

METRO-MOBILITY TALKS

Buddy Ganem & Memorial Parkway Road Improvements

CITY OF PORTLAND ROAD IMPROVEMENTS TO BEGIN IN SUMMER 2012

Road improvements along two critical thoroughfares in Portland will increase mobility, improve safety, and prepare the city for future growth, according to Brian DeLatte, Director of Public Works & Development.

DeLatte, who also serves as city engineer, said the \$4.5 million in construction costs will include improvements to a 4,800-foot section of Buddy Ganem Drive between U.S. 181 and Wildcat Drive and a short section along Memorial Parkway between Oak Brook Drive and Buddy Ganem Drive.

Construction is expected to begin in the summer of 2012 and is scheduled to be completed in 12 to 14 months.

Buddy Ganem Drive will be widened from two lanes to five lanes, including a central turn lane, and sidewalks, lighting, curbs and gutters will be added. "We're happy about the continuous left turn lane because it will increase safety and mobility," DeLatte said. "Right now we have a lot of conflicting traffic movements and the center turn lane will help with that."



The city will remove the median on Memorial Parkway between Buddy Ganem Drive and Oak Brook Drive.

The importance of adding sidewalks cannot be overstated, DeLatte said. As it stands now, pedestrians, including some children, must walk along the shoulder of the road. Curbs will separate the road from the sidewalks and sidewalks will provide a safe place dedicated to pedestrian traffic. The sidewalk on the south side of Buddy Ganem will be 10 feet wide in order to allow for bicycle traffic, DeLatte said.

The 4,800-foot section of Buddy Ganem Drive will be widened from 40 feet to 68 feet. The existing road features two 12-foot lanes with 8-foot shoulders on either side. The improved roadway will feature a 14-foot-wide left turn lane, two 12-foot-wide inside lanes, and two 15-foot-wide outside lanes. The City of Portland is negotiating with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in regard to lighting. It is expected that TxDOT will install the lights and the city will agree to maintain them, DeLatte said.

The Corpus Christi MPO Transportation Policy Committee on August 4th, unanimously approved MPO funding for the project. The \$4.5 million project is being paid 80% by the MPO - Category 7 Metropolitan Mobility funds. The 20% local share will be provided by TxDOT and the City of Portland. The only costs the city will incur will be \$350,000 in improvements to Memorial Parkway. The city will remove a median on Memorial Parkway between Oak Brook Drive and Buddy Ganem Drive and realign the road so that a traffic signal can be installed in the future.

As it exists now, traffic heading north on Memorial Parkway must stop at a stop sign placed at the intersection with Buddy Ganem Drive. Eastbound and westbound traffic on Buddy Ganem Drive is not required to stop. Road improvements at this intersection will prepare the city for growth north of Buddy Ganem Drive and will allow for the extension of Memorial Parkway north.

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