Pearland, Friendswood ready for major commercial, residential developments

BY JAKE SNYDER

With 2016 in the rearview mirror, the cities of Pearland and Friendswood are addressing the challenges they will each face in 2017.

In Pearland, a consistent theme is growth. Matt Buchanan, president of the Pearland Economic Development Corporation, anticipates attracting more businesses to the city’s industrial and commercial centers in 2017.

“We’re always actively working on projects that we hope to bring to fruition,” Buchanan said.

On the other hand, Friendswood has less room to grow outward. So the city has focused on revitalizing its downtown area to continue to be an attractive destination for development.

“I think there are a lot of misconceptions about Friendswood,” Friendswood City Planner Aubrey Harbin said. “I think part of the focus is revitalizing [downtown] so that people’s first impressions are better of our city.”

PEARLAND PURSUES GROWTH

In recent years, the city of Pearland and the PEDC began pursuing major business growth throughout the nearly 73-square-mile city limits. Undeveloped areas like the Lower Kirby Urban District and various corridors leading into the city posed opportunities to attract developers and national corporations.

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A look back, look ahead with a twist

January is perfect for so many reasons. We are on the cusp of change while also being able to slow down and reflect on all that our communities have experienced.

That is exactly what this issue is about. Development, education and transportation continue to be at the forefront of our collective consciousness as Pearland and Friendswood take shape. You will continue to see those updates through 2017.

For the last few years, “The January Issue” has focused on the big stories of the year in our core coverage areas. We are doing that again this year—but with a bit of a twist.

As you saw on the cover, we are counting down the stories that we will continue to follow into 2017. We also took a look back at the major news stories of 2016 and the newsworthy elements that will spill over into the new year. We took this storytelling approach with our business and dining coverage as well.

We have strengthened our annual government pages and added regional projects to our transportation updates. We are hopeful this narrative format will distill all the local news and information you need to know moving into 2017.

Your opinion matters to us, and we’d love to hear what your thoughts. In the meantime, Happy New Year!

Where are the pear trees in Pearland?

Little is known about the city’s founder Witold de Zychlinski, a Polish nobleman who purchased 5,991 acres and platted about 500 acres as “Pear Land” in 1884. Just as the city’s founder is shrouded in mystery, so too is the origin of pear trees in the area.

Members of the Pearland Historical Society have debated the issue for years. Some say pear trees were part of the landscape. Others believe that Zychlinski instructed his assistants to plant flowering pear trees for their natural beauty and to attract would-be settlers drawn to the city, which was promoted as an “agricultural Eden”.

Area agriculture was devastated by the Galveston hurricane of 1900, the deadliest hurricane in U.S. history. After the storm, local farmers grew oranges and figs, according to the Texas State Historical Association. And pears slowly withered out of existence.

To bring back the city’s namesake, the Pearland Alliance for Arts & Culture and the city teamed up for the Pear-Scape Art Sculpture Trail, a public art installation featuring 4-foot-tall hand-painted pears.
NOW OPEN

1 Dallas-based Salvadorian restaurant Gloria’s Latin Cuisine opened its 18th Texas location and its second Greater Houston area location in early November at 700 Baybrook Mall Drive, Friendswood. The restaurant was established in 1986 by a husband-wife duo who settled in Texas after immigrating from El Salvador in the late ’70s. The restaurant serves brunch, lunch and dinner. 281-667-9872. www.gloriascuisine.com

2 Pearland Town Center welcomed Bonchon Chicken to its array of west Pearland dining options. The restaurant opened Jan. 16 at 11200 W. Broadway St., Ste. 360, Pearland, and specializes in Korean-style fried chicken with Asian fusion and Korean dishes. The Pearland restaurant marks the franchise’s second Greater Houston area location and its third in Texas. www.facebook.com/bonchonpearlandtx

3 San Francisco-based restaurant chain The Melt, which serves artisanal grilled cheese sandwiches, burgers, and macaroni and cheese, made its Houston debut Nov. 21 with the opening of its restaurant at 700 Baybrook Mall Drive, Ste. D-123, Friendswood, on The Lawn at Baybrook Mall. The chain prides itself on being a natural fast-food alternative by serving sodas without high fructose corn syrup, aged cheeses, Angus and wagyu beef patties, fresh-baked buns, seasonal produce and soft serve ice cream made with only five ingredients. The chain anticipates opening three more Greater Houston area locations in 2017. 281-715-0657. www.themelt.com/

4 Detox spa Lavabene opened its second Greater Houston area location in Pearland on Jan. 4 at 3524 E. Broadway St., Pearland. The spa specializes in far infrared rays to induce a “deep sweat” in an effort to rid the body of toxins. Lavabene also offers massages, ultrasound cellulite and fat reduction, steaming and ear candling services along with products for purchase. 713-474-5465. www.lavabene.com

5 Hair stylist Derek Shane opened his new storefront called Artisan Loft Salon at 8703 W. Broadway St., Ste. 119, Pearland. The salon began accepting appointments for haircuts and coloring in late December. Shane is a master colorist and owner of The Joint Chiropractic, a wholesale distributor of under-ground water, sewer and storm utility products, announced it opened a branch in December at 14500 Beamer Road, Friendswood. The company will move into a 12,000-square-foot warehouse with a 10-acre yard that was previously occupied by the watersworks division of Fort Worth-based Morrison Supply Co., which occupied the facility since April. The Fortline branch will offer high-density polyethylene piping and McElroy fusion equipment. Morrison Supply Co. finalized its acquisition of Fortline in October. 713-947-2500. www.fortline.com

