

The FM548/US80 Project, step by step

By: Cary Griffin

Reprinted with the permission of Cary Griffin, Editor, Forney Messenger

The FM 548/U. S. 80 renovation project which is now in progress is on track and is scheduled for completion in December 2011, Forney Assistant City Manager Gina Nash told the *Forney Messenger* this week. What motorists are seeing right now is the first part of Phase 1 of the 18-month project, Gina said. In Phase 1, work crews are building up the service roads on both sides of U. S. 80, one lane at a time. Once the buildup of the first set of lanes is completed sometime in June, crews will open the finished lanes and block the other service road lanes in order to work on them in turn for a few months—for about the same amount of time that they worked on the first set of lanes.

In Phase 2, a new service road segment east of FM 548 on the south side will be cut that will line up with the existing service road west of FM 548. When the new service road segment is opened, it will allow a smooth flow of traffic going east along the south service road across FM 548.

The U. S. 80 overpass will be widened in Phase 3. After new lanes are added to FM 548 in the vicinity and going under the bridge, including “Texas U turn” lanes on both sides of the overpass, new beams will be added to the overpass itself, and widening of the overpass will go from there. A lot of the beam work will be done at night, Gina said.

Gina told the *Messenger* that at no time during the project will traffic be completely blocked. She stressed that at least one lane will be open in the project area at all times—both on FM 548 and even on the overpass during the widening process. “You’ll be able to get through one way or another,” Gina assured drivers.

Once the project is completed, crews will close the present entrance to the south U. S. 80 service road, eliminating the irritating jog that eastbound motorists must now negotiate if they choose to go across FM 548 along the service road. ★

IESI Bulk Pickup Changes

Our solid waste contractor, IESI, has agreed to provide bulk item pickup without the necessity of calling in a request for such pickup. The bulk pickup size cannot exceed the size of a large pickup truck bed – approximately 5 cubic yards. If the bulk pickup size exceeds 5 cubic yards, it will not be picked up, but will be placed on their schedule for pickup the following week.

Special Event

August 21, 2010 at 8:00 p.m. The City of Forney and Next Era Energy will be showing “Finding Nemo” on Soccer Field #7 at the Forney Community Park Soccer Complex. Popcorn and Drinks will be provided by Next Era Energy.

Employee Commendation

On July 20, 2010, Dispatch Supervisor Tiffany Hopkins received the City’s Star Employee Award. Ms. Hopkins received a 911 call from a victim who had overdosed on pills. Ms. Hopkins dispatched the call to Police and Fire units and stayed on the telephone with the victim, keeping the victim calm, while at the same time directing the Police and Fire personnel into the residence and to the victim, who could not respond.

This summer, the City of Forney participated in the Work Experience program with Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas. The Work Experience program is a partnership between Federal, State, and local employers to provide a quality training platform for qualified youth. Its primary purpose is to give the youth participants an opportunity for career exploration and skill development while acquiring the attributes, knowledge and skills necessary to obtain a job and advance in employment. Employers benefit by being able to mentor community youth while gaining additional temporary manpower at no cost. City Departments participating in this year’s program include: Parks, Community Development, Finance and the City Secretary’s Office.

Kudos

On June 5th the City held a very successful event called Kids Quest in downtown Forney. Our thanks go to Karen Sanders in our Public Works Department for her hard work in planning this event.

School will be starting soon. Parents, talk to your sons and/or daughters and urge them to read this article, so that they don't become a statistic.

Distracted Driving Creates Dangerous Situations

By Chief Murray Pendleton, Chairman, Connecticut Police Chief's Association Highway Safety Committee as published in TEEX Lone Star Roads, 2010, Issue 3

It only takes a second for crash to happen. Driving a car is challenging enough even when you are paying full attention to the road and its potential hazards.

Distractions occur when drivers concentrate on something other than operating their vehicles – such as talking on a cell phone. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that 25% of all crashes involve some form of drive distraction.

National surveys show that most drivers at least occasionally engage in behaviors that draw some of their attention away from their driving tasks. The most common of these behaviors include such general activities as:

- Talking or texting on a cell phone
- Talking with passengers
- Changing radio stations or CDs
- Eating or drinking while driving

Your complete attention to driving is not only in the best interest of you and your passengers, but can clearly save lives as well as reduce serious injuries.

Common Distractors – Do you do any of the following?

- Using cell phones
- Eating/drinking/smoking

- Texting and e-mailing
- Personal hygiene
- Changing radio stations/CDs/DVDs
- Sightseeing/gawking
- iPods
- In-car information screens
- Adjusting mirrors/heat/AC
- Searching for items
- GPS
- Unsecured objects
- Reading maps/directions/book/magazine/newspapers

Such distractions may not only cause you to lose control of your vehicle. They may cost someone, including you, their life.

Texting is a Major Distracter

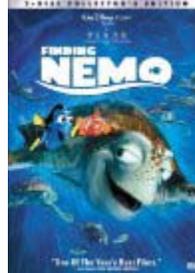
The National Safety Council estimates that 80% of Americans admit to using cell phones while driving, and 20% admit to texting while driving. That amounts to about 100 million drivers.

Driving while using a cell phone incurs a four times greater risk of crashing, which is equivalent to driving while drunk (with 0.08 blood-alcohol level). Talking on a cell phone while driving slows down the reaction time of even the most experienced driver. For texters, the risk is eight times greater. **All drivers must be committed to reducing serious injuries and deaths on our roadways. This starts with your commitment to NOT BECOME A DISTRACTED DRIVER!**

We are in a moderate drought. Please Remember to Conserve!
Watering is not allowed from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily.

Water Saving Tips

- **Fix water leaks.** One drop per second can waste up to 1,661 gallons of water each year.
- **Inspect your toilet.** If water is running inside the toilet without it being flushed, you need to change the flush tank flapper valve. You could be wasting over 200 gallons of water per day.
- **Inspect your irrigation system for leaks and over watering.** Water in the early morning or evening. Consider changing irrigation heads to drip irrigation to water more efficiently.
- **Plant water-efficient, well-adapted, and/or native shrubs and trees.** Limit turf areas to those needed for practical uses.
- **Use low flow water fixtures.** One low flow showerhead can reduce water by 25% to 60%



**Think
SHOP
Live
FORNEY**



Useless Facts 😊

Almonds are not really nuts, but a member of the peach family.

Eskimos use refrigerators to keep food FROM freezing.

Important Dates

Council Meetings

Tuesday, August 3, 2010, 7pm
Saturday, August 7, 2010, 8 am
Tuesday, August 17, 2010, 7pm

Saturday, August 21, 2010, 8pm
Soccer Field #7 @ Community Park
"Finding Nemo"