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# CRESTVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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MARCH 2022

## City Hall's New Street-Reclassification Plan May Be Part of an Upzoning Scheme. Here's How to Take Action

By Community Not Commodity

### KEY POINTS:

- The City of Austin plans to expand its right-of-way (ROW) on many neighborhood streets to an astonishing 84 feet, claiming the space is necessary for new bicycle lanes
- We believe the plan lays the groundwork for an initiative similar to CodeNEXT, with properties along the new ROWs upzoned to allow more units per lot
- If you have concerns about the plan, sign up to speak at an upcoming meeting and tell the group's members you don't want Austin's residential streets reclassified to "Level 2"

The City of Austin's plan to reclassify scores of neighborhood streets and widen its right-of-way (ROW) to as much as 84 feet has rightfully stirred up residents across our community. Although it isn't clear what the city's staff is up to, we are told "not to worry." But frankly, many of us don't trust the city after years of heavy-handed, misleading land development proposals, such as CodeNEXT. In addition to bureaucratic obtuseness, raising the street classifications from "Level 1" to "Level 2" may be a stragem for future upzoning (more density) in neighborhoods along the reclassified residential streets.

The City of Austin claims it needs to raise the classification of residential streets to Level 2 to accommodate bicycle routes, but that explanation doesn't add up. Level 1 streets have plenty of width for bike paths; the city's staff could have just created a new street classification (such as "Level 1B") with the same right-of-way (ROW) width, but indicating a possible future bike route.

The city's reasoning also doesn't make sense on expanding the ROW. Staff says that it doesn't intend to use Level 2's expanded ROW in existing neighborhoods. And it's true that with many reclassified streets, the expanded ROW would destroy people's use of their homes, resulting in inverse condemnation and the city owing property owners millions of dollars. So why spend all the effort to reclassify streets and expand the ROW if the city doesn't intend to use the ROW?

One reason makes sense to us: The city is reclassifying

*See Reclassification, continued on page 2*

## Change Initiated To Allow Additional Access to Morrow

By Chip Harris, CNA Newsletter Editor

District 7 Council Member Leslie Pool has initiated an Ordinance/zoning change that will reverse the city's long-standing position to limit cut-through traffic on Morrow Street. When zoning for Midtown was approved by the City Council a few years ago, it was with the stipulation that, except for emergency vehicles, vehicular traffic would not have access to Morrow. City staff made this recommendation based on a traffic impact analysis study that documented over 9,000 vehicle trips per day would be generated by the redevelopment of the Huntsman Chemical tract (Crestview Station) bordered by Lamar, the railroad tracks and Morrow. Further, the study reported that over a thousand trips a day would end up on Morrow, exceeding the threshold of traffic volume that would be considered safe for a street with Morrow's residential characteristics.

The Crestview Neighborhood Association (CNA) encouraged the City's position prohibiting vehicular access to Morrow and cited that the development had three access points on Lamar, one of which provided protected left turns onto Lamar when exiting Midtown. CNA has always been opposed to opening Morrow to more traffic due to concerns that traffic will revert to prior levels of over 9,000 vehicles per day, grossly higher than the typical Crestview street that sees 500 or fewer vehicles per day. The proposed opening onto Morrow is at Easy Wind Drive, a road that connects directly to Lamar and continues east as St. Johns Avenue connecting with I-35. The proposed change comes at a time when Morrow is already dealing with increased traffic as a result of removing the pork chop at Lamar that protected Morrow from west-bound cut-through traffic.

The change in the City's position is occurring simultaneously with the City's amendments to the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, the plan that calls for Tisdale to be upgraded from a Level 1 to a Level 2 street. The design for Level 2 streets calls for an 84-foot right-of-way. Congestion on major arterials like Lamar resulting from densification appears to have the city repurposing neighborhood streets to relieve the ever-growing congestion on the arterials.