6 Hair stylist Aisha Diallo opened her hair salon Amazing African Braids in December at 6713 W. Broadway St., Ste. C, Pearland. Diallo specializes in braiding and weaving. Options include Senegalese twists, boxed braids, freestyles, goddess braids, silky locks and cornrows. 832-655-2082

7 Canadian-based mattress company Essentia opened its second Texas location, its first in the Greater Houston area, on Nov. 25 at 700 Baybrook Mall Drive, Ste. A107, Friendswood. Essentia’s latex and memory foam mattresses are certified organic and made in Canada. The store also sells pillows and accessories. 346-201-6346. www.myessentia.com

8 New Jersey-based The Fix opened its third Greater Houston area location Nov. 25 at 500 Baybrook Mall Drive, Friendswood, next to Cinnabon. The device repair store fixes smartphone and tablet issues, including cracked screens and water damage. Device models accepted include Apple, Blackberry, HTC, LG, Motorola, Nokia, Palm, Samsung and Sony. 832-224-9402. www.thefixsolutions.com

9 North Carolina-based Fortiline Waterworks, a wholesale distributor of underground water, sewer and storm utility products, announced it opened a branch in December at 14500 Beamer Road, Friendswood. The company will move into a 12,000-square-foot warehouse with a 10-acre yard that was previously occupied by the watersworks division of Fort Worth-based Morrison Supply Co., which occupied the facility since April. The Fortline branch will offer high-density polyethylene piping and McElroy fusion equipment. Morrison Supply Co. finalized its acquisition of Fortline in October. 713-947-2500. www.fortline.com

10 Barrett McNabb, a U.S. Army veteran and owner of The Joint Chiropractic, opened his second Pearland location in January at 2680 Pearland Parkway, Ste. 140. The Joint’s mission is to improve quality of life through routine and affordable chiropractic care. 346-444-1241. www.thejoint.com

11 Owner Keyur Modi took his 16 years...
of experience as a pharmacist and opened Edgewood Pharmacy with his wife, who is also a tenured pharmacist. The duo established the family-owned pharmacy Jan. 16 at 120 S. Friendswood Drive, Friendswood. 281-993-4779

12 Director Chidi Ekere opened Galaxy Learning Center, a day care center with before- and after-school services, in January at 8416 W. Broadway St., Ste. 140, Pearland. The day care facility is open to children ages 6 weeks to 12 years old, and before- and after-school programs accept children ages 5-12. Galaxy Learning Center also provides school pickup and drop-off services for school-age children. 281-741-2787. www.galaxylc.com

13 Creative Tutoring Learning Center opened a second Greater Houston area location in December at 3526 E. Broadway St., Pearland. The tutoring center offers after-school programming for children in grades K-12, including physics and precalculus, as well as SAT and State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness preparation. 281-813-8099. www.facebook.com/creativetutoring

COMING SOON

14 A private school that offers academic and clinical support to autistic children and those suffering with speech or behavioral disorders will open in the fall. The Reason for Hope, which has Pearland and League City locations, will open Hope Christian Academy at 2913 Old Chocolate Bayou, Pearland. The school offers early intervention services for children ages 1-6, including speech therapy and Applied Behavioral Analysis. Ground breaking is slated for late January. 832-632-2177. www.thereasonforhope.com

15 Creamistry will open a location in early 2017 at 211 W. El Dorado Blvd., Ste. D, Friendswood. The franchise specializes in liquid nitrogen ice cream. Using liquid nitrogen allows the company to make its ice cream to-order, with the extreme cold temperatures resulting in rapid freezing and smooth, creamy ice cream. The location will be the business’s sixth store in Texas. www.creamistry.com

16 The full-color custom apparel franchise Big Frog Custom T-Shirts & More will open a Pearland location in February at 9415 W. Broadway St., Ste. 119. The company helps customers print graphics on hoodies, tank tops, sport shirts, T-shirts and tote bags for men, women, children, infants and pets. Graphic artists work with customers at the in-store design station to create custom looks. The company doesn’t charge fees for custom designs or additional colors, and there are no minimum order requirements. 281-607-9339. www.bigfrog.com/pearland

17 Fajita Pete’s will open its eighth Texas franchise in March at 15718 Hwy. 288 Pearland. The eatery has six locations in the Greater Houston area and offers a selection of grilled beef and chicken fajitas, hand-rolled tortillas and sides, such as rice, beans, guacamole and queso. Company officials said the chain is expected to grow to 40 locations in the next five years. 281-257-5520. www.fajitapetes.com

SCHOOL NOTES

Laura Seifert was sworn into office Dec. 12 as the newest member of the Friendswood ISD board. She began serving on the board in January. Seifert replaces interim trustee Denise Ruiz, who was appointed after a trustee retirement in May. Ruiz did not run for re-election. Three other trustees were sworn into office after winning in uncontested races. Seifert and her cohort will serve three-year terms. 281-482-1267. www.myfisd.com

18 Competitive Edge Tutoring will celebrate its one-year anniversary Feb. 1 at 2334 N. Main St., Pearland. Center Director Hoa Cao said the center offers tutoring sessions, SAT and ACT preparation courses, and college admissions assistance for students from kindergarten to 12th grade. Tutors help with homework and provide related subject material for students. Three to four students in the same age group are combined for the study sessions. Competitive Edge also offers after-school transportation from Pearland and Pasadena ISD schools within 6 miles of the center. 281-506-7936. www.ceturoring.com

19 Popular paint party studio Pinot’s Palette opened a franchise in January at the Pearland Town Center, 11200 W. Broadway St., Ste. 710, Pearland. The studio offers group paint parties, and participants are allowed to bring their own alcoholic beverages to enjoy during the session. The studio provides wine glasses, corkscrews, ice buckets, paper plates, plasticware, napkins and art supplies. An artist will guide the group through the painting session. 281-837-6561. www.pinotspalette.com

20 Amid possible plans to file bankruptcy, Ohio-based Limited Stores LLC closed four of its five Greater Houston area locations in January. The Pearland Town Center location at 11200 W. Broadway St., Pearland, closed Jan. 7 after liquidating its merchandise. Other Greater Houston area locations that have closed are at The Galleria, Memorial City Mall and Houston Premium Outlets in Cypress. The popular women’s apparel store had 250 stores nationwide as of December.
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continues to be a focus and is going to be for many, many years to come, because there is a lot of land there,” Buchanan said of the 1,200-acre industrial and commercial center west of Hwy. 288. “We are going to try to make it an employment center for the city of Pearland.”

