

Granada Hills & Estates

Neighborhood Newsletter

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Neighborhood Connectivity: Keywords for 2007

In the course of attending dozens of presentations on the Oak Hill Neighborhood Development Plan and meetings of Fix 290 and OHAN, and other organizations, one begins to hear some common directions for the future of Oak Hill and our neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Connectivity is the catch-phrase now. This is the idea that residents in one neighborhood (for example, Granada Hills & Estates) could interact with people or businesses in other neighborhoods (for example, the businesses at Escarpment and Slaughter) without having to access a major road or highway.

Neighborhood Connectivity is key to those of us who ride bicycles or walk or are simply a bit frightened to journey on to the speeding traffic of Hwy 290 just to go to the dry cleaners or the grocery store.

So, in recent Oak Hill Neighborhood Planning meetings (sponsored by the City of Austin), discussion has begun as to "how" and "where" should the neighborhoods be connected. This is where the creativity of designing future bike paths and small connector streets is critical.

For Granada Hills & Estates we need to look at what we have and try to make something with it. We have, in our neighborhood, two roads that currently dead end into the Seton Hospital property. In order to increase neighborhood connectivity, primarily for bikes and pedestrians, one could imagine an extension of Granada Hills Drive, across the Seton Hospital property to align with FM 1826 at the exact location of where Twilight Mesa opens to FM 1826 in the Loma Vista subdivision. This would join our two subdivisions and would be a prime location for a stop light that would serve Seton Hospital, Granada Hills, and Loma Vista.

Then, if you follow Twilight Mesa to the east, and arrive at the cul de sac at the end, you will note that it is potentially destined to connect to Escarpment drive. If these two things were to happen, Granada would have Neighborhood Connectivity to the entire Escarpment area.

Another option, may be, a trail through the back of Granada Hills Drive through a portion of the Church property, and hooking up with FM 1826 or the Slaughter Creek Trail, but maybe that would only be a bike and hike trail, rather than a street.

We also are working on Neighborhood Connectivity across Hwy 290. This is much more difficult but would include some type of overhead or underground pedestrian and bike crossing, possibly

connecting to / from the Granada Hills / Seton side of Hwy 290 to the proposed commercial developments on the other side of Hwy 290. Other cities, such as Phoenix, do these types of things quite regularly and the over or under crossings are heavily utilized.

People interested in getting involved with the planning of where and how Neighborhood Connectivity will occur, should contact either David Richardson or Rick Perkins. Our info is in the front of the newsletter.

Oak Hill Trails

Development Group Formed

Under the guidance of the City of Austin Neighborhood Planning Team, a new committee has been formed to develop a connected system of trails in the Oak Hill Area.

The goal of the group is to plan, promote, obtain funding, and construct several trails across the Oak Hill area that can be accessed by both walkers and bikers. The initial trails will probably start from the Barton Creek / Travis Country area and head west and southwest, towards William Cannon. Another major trail will follow Williamson Creek from MoPac pass under Hwy 290 and end around the crossing with Hwy 71. Another possible trail location will connect Dick Nichols park, and another possible trail will follow Slaughter Creek, up from the Slaughter Creek Wildlands Preserve and going west up Slaughter Creek towards Hwy 290.

The group is called the Austin Oak Hill Trails Alliance and was officially founded on January 10, 2007. It is modeled after a successful group called the South East Trails Alliance that has been constructing walking and biking trails in southeast Austin.

If you would like more information on the Austin Oak Hills Trails Alliance, you can send an email to: OakHillTrails@googlegroups.com

Volunteers will be needed to help plan and build the trails. This is a great activity for scouts and other people who like to work outdoors. Stay tuned for more info.

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Spring is Around the Corner ...

Finally we have had some rain and things are greening up; that means things are growing; which means it is time to think about gardening.

The "Friendly Gardeners" are planning a work day / meeting / plant swap at the park on Saturday, February 10th, at 10 in the morning. Bring gardening tools, cuttings or anything from your garden you wish to share.

