

Oak Ridge North Community News

What a hometown should be!

Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery for Oak Ridge North

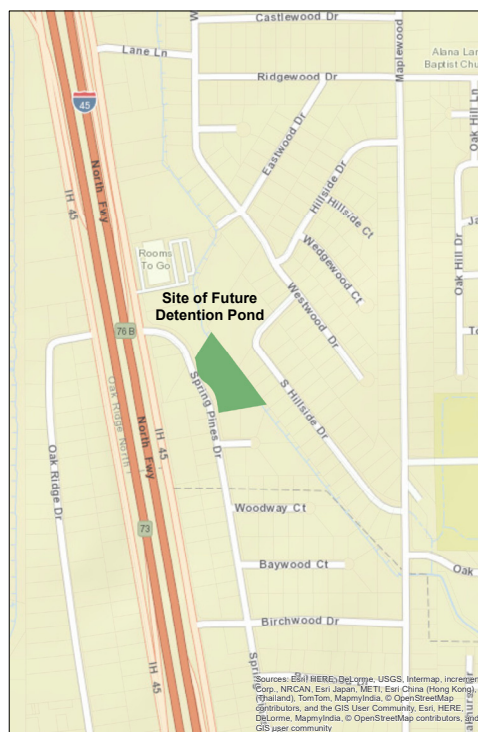
In April 2016 the city and the surrounding area experienced major flooding events. Because of the severity of these floods, the area was declared a disaster and money was granted to the state by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for recovery assistance. Montgomery County was one of the five most impacted and distressed counties in Texas, and therefore, was granted approximately \$23 million for housing and infrastructure projects as a Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR). After a period of public meetings, the county prepared a Method of Distribution (MOD), which was approved by the County Commissioners on June 27, 2017. Based on the amount of public assistance damage and percentages of low to moderate incomes, Oak Ridge North was allocated \$840,000 of this money, to be used for flood plain remediation. A summary account of all of the allocated \$23 million can be found on the Montgomery County's website under Latest News.

The City is proposing to use the allocated money for a Regional Detention Pond that will be located on Spring Pines Drive. This detention pond, which will be built in phases, will initially have a 4.3 ac-ft storage area, and will provide relief to the channel and additional storage for the drainage system. This will benefit residents in and out of the floodplain

within the city, as well as areas outside of the city limits within the watershed system.

CDBG grants for disaster recovery are administered by local, county or state governments and can be used for long term recovery, restoration of infrastructure, housing and disaster relief. At least 70% of the funds must be spent for low to moderate income persons.

Montgomery County will be handling all of the county's housing needs. They



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have recorded 976 low to moderate income home owners throughout the county that had flood damage. Individual properties will be assessed to evaluate whether or not they can be repaired, replaced, elevated, or bought out. If you had flood damages and did not receive enough aid through flood insurance for repairs, you can contact Montgomery County Community Development Department for more information.

The City will still need to apply for this grant through the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The County's MOD, as of the time of writing, has not been processed and accepted with GLO, so no time date has been set for application submittal.

Hillside Drive

What's New

City Council has authorized staff to go out for bid on a drainage improvement project on Hillside Drive from Westwood Drive to the curve. The proposed project will remove the old landscaping timber retaining walls along the ditch with a culvert.

Last year the City completed a Master Drainage Plan that identified drainage problems and recommended solutions. Hillside Drive was one of the areas of concern that was addressed. McManus & Johnson Engineering (MJE) as the firm selected to design this project. MJE recently completed the design of this project and staff has finished its review.

The anticipated construction cost is \$266,000, which includes a 10% contingency. The bid process should be 30 to 45 days. Anticipated construction is 90 working days, and is expected to take place in the fall.



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For every house is built by some man; but he that built all things is God. Hebrews 3:4

It's Time to Resolve the Water Issues

From the Mayor

Hello Neighbors:

Recently I wrote an editorial that appeared in the local papers regarding our water rate issues. I wanted you to know that your city leadership is actively working to help keep our rates low. We all know that we have a water problem, and that most of the county signed on to conserve water several years ago by not pumping so much water from the ground and committing to use more surface water. The City of Conroe and a small group of water users believes that the Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District (LSGCD) put an unlawful limit on the amount of water that can be pumped from the ground. The LSGCD is tasked by the state

to oversee the preservation, conservation, and protection of our groundwater. The City of Conroe has refused to pay their increased fees to Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District (LSGCD), and Lone Star filed a lawsuit against them. That was almost two years ago and the legal fees on both sides have grown considerably. So much so that the LSGCD is looking at raising their fees to offset legal cost. That is going to add more cost to our water bills!

