

Commissioner reflects on recent projects

Written by Andy Eads, Denton County Commissioner, Pct. 4

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Happy New Year from Denton County Precinct 4! As we look ahead to a new year, I wanted to reflect back and share with you a list of accomplishments from 2010 we worked towards in partnerships with our Precinct 4 cities, and also some milestones for Denton County.

Argyle

A traffic light at Hwy 377 at Liberty Christian School and Cross Timbers Church was funded by the county and installed. This has provided much needed safety improvements at a very busy intersection. With the help of TxDOT our office has worked with Argyle ISD providing suggestions to re-route traffic through the high school campus to a central exit point in hopes of meeting the state criteria for a traffic light at either Cook or Harpole Street. Denton County stands ready to fund any future traffic studies in hopes of installing a signal at one of these locations.

Denton County has provided a scope of work for the reconstruction of Old Justin Road in Argyle which was part of the TRIP '08 Bond election. This scope will guide the engineering firms as they design the project. We are also working on an Interlocal Cooperative Agreement whereby the County will reconstruct Forest Trail and Pioneer Circle in Argyle at a savings to Argyle during the next couple months.

Bartonville

Following the opening of the FM407/Lantana Curve, Denton County widened and paved the Wolf Run Road entrance area to accommodate a safer radius for residents and school buses.

Copper Canyon

Using TRIP '08 Bond money, construction began on Orchid Hill Lane from Copper Canyon Road to the FM2499 extension. This project reconstructs the roadway to a concrete surface and the creation of a traffic circle at the intersection of Chinn Chapel and Orchid Hill. This will be the first circle constructed by Denton County. The other project is the first of two phases to reconstruct and install of a comprehensive drainage system underneath Chinn Chapel Road. This is a very complicated project and we appreciate the public's patience as you travel the detour routes. We anticipate these projects to be completed during the second quarter of 2011.

A couple projects near Copper Canyon, but outside the city limits: The County replaced a severely deteriorated bridge on Canyon Oaks Drive, as well as installed a new guard rail on Meadow View Drive culvert crossing where brick railing was deteriorating. Another large project was the realignment and reconstruction of the north section of Copper Canyon Road from Old Alton to Hickory Hill. This project was completed under budget and we opened this road in August, prior to school re-opening in order to minimize detour routes for the school buses. We also neared completion of land acquisition and design for the southern section of Copper Canyon Road from FM407 to Hickory Hill which will go under construction later this year.

Denton

Our office continued working with TxDOT on the I-35W project from the Tarrant County Line to 35E in Denton. The county negotiated a contract with HNTB engineering firm to do the schematic and preliminary designs for future planning and widening of this important roadway.

Robson Ranch residents were thrilled to see the completion of Robson Ranch Road widening and reconstruction. We also installed additional striping on Robson Ranch Road at the request of residents.

On November 18th, a public hearing was held regarding the expansion of 35E from LBJ to Hwy 380 in Denton. This was a significant milestone in the federal environmental process as we move forward in the future widening of 35E.

DISH

We continued to work with Mayor Calvin Tillman and other elected officials on the implementation of the gas pipeline best practices which we adopted a couple years ago. This issue has been very important to all our cities in Precinct Four and Mayor Tillman has been instrumental in seeking improvements to drilling practices in the Barnett Shale here in North Texas.

Double Oak

Denton County Road and Bridge West department reconstructed Pepperport Lane in Double Oak and installed culverts for drainage improvements and overall paving. The County worked with the Town of Double Oak to realign the upcoming FM 407 widening north to minimize impacts to residents. TRIP '08 bond money was used to pay for the redesign of Waketon Road from Cross Timbers to Chinn Chapel and Simmons Road from FM 407 to Kings Road. We anticipate Simmons Road to be under construction the first quarter of 2011.

Flower Mound

The contractor on FM 1171 Section 1 has made great strides towards completing this section. The southern lanes are complete and now just the few remaining north sections are very near completion. The engineering firm of HNTB was hired for the design and schematic of I-35W from the Tarrant/Denton County line all the way up to I-35E.

