NEWS RELEASE

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Media Contact:
Morgan Ash, Public Information Officer
Office: (830) 386-2590
Email: mash@seguintexas.gov

Street study uses technology to determine deterioration of city streets

Intern duo hits the streets for summer internship

SEGUIN, Texas – Since mid-May, a pair of engineering interns have walked every inch of Seguin's public roadways. Under the direction of City Engineer Joe Ramos, the two completed a full assessment of each city council district's roads. The results of their analysis will be available this fall.

"We used a measuring wheel, and a tablet loaded with street assessment software," said Jesse Juarez, an engineering major attending the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Juarez and Will Taylor, an engineering major attending the University of Arkansas, spent the summer as interns for the City of Seguin Public Works Department. Their mission: obtain road samples (indicative of the overall street section conditions), record distresses, and grade the amount of deterioration.

"These guys used standardized criteria to grade the condition of our roads– it's the same standard of measurement that the federal government, the military and other cities and counties use. The results are standardized, and accurately predict what type of maintenance or reconstruction the city should plan for," said Joe Ramos, City Engineer.

Two factors determine the level of stress a road is under: (1) the amount of heavy loads (wear-and-tear) and (2) its age. The software used by the interns builds predictive graphs that show how each road is expected to deteriorate overtime. It was developed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers as a universal approach to evaluate and predict pavement performance and deterioration.

City leaders will use the results from the study to prioritize street maintenance and road reconstruction dollars. The information will help them identify what streets can just be maintained for now, and which streets are at the point of being unrepairable (and will require complete reconstruction). The prioritization of street projects will also take into account the state of underground utilities, in order to maximize tax and utility revenues.

"Maintenance is so much cheaper than starting over," said Taylor.

"The study performed will be repeated every two years. Each time it will add data points that will create more accurate predictions of the roads condition," said Ramos.

The final product of the street study will be used by city leaders as they plan for future street repairs.

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About the City of Seguin

Seguin, Texas is located along Interstate 10, about 35 miles east of San Antonio. Seguin is big enough to boast a top-rated university and a state-of-the-art hospital. More than 25,000 residents enjoy a range of cultural, recreational, and employment opportunities. Seguin's robust diversified economy features a steelmaker, a manufacturer of automotive parts and plants making roadside mowing equipment and building materials. In 2009, Seguin was proud to be selected by Caterpillar as the site of a major new engine manufacturing facility.