and attract a new MLS team to play within it. Events held at the stadium would not include any revenue-sharing from ticket or concession sales, and the agreement would leave the city to pay for millions in utility, sidewalk, and emergency service improvements.

According to the *Austin American-Statesman*, the McKalla stadium plan could rob the city's schools, hospitals, parks, and other public facilities of \$371 million in funding over the next 25 years. Austin Mayor Steve Adler has touted it as a great deal for the city.

The proposed ordinance would require sports teams to pay property taxes if they want to use public land for private profit. Austin residents and locally owned businesses already pay some of the highest property taxes in the state. Those taxes have forced Austin icons like Threadgill's, the Frisco Shop, and the East Side Cafe to relocate or close their doors forever. So if we are being asked to give hundreds of millions of dollars in property-tax breaks to an out-of-state billionaire's for-profit venture, the ordinance would give Austinites the opportunity to approve the deal at the ballot box.

Adding Major League Soccer to the roster of sports options in Austin would be exciting. Austin FC would join the Austin Bold soccer club, the Texas Stars hockey team, the Round Rock Express, and my beloved Texas Longhorns. MLS can be great for Austin, but only if our city's leaders play fair. The Austin City Council should not be picking winners and losers, and local taxpayers should not be subsidizing a private and very profitable enterprise.

At a time when our elected officials warn us that we don't have enough money for emergency services, schools, and other local priorities, giving away hundreds of millions of

property taxes to a private business is hard to understand. Taxpayers deserve a voice.

*Chris Lippincott and his family have lived in Crestview since 2005. Chris is the spokesman for Fair Play Austin, a political action committee formed by sports fans, local employers, and Austin taxpayers who want a level playing field. Fair Play Austin believes special interests that use public property should pay property taxes, just like the rest of us do. For more information, please visit [FairPlayAustin.org](http://FairPlayAustin.org).*

## CM Casar Amends Roadway Plan Opening Morrow to Cut-through Traffic

On April 11th, Council Member Greg Casar (District 4) introduced an amendment to the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) that would open Morrow Street to cut-through traffic by removing the protective barrier at Lamar Boulevard. Council Member Leslie Pool (District 7/Crestview), spoke in opposition to the change and voted against the amendment. Unfortunately, the amendment was approved over CM Pool's objections.

Anticipating a steep increase in traffic volume, the city promises to try to offset the resulting reduced safety of Morrow Street by reviewing and possibly implementing safety features that might be helpful. While those efforts are appreciated, they fail miserably in addressing the larger issue of promoting community on a narrow residential street that, prior to the installation of the protective barrier at Lamar, carried a similar amount of traffic as many arterial roadways.

## In Memoriam

**Jim Carpetas**, a Crestview resident since 1987 and a CNA member since 1994, passed away in April, 2019. A talented and accomplished singer and musician, Jim was well known for his mastery of the uilleann pipes, the national bagpipe of Ireland. He was well versed in traditional Irish music and loved singing folk songs. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends and fellow Ham radio operators.



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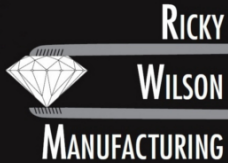


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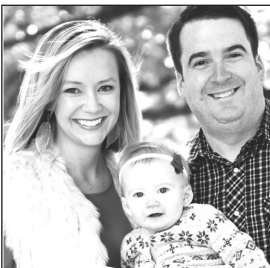


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