Denton County also purchased land in west Flower Mound to build the Precinct Four county offices. This building will house the County Commissioner, Justice of the Peace, Constable, Tax Office, and County Clerk. This fulfills our mission to bring county services out to the residents instead of requiring our residents to travel to the county seat to obtain those services.

Fort Worth

Several years ago I formed the SH 114 Stakeholder Task Force Committee to get the ball moving on the SH 114 improvements. This Task Force has been meeting monthly to see the project complete. The hard work from group paid off when on December 8th, we held the ground breaking for SH 114 Urban Section construction project at Texas Motor Speedway. The contract was awarded to Mario Sinocola, and the project is fully funded to the Wise County line. This project came in 19% under budget.

Work continues on Litsey Road reconstruction and the construction of the new Litsey Road bridge. The historic old Litsey Road bridge was salvaged and will be given to the City of Roanoke.

Justin

The widening of FM 156 through Justin was part of our TRIP '08 bond election. I created the Justin/Northlake FM 156/407 Task Force, which has worked to plan the realignment of 156 through Justin and realignment of FM 407 and a grade separation crossing of FM 156 over the railroad track. We worked with the engineers to identify various options for these two projects while preserving the historical downtown area. In the next few weeks, we will begin meeting with property owners to seek their input on this important project. We also began working with Justin to establish design and location for the funded emergency access roads, which were also part of the TRIP '08.

Krum

Denton County funded and Road and Bridge crews reconstructed Hopkins Road and improved drainage along this roadway for a considerable savings to the City of Krum. We also provided the HMA overlay on the city portion of Masch Branch Road. Denton County awarded the design contract for the installation of turn lanes at the intersection of Thoroughbred Drive and FM 1173. I am continuing to work with Krum ISD and city officials to determine the exact project limits and timeframes for this project.

Northlake

In addition to work done by the Justin/Northlake FM 156/407 Task Force, Denton County hired an engineering firm to evaluate the extension of 1171 to 156 through TRIP 08 bond money. This has been part of our on-going monthly workgroup meetings between the County, Cities and TxDOT. Our plan is to determine the future alignment and preserve the right of way necessary to construct this roadway from I-35W to FM 156.

Ponder

The reconstruction and realignment of Smith, Schluter and Old Stoney Roads and Old Stoney Bridge replacement is 95% complete. Denton County awarded the George Owens Road Bridge contract to Quality

Construction in December 2010. We also funded road base improvements and asphalt overlay of East Doyle and Eddie Streets.

Roanoke, Trophy Club & Westlake

This last year we worked with these cities on several joint projects. We worked with the cities to identify design elements and future landscape improvements to the SH 114/170 interchange which will go out for bid in January 2011. Bobcat Boulevard opened, connecting Trophy Club and Roanoke to Hwy 377. This was a joint project between the cities, county, school district and developer. We have commissioned numerous traffic studies seeking a traffic signal for this intersection and continue to work with TxDOT to see that this much-needed signal is installed in a timely manner. The Litsey Bridge was given to City of Roanoke and will be relocated within the city limits. Schooling Road in Roanoke was reconstructed using county bond funds and is 60% complete and is anticipated to be open in late spring.

Denton County

The Denton County Road and Bridge West brought into the county road system 31 new roads, (11 miles), which were accepted for county maintenance under the new policy adopted by Commissioners Court July 2009. I am proud that our county crews paved 10.27 miles of roadway. Denton County also entered into a bridge replacement agreement with TxDOT for the design and construction of three Precinct 4 bridges, which will begin construction in January 2010. This was a considerable savings to the Denton County taxpayer. These three bridges are George Owens Road bridge, Underwood Road bridge, and John Day Road bridge.

Another significant milestone for Denton County was the opening in September of our new Denton County Health Department. This marks the completion of the first of three phases of the new county government complex which will be located on Loop 288 in Denton. We plan to sell other county properties within Denton and consolidate our operations on this site.

I want to thank the residents of Precinct Four for allowing me to serve as your County Commissioner for the past four years. I have been busy working hard with the elected officials on the federal, state, and local level to manage the continued growth here in Denton County.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at 940-349-2801 or email me at andy.eads@dentoncounty.com .