There are steps the City can take to reassure the neighborhood that they won't let Morrow revert to its previous untenable position. The first step is to pause the process of changing the ordinance in order to engage with those Morrow residents who will bear the brunt of increased traffic in order to develop and approve a City plan that monitors the traffic volume and protects the residential integrity of Morrow Street by identifying roadway modifications to be made should traffic volumes on Morrow exceed certain thresholds.



# CRESTVIEW

## NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

### NEWSLETTER

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www.crestviewna.com

CNA General Meetings are held the second Monday of every month at 7:00 PM at the Crestview United Methodist Church, 1300 Morrow St.

Treasurer: joincrestview@gmail.com

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#### Neighborhood Email Groups

crestview-gardeners@googlegroups.com  
crestview-parents@googlegroups.com

When you were born you were crying and everyone else was smiling. Live your life so at the end, you're the one who is smiling and everyone else is crying.

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

If we should be so lucky as to touch the lives of many, so be it. But if our lot is no more than the setting of a table, or the tending of a garden, or showing a child a path in the woods, our lives are no less worthy.

~ Kent Nerburn



## City Registry for the Medically Vulnerable

The City of Austin keeps a registry of residential utility customers with a long-term disease, ailment or critical illness. Customers eligible for the program receive more time to pay their bills and special attention from city staff and partnering social service agencies - especially during storms and disasters, although customers are not guaranteed power during a crisis.

To qualify for the Medically Vulnerable registry, the city says customers must have a licensed physician verify eligibility and meet one of the following criteria:

- On a life support system that requires uninterrupted electric or water service, such as an iron lung, ventilator, feeding pump, kidney dialysis machine, aerosol tent, apnea monitor, blood pump, compressor/concentrator, electric nerve stimulator, extremity pump, hospital bed, hemodialysis machine, oxygen concentrator, pressure pump, pressure pad or respirator
- Treated by a licensed physician for a critical illness such as paraplegia, quadriplegia, hemiplegia, multiple sclerosis or scleroderma
- Treated by a licensed physician for a serious illness impacted by changes in temperature

To join the registry, call Customer Care at 512-494-9400. Austin Energy asks for the name and number of the customer's physician, as well as the type of medical equipment in the customer's household.

## Sunshine Community Gardens Plant Sale

Sunshine Gardens's plant is Saturday March 5th from 9-2 at 4814 Sunshine Dr. There will be a great selection of organic vegetables including tomatoes, peppers and eggplants, along with herbs and passalong plants. Compost will also be available to keep the plants happy and healthy. People are asked to wear a mask to help keep everyone healthy and happy as well.



For more information including a list of the vegetable varieties available, please go to <https://sunshinecommunitygardens.org/index.php?p=plantsale/index>.

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*Reclassification, continued from page 1*

now so in the near future it can pass a land-code amendment to increase the number of units allowed on all Level 2 streets, across-the-board. For example, the city council could pass a "legislative amendment" that all lots on Level 2 streets could have up to eight units, encouraging "redevelopment" of single-family neighborhoods. Knowing the city, it probably would try to pass the amendment without providing you notice, a hearing, or protest rights.

We don't know for sure what the City of Austin is up to, but it doesn't seem to be driven by bike paths or ROWs. It instead appears to be part of the city's ongoing scheme to eliminate single-family neighborhoods. Whatever the city's intent, there is no need to reclassify residential streets to Level 2. If you are concerned, sign up to speak at one of the upcoming hearings or write the mayor and council members about how you feel.

#### Austin Strategic Mobility Plan Amendment Schedule:

- Pedestrian Advisory Council : March 7
- Planning Commission Briefing : March 8
- Council Mobility Committee : March 10
- Comprehensive Plan Joint Committee : March 10
- Bicycle Advisory Council : March 15
- Zoning and Platting Commission : March 29
- Planning Commission Recommendation : May 10
- City Council Public Hearing : May 19 (pending Council action)
- City Council Readings : June (TBD)

(Community Not Commodity is a local organization that advocates for land development that supports community values over developer profits. For more information please go to <https://communitynotcommodity.com/who-we-are/>.)