In addition to swapping plants and cleaning up some beds, we will discuss plans for developing the Granada Hills gardening group and how the group can be of service to the neighborhood. Some thoughts that have been presented so far is to break up into several mini-groups; one for the park, one for the entrance, and another to assist neighbors with general upkeep of their property when they for some reason are unable to do it for themselves. Lawn service companies do not always seem to give a personal touch.



The thought is we could have work days to just help neighbors. This is also a wonderful opportunity for the young people in the area to help with the chores of keeping Granada Hills such a desirable place to live. Working together gives a sense of ownership and community and pride.

Mark your Calendars now to meet at the park on Saturday, Feb 10th, 10 am, with your gardening dreams and let's continue the wonderful traditions of Granada Hills that make this such a desirable place to live. Call me, Hope Dyson, if you have any questions or comments at 394-1558, or just show up, we will be there. Hope Dyson, Travis County Master Gardener

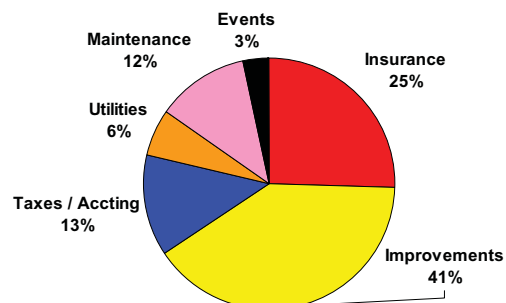
2006 Expense Breakdown

In 2006, income and property taxes and insurance consumed about 38% of the Granada HOA budget, for a total of about \$11,000.

Capital improvements, such as the installation of the drinking water fountains, the paving of the parking lot, and the curb, amounted to just over 40% of our budget. These items were a one time charge that should last for 10 years or more.

The breakdown of the expenses in 2006 is shown in the pie chart below:

2006 Expenses \$31,737



Granada Hills & Estates

Plans for 2007 / Thanks for your Support

The Volunteers on the Granada HOA Board thank you very much for your support. You know that it is sometimes difficult responding to the many different questions or problems that residents have, but we do our best.

This year, we actually started to receive 2007 HOA Maintenance Dues in the middle of December 2006. And through January 11th, we have received 10% of our membership goal of 312 members for 2007. (Our goal is 75% participation from the neighborhood.)

We especially thank the eleven 2007 members who have donated \$100 or more; we hear you loud and clear.

As for 2007, we are planning to host a variety of events; including Meet and Greets, Friendly Gardener, Neighbors Night Out, and if we have enough interest, we may hold a Granada 5K and triathlon in late April or early May. This will be open to all neighbors and we hope to be able to get some good donations from local businesses that will make it fun for all ages to participate. Besides running, we envision volleyball, tetherball, swimming, horse shoes, and maybe bike-racing as possible events that entrants can select from. We hope that we'll be able to get local business owners, police, fire, and political representatives to actually participate in the competition. If you are interested in helping to put together a Granada 5K, please contact Rick Perkins at rick@granadahoa.org or 426-5728.

Have a great year!

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each month on-line at www.PEELinc.com**

Foreign Travel With Your Neighbors

Do you have a desire to travel to a foreign country and you'd like to go with friends? Kathy and Joe Gathright (residents of Granada Hills) have been organizing trips abroad for several years. They are looking for singles or couples to join them on their trip this year to China.

Some of the places their groups have visited include Costa Rica, Nova Scotia, the Canadian Rockies, a cruise down the Blue Danube with stops in Germany, Austria, and Hungary, and several trips to Scotland. In the past, the Granada Hills group has varied between 8 and 20 people and all are fully escorted. Joe says that most of the travelers are senior citizens, but that some younger couples might be able to "keep up" with the senior folks. He says there is always a lot to do for everyone. The Granada tour group actually joins with a larger tour group from other parts of the US, so there is a lot of diversity and interesting people to meet.

If you are interested in learning more about the 9-day trip to China, contact Kathy and Joe and learn about all of the details. Call them at 288-0957. When you get back, send us photos and we'll put them in the newsletter.

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