



Harrison County Road and Bridge Department

3800 Five Notch Road Phone No. (903) 935-4868

MARSHALL, TEXAS 75672

DATE: September 1, 2010

TO: Members of the Marshall City Commission

FROM: John Paul Jones, County Engineer

I'm writing regarding the Friday, August 27, 2010 article and Sunday, August 29, 2010 editorial in the *Marshall News Messenger* which referenced the "road repair for Buck Sherrod Road" and the City's having designated Buck Sherrod Road for improvements by the County. As county engineer, I have the responsibility for working with City staff to agree upon and provide cost estimates for the road reconstruction in-kind services portion of the Interlocal Agreement with the City.

The first I heard that the City wished to designate Buck Sherrod Road as the reconstruction project for 2010, was when I was informed that it was in the newspaper on Friday. There has been no formal request made to me, as representative of the County, for improvements to be made to this road. Receiving a designated road request this late in the year would make scheduling impossible as we are already in full production this late in the summer.

Contrary to the story in Friday's *Marshall News Messenger*, the County has not failed in "2 or 3 of the last 4 years" to do the road work. Park Street was designated by the City as the street they wished to have repaired by the County in 2007. Weather conditions and other restraints prevented the work being done that year but, at County Judge Richard Anderson's request, the work for the City for 2007 and 2008 was completed in 2008.

In June 2009, Woodall Street was designated by the City for repairs. Due to weather restraints, the County was unable to complete the project as well as finish our own summer construction.

It is also understood under the Interlocal Agreement that the County roads will be worked first, with the City's designated road being done at the end of the county road construction season.

There has been major development at the County Road & Bridge Department in the past several years. In fiscal year 2004, the County Road & Bridge budget was substantially cut and provided for less than four miles of road reconstruction that year. In 2007, the number was 16. Accepting the challenge from

the Commissioners' Court and with two recyclers being budgeted instead of one and with adequate budgeting for paving materials, we are on schedule to complete 40 miles this summer of 2010.

This aggressive schedule in establishing production goals for the Road & Bridge Department was recommended by the County Judge and supported by the Commissioners' Court. In light of this forward shift of momentum and the need to continually strengthen our county road system for our citizens and to catch up on the work needed to be done, I understand the County Commissioners' Court reluctance to agree to continually "roll-over" prior requests which could result in serious delays to the County's own recycling efforts.

In closing, while not having been informed formally or informally about the designation of Buck Sherrod Road until last Friday in the newspaper, I believe that Buck Sherrod would be a good choice for a designated road, since it would connect an existing County road with Highway 80 East. However, I am in a difficult position particularly as no written request has even been received.

Hopefully, this has helped to clarify how the City's portion of Buck Sherrod Road has not been designated to the County to be improved, and how, as the results of the much-needed recent increase in production by the Harrison County Road & Bridge Department, this process has been rendered more difficult.

Understandably, road building is an expensive process and is often little understood, but it is most appreciated by the traveling public.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



John Paul Jones, P.E.

Harrison County Engineer