Last April, international biotech firm Lonza Houston Inc. broke ground on a 100,000-square-foot facility in Lower Kirby. Five months later, the company announced it was expanding the facility by another 150,000 square feet.

FloWorks International, a supplier of pipe, valves, fittings and related products for the industrial and energy sectors, broke ground in September 2015 on some really great opportunities along Hwy. 288 between Southfork Drive and Friendswood Drive.

“Interest in new residential developments is strong as communities, such as Baker’s Landing, Southern Trails and Shadow Creek Ranch, continue to build out,” Pearson said.

Shadow Creek Ranch, a 3,500-acre master-planned community, began construction in 2001 and its developer estimates upward of 13,000 single-family homes at build-out. As it stands, there are more than 6,200 homes built.

MANAGING CITY SERVICES

Another result of growth has been the challenge of matching city services with the continued increase in the city’s fervent expansion, Pearson said.

The city of Pearland has grown from more than 91,000 residents in 2010, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, to an estimated 119,000 residents in 2016.

“That has been one of our challenges: to grow city services commensurate with the community in terms of breadth and volume,” Pearson said. “We have never grown for growth’s sake.”

In an effort to boost the city’s appeal to developers while managing its population boom, Pearland is investing millions in road improvements. The most expensive of these road projects slated for 2017 is the $33 million expansion of Hughes Ranch Road to a four-lane boulevard.

Pearland has developed a five-year, $545 million capital improvement plan to keep the city on track with near-term growth from 2017-2021.

FRIENDSWOOD GETS A NEW LOOK

Although the city of Friendswood has less undeveloped land for growth, officials hope to attract more businesses to its downtown area through revitalization efforts and incentive programs.

In May, voters approved the adoption of a downtown improvements sales and use tax of one-eighth of one percent to fund infrastructure, pedestrian and other aesthetic improvements in the area.

“The city got on board with us this year and put pavers, benches and lights in front of City Hall, which is part of the Downtown District,” Harbin said.

The city also has a Chapter 380 municipal grant program that helps offset the costs of major developments in the downtown area for investments of at least $250,000. The city also offers fee waivers and potential tax abatement. In addition, city council approved aesthetic improvements outside of city hall, which is in the downtown area.

A major player is Friendswood-based developer Tannos Construction, which is building out new retail and commercial space in downtown. Tannos has started construction on two commercial strip centers—the first location was completed in downtown Friendswood—with a third slated for 2017.

In addition to downtown projects, the 276-acre Friendswood Trails master-planned community is slated to break ground on the former Sunmeadow golf course by mid-2017.

West Ranch and Sterling Creek are set to complete build-out within five years, Harbin said.

“We’ll grow slowly,” Harbin said. “We don’t anticipate Pearland kind of growth. Our growth is limited.”

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2 RENOVATION PLANNED FOR PEARLAND CITY HALL

WHAT WE REPORTED A $6.1 million contract with Pearland-based Construction Masters of Houston Inc. was approved in November. Although City Council members voiced concerns that costs were higher than anticipated, the contract was approved by a 4-2 vote. The council also approved $1.1 million in certificates of obligation, a form of municipal debt, to fund the project. The plans includes electrical, plumbing, mechanical engineering, a new heating, ventilation and air conditioning system, upgrades to the elevators and security systems, and build-out of the community center. The City Hall complex comprises the 30-year-old City Hall and the 34-year-old city annex buildings. The total cost for the project is estimated at $6.98 million. The city set aside $5.9 million for the project, about $4.7 million of which are previously issued certificates of obligation. The newly issued debt will close the funding shortfall.

THE LATEST Renovations at the City Hall complex began in December. The project does not include the building envelope, which includes walls, doors, windows and roofing.

WHAT’S NEXT The contractor is slated to complete the project by late 2017. The newly issued debt to fund the renovations will not increase the city’s tax rate but would increase the city’s annual debt service by about $55,000, Deputy City Manager Jon Branson said.

3 DEVELOPER TO BUILD ON SUNMEADOW GOLF COURSE

WHAT WE REPORTED Parke Patterson, owner of Sugar Land-based Parke Patterson Land Development, faced initial opposition from Friendswood City Council in July to a zoning change that would have advanced a residential development. Patterson reached out to the home owners association to make concessions to residents, like improving Sunmeadow’s drainage and keeping green space for residents with backyards facing what was once the golf course. Patterson began meeting with community stakeholders two years ago to move the development forward. Patterson formed Friendswood Trails LLC in early 2016 and serves as a co-partner. The new company will be responsible for the residential development.

THE LATEST Friendswood City Council approved the zoning change in September to advance the residential development. Friendswood Trails LLC closed on the sale for the land in December. The development includes 80 acres of green space, two parks, trails and five detention ponds. Losing green space was of particular concern for Sunmeadow residents, who had come to enjoy the spacious outdoors but now abut the new development. Although some existing residents will have neighbors moving close to their backyard fences, those living along the horse-shoe-shaped green space around Old Course and Gleneagles drives will keep their green space.