## Brentwood Elementary News

### Register Now for the 2022-2023 School Year

Did you know that registering students early helps Brentwood get staffing and campus resources? With our brand new campus, we want to be sure we have the right amount of support for our school, and we can't do that without your help.

To register new or returning students, log in to the AISD parent portal at <https://portal.austinisd.org> and search for the 'Registration' tile. Click the tile, and fill out all requested information. Have questions? Need help? Please contact the Brentwood Elementary office at 512-414-4339.

Know neighbors with incoming Kindergarten students, or who have recently moved and will enroll at Brentwood for the first time this fall? Please share how to register, and help us spread the word!

### Used Book Sale is Back - March 26

The time has arrived to tidy up your bookshelves for Brentwood Elementary's Used Book Sale! We would love any and all gently used children's books you have to give, but since we are limited in time and storage space for this year's sale, we will not be collecting books for adults. The proceeds from the sale will go to purchase new books and materials for the school library.

This year's Used Book Sale will be held Saturday, March 26th from 9:00am-2:00pm in the Hope Chapel Family Room located at 6701 Arroyo Seco. Masks are strongly encouraged to keep everyone safe!

Please drop off your donations no later than Thursday, March 24th at one of the addresses listed below. If possible, we ask that you send your books in boxes to allow for easy



storage and transportation.

Used Book Sale drop-off locations:

- Brentwood South: 5317 Roosevelt Ave
- Brentwood East: 1108 Algeria Rd
- Brentwood West: 6702 Hardy Dr
- Crestview East: 7809 Tisdale Dr
- Crestview West: 1700 Barbara St

Need someone to fetch your items? Email Meagan Sykes at [meagan@modernndigs.com](mailto:meagan@modernndigs.com) to schedule a pick-up.

If you would like to volunteer to lend a hand with the Used Book Sale, we would love to have you. Please use the SignUp link to pick a time to set-up, assist with sales or pack-up at the end of the day: <https://signup.com/go/VMOKtzJ>

### "Bird Mural" Update

For those that know of the iconic "bird mural" that adorned Brentwood Elementary, we can reassure you it's in great hands. We received a few photos of Jean Graham, who has devoted over 200 hours to this project, both in saving the mural from demolition (with fellow neighbor Ralph Castillo's donated time and materials), and in repair work for eventual re-install. We are thankful for her time and talents in preserving the history of our community and school. The mural will be moved to our newly remodeled Brentwood Elementary campus soon! Keep an eye out for more details and a call for volunteers.





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## In Memoriam

### James Paul Mikulak

James Paul Mikulak peacefully passed away on Thursday, February 3, 2022, at Brookdale Westlake Hills Assisted Living in Austin, Texas at the age of 87. Born on September 1, 1934 in Toledo, Ohio, he moved to Crestview almost 20 years ago and joined his son to live up front in his Crestview cottage duplex. As Jim once stated, "he got to Texas as soon as he could".



Jim travelled the world during his time in Texas while also pursuing his goal of visiting all of the presidential libraries in the United States. A lover of both train travel and model trains he quickly took over one of the bedrooms and built an elaborate model train set. Jim cherished his family, his Texas pickup truck, and his miniature schnauzer, Cricket.

James Paul Mikulak was a first generation American, a son, a veteran, a husband, an uncle, a grandfather, and a great grandfather. His charm and fun-loving personality will be missed by all who knew him.

Jim was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Betty Prince Mikulak and younger son, Gregg Mikulak. Jim is survived by his son, James Kevin Mikulak, a Crestview resident for over 35 years, and his wife Holly.

<https://www.austinnaturalfunerals.com/obituaries/James-Mikulak/#!/Obituary>

### Steven Sadowsky

Although not a Crestview resident, Mr. Sadowsky deserves remembrance for the debt the entire city owes him for the countless hours he spent above and beyond performing his duties as the city's historic preservation officer. For 21 years,

he meticulously researched and documented the histories of older homes and buildings in Austin. Even during his illness, Mr. Sadowsky never quit advocating for historic preservation, not just for well-preserved West Austin homes but for the East Austin structures that reflected the city's history.