While we are not an active part in the lawsuit, we are actively working to try and get the sides to come to the table and mediate some sort of settlement. I have met with both sides of this issue, and both be-

lieve they are right. As a mediator I know the value of two parties coming together with a neutral third party to work through the issues to find a resolution. Mediation is the way for each of the parties to avoid a court battle and develop their own resolution. This insures there is a win-win outcome instead of one party having to win and the other lose.

I believe those good people on both sides are big enough to come to the table and work out a resolution. After all, our great country was founded on the ability of good people with differing opinions to come together and work them out.

A mediated settlement would allow both sides



Mayor Jim Kuykendall

to come away with a win. The greatest winner of all will be all of us that use water who need lower water bills! That's what makes all of us know "what a hometown should be."

Blessings,

Jim Kuykendall, Mayor

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Public Works

State of the City

Most of our citizens are aware that we have a “Public Works” department in Oak Ridge North. Along with the Police Officers they are the most visible public servants our residents see on a regular basis. I suspect that many are not sure what the term “public works” really means.

The term grew in popularity after the World War II public works programs that put people back to work in the depression years were put in place. Public Works projects are still a major area of employment in the United States. We employ 16 people in the City. There is even greater economic impact with our major construction projects, which involve engineering and construction contractors.

For Oak Ridge North public works is a broad category of projects constructed and maintained by the City, including public services (like water and sewer), public buildings, public spaces like sidewalks and parks, drainage facilities, and other facilities. Public Works has had special emphasis these past eight years as the City found that all of its infrastructure aged out at 40 years old, and all at one time.

An article by Alex Marshall in Governing Magazine recently suggested that the term public infrastructure was a more understandable term for

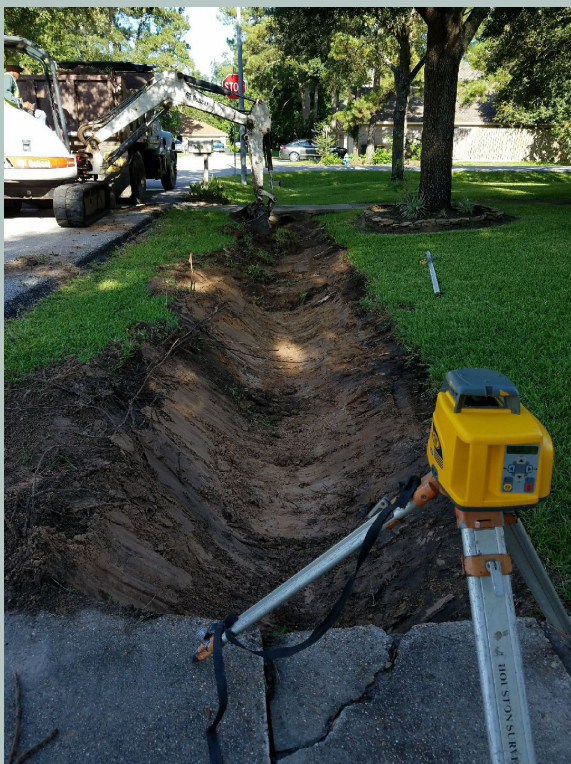
public use. It is apparently rapidly replacing the term public works. It seems to me that the term better describes what the City has in place and what it maintains. Our City Council is responsible for the infrastructure that serves our residents. It is these infrastructure systems that deliver water, and carry away sewer, and storm sewer. It is our streets that give and control access. Our parks provide recreation. It is the buildings that house our services and the equipment we need to deliver and maintain those services. The buildings house the workspace of the people who deliver those services every day.



Quoting Alex Marshall, “Whatever you call these systems, building, nurturing and managing them has always been inherently political and controversial because they represent the public coming together to do something collectively.” And, they come at a cost.

We continue our emphasis on infrastructure and public works because we don’t want to find ourselves aged out again all at one time. We have increased our emphasis on infrastructure planning. We have a capital improvement program that reaches out into the future. We have to plan on how the City will finance those programs over the corresponding years. This is, and will remain, one of the key features of our budgeting process. It is a key component of your tax rate and your utility bill. It can be painful, but as Mr. Marshall states in his article, “...it’s a good fight to have, choosing what projects we put our collective will into – whatever one calls them.”