WHAT’S NEXT Patterson is working on an engineering design to outline water, sewer and drainage plans as well as street placement. He plans to begin development by spring. No homebuilders have been contracted yet. Build-out of Friendswood Trails is expected within six to seven years of its ground breaking. Homes are expected to be priced in the $300,000 to $600,000 range.
SCHOOL DISTRICTS PLAN NEW CAMPUSES, RENOVATIONS

WHAT WE REPORTED  Pearland ISD passed a $220 million bond referendum in November, which included renovations to nine campuses and the stadium, security upgrades on each campus, technology upgrades on each campus and targeted expansions at seven campuses. Alvin ISD broke ground on two elementary schools, a junior high school and a career and technical education center in Pearland in 2016 with bond funds that were approved in 2015.

THE LATEST  PISD will begin design engineering at Dawson, Pearland and Turner high schools as well as Pearland Junior High East and Pearland Junior High West schools in 2017. PISD officials anticipate a December ground breaking at Dawson High School and Pearland Junior High West. AISD opened Meridiana Elementary School and Shadow Creek High School, which were bond-funded projects, in time for the 2016-17 school year.

WHAT’S NEXT  AISD board of trustees ordered the sale of $52 million in bonds, the remaining balance from the $245 million bond referendum that voters approved in 2015. The two AISD elementary schools under construction, which are in Shadow Creek Ranch, are slated to open for the 2017-18 school year.

HIGHER EDUCATION OPTIONS EXPAND IN PEARLAND

WHAT WE REPORTED  In June, the city of Pearland donated 21 acres to the University of Houston-Clear Lake Pearland Campus to pave the way for a new building and an expansion of higher education course offerings. The donated property is adjacent to the campus, which is located off Pearland Parkway. UHCL Pearland shared an office building with the Pearland Economic Development Corporation until August, when the PEDC moved to Shadow Creek Ranch.

THE LATEST  The university is in the design phase for a 52,000-square-foot health sciences building, which will sit on a portion of the donated property. The design architect is PBK Architects Inc. The university is also conducting site surveys and geotechnical work prior to construction.

WHAT’S NEXT  UHCL Pearland will break ground on the building in April or May. The $20 million construction project was contracted out to Austin Commercial. The new building will house nursing and other health care programs.

FRIENDSWOOD INVESTS IN ITS TEACHERS, PERSONNEL

WHAT WE REPORTED  Residents living within Friendswood ISD’s boundaries voted in a September special election to approve a tax rate increase. School district taxes are separated into two buckets—operations and debt service. Residents voted to increase the district’s operations tax rate by 9 cents, going from $1.04 to $1.13 per $100 valuation. The rate increase was billed as a way to provide salary increase for teachers, improve personnel retention and staffing, and make up for tax dollars that were recaptured by the state each year through a tax recapture plan dubbed the “Robin Hood” tax.

THE LATEST  FISD has raised teacher salaries for two consecutive years, bringing the base teacher salary up to $50,250 for the 2016-17 school year from $47,000 in the 2014-15 school year.

WHAT’S NEXT  The school district anticipates increased hiring for specialists, nurses, principals, administrators and teachers over the next year.

FIRE DEPARTMENTS EXPAND TO MEET POPULAR DEMAND

WHAT WE REPORTED  Fire fighters at the city of Pearland have seen their call volumes...
skyscraper, and they expect to see more than 1,000 additional calls each year for the next five years. To meet demand, investments in new fire stations, equipment and personnel are being made. Friendswood is also growing its firefighting capacity.

THE LATEST The city of Pearland opened two new fire stations in 2016. Fire Station No. 3 held its grand opening in January off FM 518 and Yost Boulevard. Fire Station No. 2 opened in June off Harkey and Fite roads. The Friendswood Volunteer Fire Department will relocate its headquarters to the new Fire Station No. 1, which broke ground in April at 1610 Whitaker Drive. Fire Station No. 4, off Woodlawn Drive, is undergoing a partial remodel and an addition of about 1,100 square feet.

WHAT’S NEXT Tentatively, the city of Pearland is planning for two additional fire stations over the next five years. Friendswood Fire Station No. 1 is slated for completion in May, and Fire Station No. 4 is slated for completion in March.

THE LATEST A $300 million master-planned and mixed-use center called the Ivy District is expected to break ground this year in the Lower Kirby Urban District. The Ivy District is the project of American Modern Green LLC, the Houston-based subsidiary of Beijing-based Modern Land China Co. Ltd. The development will include townhomes, retail and restaurant space, hotels, a community center, a senior living community and green space.

WHAT’S NEXT Both FloWorks and Lonza expect their facilities to be completed in 2017. Build-out of the Ivy District may take up to three years.

FRIENDSWOOD RESIDENTS SUE CITY, CONTEST MAY ELECTIONS

WHAT WE REPORTED A group of eight Friendswood residents filed suit in the Harris County District Court contesting the results of the May general and special elections. The contest attempts to overturn the results of a contested City Council race and two new sales and use taxes. A downtown improvement sales tax was adopted at a rate of one-eighth of one percent. A street maintenance sales tax was also adopted at a rate of three-eighths of 1 percent. Contestants stated in their original petition the election should be void because a voting precinct was not included in the election ordinance, some required paperwork was not signed, the election was not ordered at least 78 days in advance in accordance with state law and a slew of other allegations, according to court documents. One of the contestants, former Council Member Michael Stacy, lost his bid for re-election by 215 votes to Council Member Carl Gustafson.

THE LATEST In late November, the presiding judge handed down a summary judgment in favor of the city of Friendswood, which denied the election contest and dismissed the case.