Before turning to history, he served as a lawyer. Outside of work, Steve's greatest pleasures were his family and his friends and enjoying all that Austin has to offer in live music and natural beauty.

Steve died peacefully on January 12, 2022. With him goes a wealth of knowledge and a lifetime of experience that will be irreplaceable.

## It's My Park Day Is Back!

**I**t's My Park Day (IMPD) 2022 is scheduled for Saturday, March 5th from 9am to 12pm. After a two-year hiatus on in-person park projects, this spring's workday will be a great opportunity to get outside, give Brentwood Park some love, and meet your neighbors. IMPD is a city-wide service day organized by Austin Parks Foundation and Austin Parks and Recreation, and our work day is sponsored by Eldorado Cafe and Genuine Joe. Friends of Brentwood Park (FOBP) has organized projects and neighbors for IMPD at Brentwood Park each year since 2010.

Registration is ongoing at <https://givepul.se/t071nc>, and we've got some tasks that need doing before and after the workday if you'd like to participate but are busy that morning. We can be reached through our group email address: [friendsofbrentwoodpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofbrentwoodpark@gmail.com). Our website with more information about FOBP is [www.friendsofbrentwoodpark.org](http://www.friendsofbrentwoodpark.org)





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## City to Temporarily Suspend Brushy and Bulk Pickup

Beginning February 21, 2022, Austin Resource Recovery (ARR), a department of the City of Austin, will suspend large brush and bulk collection for residential curbside customers until further notice. Any missed collection during the interruption will be rescheduled once services resume. These suspensions are attributable to staffing shortages related to COVID-19 and difficulty filling open vacancies. The service is suspended until more drivers can be hired.



For those seeking alternatives during the suspension of curbside collections for brush and bulk items, ARR is asking customers to drop off large brush at the Hornsby Bend Biosolids Management Plant if possible. Curbside customers are encouraged to donate or gift unwanted bulk items in good condition or hold on to them until service resumes. Austinites may also schedule a collection through ARR's Clothing and Housewares program at no additional charge. Additional disposal options can be found in ARR's 'What Do I Do With...' tool.

With the goal of re-establishing all curbside collections, ARR is hiring entry-level and experienced drivers and has recently increased starting wages. New drivers start at \$17 an hour to attract talent. Those interested may call (512) 974-1980 or visit [bit.ly/ARRApply](http://bit.ly/ARRApply) to learn more and apply.

## Crestview Artists Profiles

by Marilyn Querejazu

### Jay Cooper

You may have passed the giant armchair at the corner of Morrow and Woodrow in front of the Violet Crown City Church and wondered: Why a giant armchair? Pastor Jay Cooper built the chair six years ago out of salvaged lumber to experience renewal: to make something new out of something discarded. It has since displayed many designs and messages and been the background for many photos. He's put a lot of paint on it over the years.



Pastor Cooper describes himself as "the product of a Roman Catholic 18-wheeler colliding with a United Methodist bus that careened into a Presbyterian seminary before picking up speed, rolling off a cliff, and hurtling, naturally, toward an evangelical progressivism. Somehow the bumpy ride didn't throw my Jewish carpenter passenger out of the vehicle."

He draws inspiration from 20 years of experience including work as a missionary in Guatemala where he directed teams of medical professionals and constructors to areas of need.

### Milo Poteracki

Milo Poteracki is a busy eight-year-old. He creates and delivers the (almost) weekly Madison News, a fun-filled newsletter for his neighbors and friends on Madison Avenue. The newsletter includes cartoons drawn by Milo (with contributions from his friend Giovanni), a weather forecast, recipes, jokes, restaurant reviews, and Madison Avenue news (new babies, pets, etc.).

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