Vicky Rudy, City Manager



Pet Tags

Building Oak Ridge North

The City of Oak Ridge North requires that all dogs and cats in the city be registered. The registration is necessary to insure that pets are up-to-date with rabies vaccinations and protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Registration is required annually. Here is a list of items required to obtain the registration.



1. An "application for animal license" must be completed. The application may be picked up at city hall or found online at www.oakridgenorth.com.
2. Provide a copy of the rabies vaccination your pet has received.
3. The registration fee is \$5.00 per animal registered.
4. Submit the above information and payment to the permits department at city hall.

Once the pet is registered you will receive a numbered pet tag that is required to be attached to the pet's collar.

In the past it has been very helpful in reuniting "escapee" pets with their owners. If an "escapee pet" is found, and if that pet is wearing their pet tag, we can look up whom the pet belongs to so they can be brought back home.

If you have any questions or if you suspect there are pets that are not registered, please contact the permits department, and we will be able to help you. The phone number for the permits department is (832)381-3301.

John Beisert, Building Official

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Fall Festival

Community Events

Fall Festival

Do you know a small business or make crafts you want to sell? Know someone who does? Go to our website for more information and to register to be a vendor at our Fourth Annual Fall Festival!

The Fall Festival will be on Saturday, October 7th from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. There is no admission fee, so bring the whole family to enjoy kids games, get your family photo taken in the pumpkin patch, play in the bounce houses, go for a ride on the trackless train, and much more! We hope to see everyone there.

For all event information please contact Community Programs Coordinator, Sarah McClure, at smcclure@oakridgenorth.com or 832-381-3215.



4th of July



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Water Leaks

Public Works

During this time of hot, dry weather, and in a climate of water supply tension, a discovered water main leak could end up being a slow drip torture of sorts. The City has a 2-person water crew that maintains and operates our water system. When a leak is discovered, the crew assesses how severe the leak is and determines what the repair effort will be, if the City has the capability of repairing the leak, and how long it will take to repair the leak. In some cases, the leak may be on the resident's side of the meter, in which case the crew will alert the owner and see if they want the water shut off until the resident can repair their supply line (domestic or irrigation lines). This keeps the water meter from spinning and the water bill from escalating.

If the leak is on the City side of the meter, the crew will try to determine where the leak is. In some cases the leak is under the street, under a driveway, or severe enough to call a contractor to come assist in the repair. For those cases where the street could be affected, the crew will try to avoid damaging the street, especially over a weekend, where traffic would need to be diverted while the street was trenched. Instead, a contractor will be notified and will bore under the street leaving as little disruption and disrepair as possible. Unfortunately, the contractor is not always available on the weekends or at night, so the crew will try to minimize the effects of the leak until the necessary equipment and manpower is available.

When the leak is severe, the crew will call additional City staff and the leak will be repaired immediately to preserve the water pressure and water volume, regardless of the street or curb damage. Generally severe leaks are leaks where the pressure in the cracked or broken pipe is low or when water is shooting out of the ground.

Residents can identify leaks on their property by looking at the water meter to see if the "leak indicator" is spinning – the "leak indicator" is a dime-sized triangular or star-patterned dial on the display face of the meter.



Joe Sherwin, Director of Public Works

After hours Public Works phone number:
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Salon Beaux Cheveux/ South Woodlands Art Gallery

Business Spotlight

It's all in the family for Outer Image Design, Salon Beaux Cheveux, SWAG and Nedd Guitars. Located at 27562 Robinson Road, you can find all four businesses in one location. Couple Steve and Kellie Nedd own Outer Image Design, Salon Beaux Cheveux and SWAG (South Woodlands Art Gallery). Nedd's brother, Mike is the owner of Nedd Guitars and Kellie's daughter, Mandi Dalton, is the administrator for Outer Image Design, Salon Beaux Cheveux and SWAG.

Steve Nedd owns the property on Robinson Road, which houses all four businesses in two separate buildings. Outer Image has approximately 2,500 square feet of space with Nedd Guitars occupying about 1,000 square feet and the salon taking up the rest of the 7,500 square foot space. Brothers Steve and Mike grew up on Jimmy Lane and attended Oak Ridge High School and still remain in the local area, so choosing Oak Ridge North as home for their businesses just made sense. Previously located on Hanna Road, the brothers moved the business to the current location in 2015. Besides being locals, the brothers were drawn to the increased traffic on Robinson Road and possible reconstruction of the road itself.