WHAT’S NEXT Residents plan to fight the case on appeal, the notice of which was filed just days after a summary judgment was handed down.

PEARLAND TO INVEST IN, RESHAPE HWY. 35 CORRIDOR

WHAT WE REPORTED In an effort to boost recruitment and Pearland’s aesthetic appeal, the PEDC unveiled its strategy in June to redevelop the Hwy. 35 corridor from Beltway 8 to FM 518. The strategy includes entryway monuments, streetscape improvements, business parks, restaurant and entertainment, and a new residential community.

THE LATEST The city of Pearland approved a $654,900 contract with Clark Condon Associates Inc. for design development on the corridor improvements Nov. 14. Once design development is complete the city will put out construction bids for the $56 million project.

WHAT’S NEXT Improvements are slated for completion in 2019.
Among the specialists welcoming new patients are (L-R): Tom Thomas, D.O., Endocrinology; Stephen Tabor, D.O., Orthopedics-Sports Medicine; Beth Yip, M.D., Pediatrics; Ekanem Ohia, M.D., Family Medicine; and Michael Leung, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., OB/GYN.

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4 notable business openings

1. **Lonza Houston Inc.**
   - **What We Reported**: Lonza Houston Inc., an international viral and cell therapy manufacturer, broke ground on a 100,000-square-foot facility in March in west Pearland’s Lower Kirby Urban District. Lonza will join a number of medical field companies in the district, which is squared off by Beltway 8, Hwy. 288, Almeda School Road and Clear Creek.
   - **What’s Next**: The new facility is expected to employ more than 100 people when it opens in 2017.

2. **Dick’s/Field & Stream/Golf Galaxy**
   - **What We Reported**: Dick’s Sporting Goods opened 10 stores in the Greater Houston area in October, including three stores in Friendswood. Among the 10 locations are two Field & Stream stores and two Golf Galaxy stores, which are specialty shops owned by Dick’s Sporting Goods that supply hunting and golf apparel and goods, respectively.
   - **The Latest**: A new Dick’s Sporting Goods location is set to open at Pearland Town Center in spring 2017.

3. **Lary’s Florist & Designs**
   - **What We Reported**: Lary’s Florist & Designs owner Stacy Parsons bought the floral shop in 2012. Parsons and her staff offer everything from wedding flowers to full-service wedding day planning.
   - **What’s Next**: Parsons purchased a plot of land next door to her current location with plans to expand her shop. The flower shop broke ground on the expansion plan in December and expects to complete the project this year.

4. **Bakfish Brewery**
   - **What We Reported**: Co-founders and co-owners Brian Allen and Kris Szécsy opened Pearland’s first craft brewery and brewpub, Bakfish Brewing Co., on March 14, adding to the Greater Houston area’s burgeoning craft beer scene. Bakfish also features a 2,000-square-foot taproom where patrons can enjoy selections brewed on-site.
   - **The Latest**: Bakfish began canning its popular beer “I Tell You Wit” in November and selling six packs in its on-site store. The brewery began selling its products in retail stores in December and its owners hope to expand its canning operation to include more beer options in 2017.
4 notable restaurant openings

1. **PENA’S DONUTS & DINER**
   - Owner Raymond Pena serves up his famous doughnuts at his new restaurant.
   - **WHAT WE REPORTED** Pena’s Donuts and Diner opened for business Oct. 21. The new restaurant serves a similar menu as the original spot, offering a variety of doughnuts, hamburgers, sandwiches and other American-style lunch items.
   - **THE LATEST** While it offered dinner options at its new concept, the diner announced in December that it would be cutting back hours to just include breakfast and lunch.

2. **BB’S CAFE**
   - Cajun cuisine and po’boy shop BB’s Cafe opened its first Pearland location in May.
   - **WHAT WE REPORTED** Houston-based BB’s Cafe opened its first Pearland location May 24. It is the restaurant’s sixth location in the Greater Houston area. BB’s Cafe offers “Tex-Orleans”-style Cajun cuisine, such as gumbo, po’boys, crawfish and a variety of other seafood selections. The restaurant also includes a full bar and happy hour specials.
   - **THE LATEST** As of Jan. 1, five BB’s locations debuted a new menu featuring a new section called “Gone Fishing” as well as a new sampler platter appetizer called All that Jazz. The location is also ideal for crawfish season, which is expected to start near the end of January.
   - **WHAT’S NEXT** The Houston-based franchise has announced the opening of its seventh-area location, a 3,200-square-foot facility at 1275 Eldridge Parkway, Houston, in the Energy Corridor in late 2017. BB’s will

---

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celebrate its 10th anniversary at its Montrose location in November.

3 BRASSERIE 1895

Owner Kris Jakob (left) and executive pastry chef David Berg opened Brasserie 1895.

Kris Jakob,
Friendswood resident and former director at Culinary Institute LeNotre
in Houston, opened Brasserie 1895 in Friendswood this summer. The restaurant features a bar with craft beer and wines, and it has capacity for 100 guests.

THE LATEST In early September, the restaurant added Sunday hours to include a brunch menu. The restaurant is open from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Sundays and serves crab cake Benedict, creme brulee french toast and supreme omelet souffle.

WHAT WE REPORTED Kris Jakob, Friendswood resident and former director at Culinary Institute LeNotre in Houston, opened Brasserie 1895 in Friendswood this summer. The restaurant features a bar with craft beer and wines, and it has capacity for 100 guests.

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4 KILLEN’S BURGERS

In June, acclaimed pitmaster Ronnie Killen opened Killen’s Burgers on June 6 at the former location of Killen’s Steakhouse. The retro-themed restaurant offers hamburgers, grilled and fried chicken sandwiches, hot dogs and French fries. The establishment is Killen’s third restaurant in Pearland.

