



Steve Radack, Commissioner

Harris County Precinct 3

**PRECINCT THREE THIRD QUARTER REPORT
2012**

**Commissioners Court: Say “Yes” to METRO mobility plan
*Referendum on Nov. 6th ballot***

Harris County Commissioners Court is urging voters in METRO service area to back a Nov. 6th referendum to keep sales tax revenue collected by the transit agency flowing to vital county mobility projects.

Precinct Three Commissioner Steve Radack and his colleagues on Commissioners Court voted unanimously Sept. 11th to support a resolution brought by County Judge Ed Emmett to recommend voter approval to continue METRO’s General Mobility Program.

The mobility program, initially approved by voters in 2003, is up for renewal this year. It calls for 25 percent of METRO’s one-cent sales tax to be used for street improvements and mobility projects authorized by law. The METRO sales tax dedicated to such projects is split between the City of Houston, Harris County and member cities in the service area.

Those agencies can use the funds for new streets and roads, maintaining existing ones, bridges, grade separations, hike-and-bike trails, installing and maintaining transportation signals and landscaping and drainage associated with projects.

As it came time to renew the mobility pact with voters, a proposal was considered that would have cut mobility funds to the county and some cities. But, after a negotiation lead by Commissioner Radack and conducted in consultation with other court members, the proposal was refined. The METRO Board of Directors then voted to place the new plan before voters.

That plan keeps mobility payments to the county and other entities in place until 2025. It means all residents in the METRO service area, including those in unincorporated areas, can continue to be served by mobility projects. As part of the proposal, METRO sales and use tax will not increase and the share of the one-cent METRO sales tax dedicated to the general mobility will remain at 25 percent.

And since a sales tax is a consumer tax, there is no burden on property taxpayers. There is also the possibility increases in sales tax revenues could result in higher mobility payments to the county and other agencies. That could mean more mobility projects. In addition, there’s an extra safeguard for taxpayers. Money realized from any sales tax revenue increases put into the mobility program and earmarked for METRO can only be used to pay for buses or debt retirement, not rail expansion.

Joining Commissioner Radack and Judge Emmett in voting for the METRO mobility program resolution were Precinct One Commissioner El Franco Lee, Precinct Two Commissioner Jack Morman and Precinct Four Commissioner Jack Cagle.

The court’s recommendation on the METRO Mobility Program concerns only that item on the Nov. 6th ballot and in no way concerns any other measure being put before voters on Election Day.

Big event for little birds

Preparations are continuing for Commissioner Radack's annual Kleb Woods Hummingbird Festival at the Kleb Woods Nature Center, 20303 Draper Road at Mueschke Road in Tomball. The popular event will be Sept. 15th, from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

This year's event will feature hummingbird expert Sumita Prasad, who will be capturing and banding the small birds and giving patrons a chance to closely examine them. Kleb Woods Nature Center naturalist Kendra Kocab will present a program on how to identify hummingbirds and how to document sightings. Gary Clark, a professor at Lone Star College-North Harris and author of a weekly newspaper column on nature, will also be there to discuss hummingbirds. His talk will be illustrated by his wife – professional photographer Kathy Adams Clark.

There will also be a program called *Silent Hunters* – a presentation by Houston Audubon Society Education Director Mary Ann Weber. She will be displaying live owls throughout the day and give patrons a chance to observe an Eastern Screech Owl, a Barred Owl and a Great Horned Owl. Kleb Woods Nature Center volunteer blacksmiths will also be demonstrating their skills and tours of the facility will be available.

Admission to the family-friendly event is free. Patrons are encouraged to bring their own drinks and snacks. None will be sold at the event. For more information, call (281) 357-5324.

“Birder” lecture series at Kleb Woods Nature Center

Also at Commissioner Radack's Kleb Woods Nature Center this fall will be a lecture series aimed at the hearts of local bird enthusiasts. The lectures and presentations will be presented every Friday starting Sept. 28th and running through Dec. 7th.

The first lecture will be on hawks and how to identify them. Other topics that will be covered will include the history of bird conservation, the American Oystercatcher, a history of the Texas Ornithological Society, shorebird identification and sparrows, their habits and how to identify them. For more information on the “birder friendly” series, which is free to attend, please visit Commissioner Radack's website at www.pct3.hctx.net or call (281) 357-5324.

October blood drive scheduled

Commissioner Radack and the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center are again teaming up to host a blood drive at the Bear Creek Community center, 3055 Bear Creek Drive, on Oct. 12th from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. The public is invited and encouraged to donate. Call Neemesys Magee at (713) 266-8193 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Annual Halloween Safe Night in Precinct Three

Commissioner Radack's annual Harris County Precinct Three Halloween Safe Night is scheduled for Oct. 26th from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. at the Westside Service Center, 16635 Clay Road. There will be refreshments, games and prizes, candy and a costume contest at 7 p.m. Parents should make sure their children bring their trick-or-treat bags. For more information on this popular event, call (281) 463-6300.

Trail completions

Work crews have recently completed two trail projects in Precinct Three. The Mason Creek Trail, from north of Kingsland to George Bush Park, is now complete. The contractor is

putting the finishing touches on the trail that winds under six roadways. The trail is 4.5 miles and also features two pedestrian bridges, one of which is located near at a METRO Park-and-Ride facility on Kingsland.

That bridge has been named for Jackie Freeman, a former longtime member of the METRO Board of Directors who also serves as the Deputy Executive Director of Harris County's Public Infrastructure Department. The trail and the amenities along it were made possible by a partnership between Precinct Three, METRO and municipal utility districts.

The South Mayde Creek Trail is also complete. This trail is 1.75 miles. It starts just east of Fry Road and dead ends in Cullen Park. This project was made possible by a partnership with Precinct Three and the Texas Department of Transportation.

This trail will serve the Westlake communities by connecting to the Mayde Creek school complex, the existing Mayde Creek trail and Cullen Park, which is operated by the City of Houston.

Construction reports and staying informed

Updates on Precinct Three road and construction projects previously featured in this report can now be seen on Commissioner Radack's website at www.pct3.hctx.net. That data will be updated monthly since this report is now generated quarterly.

As always, Precinct Three encourages comments and questions. You can mail them to Commissioner Radack's office at 1001 Preston, 9th Floor, Houston, Texas 77002 or email us at pct3@hctx.net.