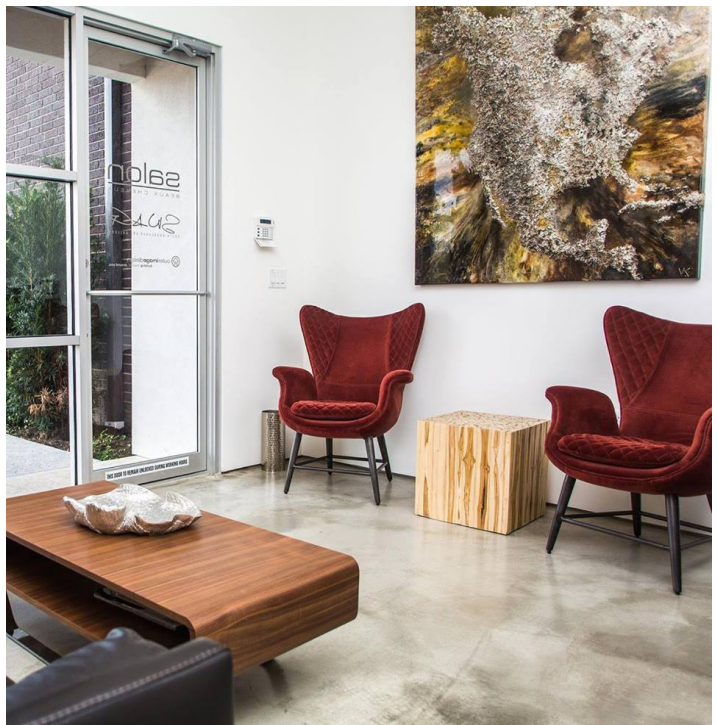


SALON BEAUX CHEVEUX

Salon Beaux Cheveux is jointly owned by Steve and Kellie Nedd, and run by Mandi Dalton. The full service salon currently has two locations, one at 540 Sawdust Road and the one at Robinson Road. The Robinson Road location has approximately 30 stylists and offers a multitude of services, including: waxing, nails, cut and color, spray tans, extensions and microblading. For more information visit www.salonbeauxcheveux.com or call (832) 791-1730 to book your appointment.

SOUTH WOODLANDS ART GALLERY (SWAG)

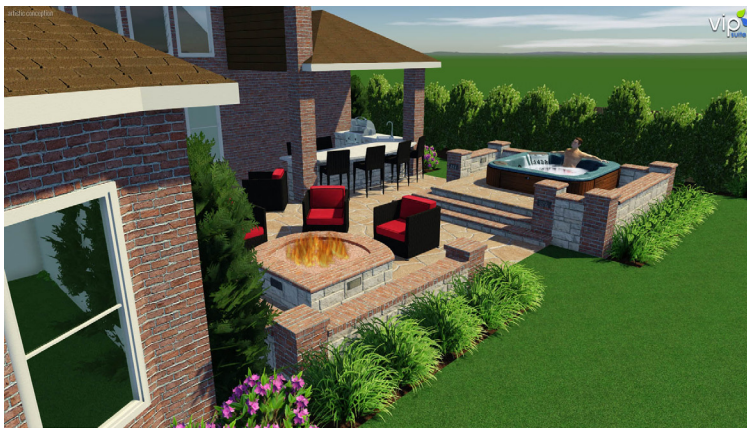
For Kellie Nedd, art had always been a passion. As a licensed cosmetologist, while opening Salon Beaux Cheveux, she also began SWAG. SWAG creates a community to host local and international artist. Nedd's work is also featured in the gallery. While the salon is open anyone can peruse the art and the gallery also hosts shows as well. For more information regarding SWAG, please visit www.facebook.com/south-woodlandsartgallery.



Salon Beaux Cheveux waiting area with SWAG art

Outer Image Design/Nedd Guitars

Business Spotlight



OUTER IMAGE DESIGN

Steve Nedd has been running Outer Image Design for over 20 years since 1993. Outer Image is a premier designing and building firm serving the Woodlands and surrounding areas. They specialize in providing outdoor living, from: structures and pools, to landscape and designs. They work to integrate custom outdoor living spaces, including pergolas, kitchens and fire places or custom in-ground pools. For more information you may [contact admin@outerimagedesigns.com](mailto:contact_admin@outerimagedesigns.com) or call (281) 323-4993.