THE LATEST In November, Killen added Killen’s STQ at 2231 S. Voss Road, Houston. The new concept marks Killen’s first concept in Houston and his fourth restaurant overall. Killen’s STQ offers a variety of entrees offered at the different Pearland locations while adding a few unique dishes.

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BY THE NUMBERS

PEARLAND

17 AMERICAN RESTAURANTS

1 ITALIAN RESTAURANT

5 DESSERT STORES

FRIENDSWOOD

2 AMERICAN RESTAURANTS

1 ITALIAN RESTAURANT

2 MEXICAN RESTAURANTS

2 DESSERT STORES

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Blackhawk Boulevard reconstruction
Friendswood City Council approved a design engineering and feasibility contract for the reconstruction of Blackhawk Boulevard in December. The proposed reconstruction on Blackhawk Boulevard extends from FM 2351 to Friendswood Link Road. No new lanes will be added. The 50-year-old road is a major thoroughfare and point of entry into the city.

Timeline: TBA

Old Alvin Road widening
The widening project extends from Plum Street to McHard Road in Pearland and will expand the existing two-lane asphalt roadway to four lanes with concrete curbs, gutter pavement, a sidewalk and a storm system. Plans for Old Alvin Road were approved as part of the 2007 bond referendum.

Timeline: September 2017-September 2018

Potter’s Liquor

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A question for Tom Reid, mayor

Q: How is the city managing growth while still maintaining critical city services to residents?

A: We’re going to have to hire more first responders, develop a plan where we’re more effective with our policing and have the resources to quickly get to problem areas.

Big decisions made in 2016

- **Renovation of City Hall complex**
  The City Council approved a $6.1 million construction contract with Construction Masters of Houston Inc. to pursue renovations at City Hall and the City Hall annex. Total expenditures for the project are estimated at $6.98 million. The contract was approved in November, and construction began in December.

- **Expansion of Reflection Bay Water Reclamation facility**
  The $47 million project broke ground in August and is slated for completion in 2019. The facility, which was built in 2003, will increase to a 4 million gallons-per-day capacity upon completion, up from 2 million gallons-per-day. The expansion includes odor control units, upgrades to the lift station and improved disinfection systems.

- **Tom Reid Library improvements**
  The roof replacement at the library was completed in November, and the city will install a fiber optic connection between the library and City Hall to improve internet connectivity.

Top issues for 2017

- **Complete road construction**
  The city expects to break ground on five road construction projects around Pearland, totaling $55 million. The most expensive project slated for this year is the expansion of Hughes Ranch Road between Hwy. 288 and Cullen Boulevard. The city will also begin designing the expansion of Mykawa Road.

- **Surface water treatment plant**
  The city expects to bid out portions of the new surface water treatment facility project this year, which will go up on the west side of Hwy. 288. In November, the Texas Water Development Board approved a $159.5 million loan to assist financing in the project. At total build-out, the facility will be able to pump up to 20 million gallons per day. The facility will produce half that much by 2022.

- **Expand Tom Reid Library**
  An 8,174-square-foot expansion of the library is estimated to cost $4 million. A ground breaking is slated for early 2017. Funds were approved as part of a 2007 bond referendum.

The 2015–16 Pearland City Council, from left: Tony Carbone, Derrick Reed, Mayor Pro Tem Gary Moore, Mayor Tom Reid, Keith Ordeneaux, Greg Hill and Trent Perez

COURTESY CITY OF PEARLAND

The 2015–16 Friendswood City Council, from left to right: Carl Gustafson, John Scott, Mike Foreman, Mayor Kevin Holland, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Hill, Billy Enochs and Steve Rockey

A question for Kevin Holland, mayor

Q: What are you most looking forward to in 2017?

A: The council will continue to answer to the citizens, support what they’ve envisioned Friendswood to be, and we’ll keep moving that way just like we did in 2016.
ANNUAL EVENTS CALENDAR

COMMUNITY CALENDAR 2017

From festivals to fun runs, the area hosts a variety of events throughout the year.

JANUARY

28 Winterfest
The city of Pearland’s annual event includes snow, rides, food, craft vendors and family fun. Other activities include live performances, snow tubing hills and play areas, a petting zoo and pony rides. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Free (age 2 and younger), $5 (age 16 and older), $10 (ages 3-15). Pearland Recreation Center & Natatorium, 4141 Bailey Road, Pearland. 281-652-1600. www.pearlandtx.gov/winterfest

28 ‘Burn for a Cause’
Women are invited for a 45-minute spin and sip session. United Fitness plans to make the session monthly along with a “Bros and Brews” event for men. 6:30-8 p.m. $30 (admission). United Fitness, 9223 Broadway St., Ste. 135, Pearland. 318-934-3715. www.unitedfitnesshouston.com

FEBRUARY

10 Charity bingo night
The second annual event hosted by Christy’s Wish Foundation includes regular games and one ultimate game of bingo with prizes, a raffle and food. 6-9 p.m. $20 (four regular bingo cards, presale), $50 (four regular and four ultimate bingo cards). Friendswood Junior High School, 1000 Mansion Parkway, Friendswood. www.christyswish.org

25 2017 Daddy Daughter Dance
The event is hosted by the Pearland Parks & Recreation Department and includes a night of dessert and dancing. The event theme is “One Night in Paris”. 6-8 p.m. $30 (per couple, $10 per additional sibling). Pearland Recreation Center & Natatorium, 4141 Bailey Road, Pearland. 281-412-8930. www.pearlandtx.gov

MARCH

25 Paws in the Park
The 23rd annual event begins with a pet and owner fun run, including 1K, 3K and 5K runs, followed by the national Dock Diving contest. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free (admission). Veterans Sports Complex, 4141 Bailey Road, Pearland. 281-412-8907. www.pearlandtx.gov

APRIL

1 Spring Litter Cleanup
Keep Pearland Beautiful hosts one of two yearly community cleanups. Volunteers clean up to 72 miles of roads, parks and schools in Pearland. The event begins at the Stella Roberts Recycling Center, where volunteers are given breakfast and pick up supplies before taking to the streets to clean up litter. 7:30 a.m. Free. Stella Roberts Recycling Center, 5800 Magnolia St., Pearland. 281-489-2795. www.keeppearlandbeautiful.org

Friendswood Auto and Bike Show
The Friendswood Chamber of Commerce hosts its 14th annual event at Stevenson Park. The event showcases vintage and specialty vehicles from around the Greater Houston area. Local car dealerships are expected to bring classic vehicles. The event also features arts and crafts and local food vendors, and a DJ will be on-site. Time TBA. Price TBA. Stevenson Park, 1000 S. Friendswood Drive, Friendswood. 281-482-3329. www.friendswoodchamber.com

MAY

6 Youth Fishing Derby
The city of Friendswood Parks & Recreation Department hosts the annual event, which is designed to give children a chance to experience fishing and the outdoors. Bait, tackle and rods are provided for all children. The event is designed for...
children age 16 and younger. Centennial Park, 2200 S. Friendswood Drive, Friendswood. 281-996-3220. www.ci.friendswood.tx.us

30 **Memorial Day celebration**
The city of Friendswood hosts its annual Memorial Day ceremony and encourages area veterans to attend wearing their full uniforms. Following the ceremony, there is a group photo of local veterans and attendees. 10 a.m.-noon. Free. Friendswood City Hall, 910 S. Friendswood Drive, Friendswood. 281-996-3220. www.ci.friendswood.tx.us

**JULY**

4 **Friendswood Fourth of July celebration**
The day begins with the Grand Parade along Friendswood Drive and the parade ends at Stevenson Park. The day includes rides, games, food and entertainment, concluding with the evening program and fireworks display held at Centennial Park. The event marks the 122nd consecutive year the community has celebrated America’s independence, the longest streak in the nation. 10 a.m. Free. Grand Parade, Stevenson Park, 1100 S. Friendswood Drive. Fireworks display, Centennial Park, 2200 S. Friendswood Drive, Friendswood. 281-996-3200. www.ci.friendswood.tx.us

26 **Swing into Golf Tournament**
The 20th annual event benefiting the Friendswood Chamber of Commerce welcomes all skill levels. Player packages include range balls, lunch, a catered dinner and goodie bags. 11 a.m. (check in). Price TBA. Timber Creek Golf Club, 4554 FM 2351, Friendswood. 281-482-3329. www.friendswoodchamber.com

**AUGUST**

26 **Pearland Wine and Food Festival**
Dionisio Winery brings the sixth annual event back to Pearland Town Center Pavilion with a new set of food vendors. The event showcases Texas-based wineries serving red and white wines. The festival also includes local food and live music. Tickets include festival entry, a wine glass and 10 drink tickets. Noon-8 p.m. $25 (per person). Pearland Town Center Pavilion, 11200 W. Broadway St., Pearland. 713-906-2499. www.dionisiowinery.com

**NOVEMBER**

11 **Friendswood Fall Haul**
The annual cleanup event allows residents to throw away tree limbs, grass clippings, appliances, furniture, wood, metal and plastic. The garage sale proceeds support city beautification and parks maintenance initiatives. 8 a.m. Free. Centennial Park, 2200 S. Friendswood Drive, Friendswood. 281-996-3200. www.ci.friendswood.tx.us

**DECEMBER**

1 **Hometown Christmas Festival**
The Pearland Parks and Recreation Department and Pearland Town Center host an annual celebration featuring Christmas entertainment, live music, food, horse and carriage rides and breakfast with Santa Claus. Pearland Town Center, 11200 Broadway St., Pearland. 281-997-5970. www.visitpearland.com

22 **Trim a Tree open house**
The 22nd annual Friendswood Chamber of Commerce event is open to the public. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. Friendswood Chamber of Commerce, 1100 S. Friendswood Drive, Friendswood. www.friendswoodchamber.com

**ONLINE CALENDAR**
Find more or submit Pearland/Friendswood events at communityimpact.com/plf-calendar

To have Pearland/Friendswood events considered for the print edition, they must be submitted online by the first of the month.

**POMONA**
Pomona is the first LiveSmart master-planned community in the Houston area by Hillwood Communities, a Perot company. Featuring a relaxed, coastal atmosphere, this 1,000-acre community in the heart of the rapidly growing Highway 288 corridor makes it easy to live a happier, healthier lifestyle with a resort-style amenity center, miles of walking trails, sports fields, Fish Camp, Exploration Zone Park and an on-site Alvin ISD elementary school. And with 300 acres left untouched or as dedicated green space, Pomona is setting the standard for what it means to LiveSmart.

New Homes From Mid $200s–$600s PomonaByHillwood.com

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**WORTH THE TRIP**

COURTESY BRAZORIA COUNTY FAIR

Pomona is the first LiveSmart master-planned community in the Houston area by Hillwood Communities, a Perot company. Featuring a relaxed, coastal atmosphere, this 1,000-acre community in the heart of the rapidly growing Highway 288 corridor makes it easy to live a happier, healthier lifestyle with a resort-style amenity center, miles of walking trails, sports fields, Fish Camp, Exploration Zone Park and an on-site Alvin ISD elementary school. And with 300 acres left untouched or as dedicated green space, Pomona is setting the standard for what it means to LiveSmart.