NEDD GUITARS

Mike Nedd has been working with guitars in some form or fashion for the last 20 years and has been running Nedd's Guitars for the past thirteen years in Oak Ridge North. Nedd Guitars builds and repairs guitars and basses. Along with repairs at his own shop, Mike also handles repairs for several other stores in and around the Houston area. He offers a variety of services, including: set ups, neck adjustments, intonation, fret dress, nut replacement, bracing, pickup installation, electrical mod and builds custom guitars. Mike has done work for Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top, Bad Company, Saliva, Piggy D of Robb Zombie, David Piggott of the Monte Montgomery Band and Rusty Cooley just to name a few. For more information visit www.neddguitars.com or give him a call at (281) 381-1132.

Heather Neeley, Director of Economic Development



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License to Carry

Police Spotlight

I am told I sometimes bring doom and gloom into the room. Seeing how my job requires me to live in a world of doom and gloom, I guess this is a fair criticism. I take very seriously the safety and quality of life in our community. It occupies my thoughts and I am constantly thinking of ways to make our community safer. Some of those ways include supporting our "license to carry" program, focusing on analysis directed patrol in both the residential and business areas of the city, supporting an investigative branch of the department, and assuring that we have the finest, best equipped officers to do this job.

In support of the license to carry, we have instructors that teach classes on a monthly basis to citizens that wish to carry firearms. We do this to make certain that the training citizens receive is complete and unbiased. The cost for the classwork is \$10. In addition you must apply for the license and pay for qualifications. If interested contact Detective Ford at 281-292-2762.

When crime does happen in the city, we look at trends in areas, and direct patrol to those areas. If we experience an increase in motor vehicle burglaries, we will target that area with marked and unmarked patrol vehicles. The same is true for other crimes. We use a combination of marked and unmarked vehicles to assure that crooks in our city don't know where the police may come from, but they know by God we're here.

We have a great patrol group, but when reports are made, those reports need investigation by full time, dedicated investigators. Many times the crimes are complex identify theft, robbery, or computer based offenses that require a great deal of time and effort to bring to a reasonable conclusion. Therefore we have four individuals that work investigations, warrants, data input, case preparation, evidence processing and storage. These are the folks you may never see because they work in the background to assure that crooks are caught and prosecuted.

It is not easy to be accepted into our agency. Our officers go through extensive physical, psychological, and educational testing before they are allowed to wear our uniform. A six month training program, after their academy, assures that they know their jobs and our expectations. We have supervisory staff that works directly with the officers on each shift.

In combining these facets into our overall plan, we believe we have found a successful formula. This City has the lowest overall crime rate of any city in Montgomery County. Sure, we have our instances, but we catch'em. It may take some time and effort, but we believe that if you commit an offense in this City, you will be brought back to this City in handcuffs.

You can't run far enough, fast enough or long enough to keep that from happening.

Andy Walters, Chief of Police



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Brian Pate was recently named the new Director of Finance at the City. Brian, a CPA, has over 17 years of experience in multiple accounting and financial disciplines, including planning, budgeting and forecasting, and financial and accounting management.

Previously Brian served with The Cynthia Woods Mitchell pavilion as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). He also was CFO for Arrow Child & Family Ministries, and was Vice President of Finance & Administration for The Woodlands Township. He is a graduate of Sam Houston State University, with a Masters of Business Administration.

Brian has two children, Jackson and Jacob.

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Mayor Pro Tem: Clint McClaren
Council Members:
Place 1: Paul Bond
Place 2: Clint McClaren
Place 3: Alex Jones
Place 4: Michelle Cassio
Place 5: Frances Planchard
Vicky Rudy, City Manager
Laura Calcote, City Secretary
Andy Walters, Chief of Police
Joe Sherwin, Director of Public Works/
Engineering
Brian Pate, Director of Finance
Heather Neeley, Director of Economic Development
John Beisert, Building Official

City of Oak Ridge North Monthly Meeting Schedule

City Council
2nd & 4th Mondays 7:00 p.m.

Planning and Zoning
1st Monday 7:00 p.m.

Economic Development Corporation
3rd Monday 7:00 p.m.

Community Affairs Committee
4th Tuesday 6:30 p.m.

For complete schedules and agendas visit:
oakridgenorth.com

The public is ALWAYS welcome!

The Oak Ridge North Community News is a quarterly publication, designed and produced by Sarah McClure, Community Programs Coordinator for the City of Oak Ridge North. Front page photo courtesy of local photographer, Robert Harrington, owner of Bella Vista Productions.



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