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Different sides of the Capitol may have different priorities heading into 2017 legislative session

BY EMILY DONALDSON

Should the Texas Legislature accomplish only one thing during the 85th legislative session, which started Jan. 10, the body of elected officials is required to pass a balanced budget for the 2018-19 fiscal biennium.

Per the Texas Constitution, expenditures must not exceed revenue.

In July, Gov. Greg Abbott, House Speaker Joe Straus and Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick asked state agencies to reduce their budget requests by 4 percent, forecasting what could be a revenue shortfall.

Sherri Greenberg, fellow of the Max Sherman chair in state and local government at The University of Texas, said this request was an indicator of how the 2017 session will play out.

“This is going to be a session, not for addition, but for subtraction and cutting,” Greenberg said.

She noted this would be particularly important with an increasingly out-of-touch relationship between members of the state Senate and the Texas House of Representatives.

Patrick presides over the Senate as the state-elected lieutenant governor, and Straus presides over the House in an office elected by fellow representatives.

Straus described how this difference affects the way the legislative agenda is formulated in each chamber during an event held by the Texas Tribune in November.

“I don’t think it is appropriate, certainly admissible, for a speaker to have a hard-driving, lengthy agenda of specifics,” Straus said. “That’s not the way the House works. ... I think the House members would string me up if I said, ‘Here’s your bill; pass it.’”

Straus referenced Patrick’s top 30 legislative priorities, which are listed as Senate bills 1 through 30 and include school choice, sanctuary cities, transgender bathroom regulations and abortion.

Greenberg said some of these issues would likely be the root of clashes between the chambers.

“The lieutenant governor has said a lot about the bathroom bill, and Speaker Straus said he does not feel it is an urgent matter,” she said.

Alternatively, Straus does not have a similar list of priorities. In November, he listed general topics he cares about, which include public education, higher education, infrastructure, Child Protective Services, foster care and mental health care.

Greenberg also noted the difference between the House and the Senate regarding school choice. She said the large number of rural state representatives affects the overall state House sentiment on school choice. Many legislative districts do not have alternatives to public school, so vouchers are unpopular among representatives in those areas, she said.

“If there isn’t an alternative, [House members] don’t want money being taken away from their public schools,” Greenberg said.

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**FEATURED NEIGHBORHOOD**

**LAKES OF FALCON RIDGE 77546**

- **Build-out year:** 2007
- **Builders include:** various
- **Square footage:** 3,800-4,851
- **Home values:** $409,000-$485,000
- **HOA dues:** (estimated); $600 annually
- **Amenities:** community swimming pool, lake and park

**Schools:**
- Cline Elementary School
- Friendswood Junior High School
- Friendswood High School

**Property taxes (in dollars):**
- Galveston County: 0.5613
- City of Friendswood: 0.5687
- Friendswood ISD: 1.3670
- County road and bridge: 0.0058
- Galveston Co. Consolidate Drainage: 0.1150

**Total (per $100 valuation):** 2.6178

**MARKET DATA**

**ON THE MARKET (DECEMBER 2016)**

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**RECENT LISTINGS**

- **508 Falcon Lake Drive**
  - 5 bedroom / 3.5 bath
  - 4,096 sq. ft.
  - $409,000
  - Norman Frenk
  - 713-818-0829
  - Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate Gary Greene

- **705 Falcon Lake Drive**
  - 5 bedroom / 3.5 bath
  - 3,800 sq. ft.
  - $409,000
  - Frances Moody
  - 281-455-1511
  - Brockway Realty

**AVG. HOME PRICE**

- **Neighborhood data provided by Alina Rogers, Realtor Realty Associates**
- AlinaWRogers@yahoo.com
- 281-961-2944

- **Neighborhood data provided by Alina Rogers**
- AlinaWRogers@yahoo.com
- 281-961-2944

**NEW CONSTRUCTION**

**STERLING CREEK**

- **Ground breaking:** 2013
- **Builders include:** Sterling Builders, David Weekley Homes
- **Lot size:** 90-118 feet wide
- **Median square footage:** 4,717 square feet
- **Home values:** $650,000+
- **HOA dues:** (estimated); $650 annually
- **Amenities:** estate-sized home sites, gated community, energy-efficient homes, access to I-45, waterfront sites

**Schools:**
- Cline Elementary School, Windsong Intermediate School, Friendswood Junior High School, Friendswood High School

**Property taxes (in dollars):**
- Galveston County: 0.5613
- City of Friendswood: 0.5687
- Friendswood ISD: 1.3670
- County road and bridge: 0.0058
- Galveston Co. Consolidate Drainage: 0.1150

**Total (per $100 valuation):** 2.6178

**REAL ESTATE**

- **OAKBROOK WEST**
  - 15410 Torry Pines | $215,000

- **SHADOW CREEK RANCH**
  - 13808 Lakewater | $295,000

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Mon-Fri
11am-7pm

DEALS THIS MONTH

AUTO REPAIR
Auto Max Automotive ................................ 26

DINING
Amici Ristorante Italiano ............................ 31
Big City Wings ........................................... 31
Bogie’s Pub and Grill .................................. 31
Crescent City Connections ........................ 25
FitChef Foods Texas .................................. 30
Flaming Wok ............................................. 28
Menchie’s Frozen Yogurt ............................ 26
Papa Murphy’s - Kingwood ........................ 30
Salata - Pearland ...................................... 30
Wingstop - Pearland Parkway .................... 27

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
Houston Groutsmith .................................. 28
Vern Insurance Group ................................. 27
White Gloves Kleaning Services .................. 29

RETAIL
MK Floors .................................................. 29
Nutrishop - Pearland .................................. 28
Paisley Lane ............................................... 26
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