

# ASPEN TRAILS METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

## FALL 2006 NEWSLETTER

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**Payments and Correspondence** for the metro district may be sent to: Aspen Trails Metro District (or ATMD), #1 Trew Creek Dr, Aspen Trails; Durango, CO 81301. Fax 247-8101

**ATMD PURPOSE:** To maintain and improve roads making them safer & more accessible; and to provide limited parks & recreation services.

**Website address:** [www.aspentrailsmd.com](http://www.aspentrailsmd.com) Helpful information at your fingertips

### A Word from the Chairman:

As the ATMD wraps up another year of improvements, we would like to remind everyone to protect our investments. While we are in the process of taking additional projects to eventually bring all secondary roads up to minimum standards, we need help from the residents and everyday users of these roads.

ATMD Resolution #2005-5 remains in effect to protect our roadwork by holding a homeowner and/or contractor responsible for the degradation of our community's roadways. This means that you or anyone working for you on your property is to blame if, in the process of working, the roads are damaged.

Please be considerate to our roads and to your neighbors who drive on them by using proper planning, responsible construction, and careful examination of drainage. Please call before you dig, conform to ATMD road specifications where driveways intersect roads, and communicate any questions and concerns to the board of directors so that we may do the greatest amount of service possible to everyone. Together we can help minimize wear and tear on our roads and protect our investment.

– O Ryan Gassaway

**Roadwork Update** Work this summer included a focus on drainage improvement with new or extended culverts on sections of upper Sierra Dr and Aspen Dr; and ditch work, as well as grading, and additional roadbase added along Sierra Dr, Trew Creek, Aspen Dr, Ridgecrest, Elk Lane and Sierra Circle. Approximately \$42,000 in road improvements and maintenance work has been done so far this year.

**In Memoriam** We are sad to share the news that PJ O'Connell died in March 2006 from injuries sustained in a biking accident. PJ was a tremendous asset to our community, serving on both the organizing committee and the board of directors for ATMD. He will be missed!

**Save the Roads:** Simple steps each of us take can help our roads to last longer costing us less in annual maintenance. Slow down and use a lower gear while driving in the subdivision, this will help you to climb the hills with more control, better traction, and less tire spinning, causing less damage to the road. Driving slowly (speed limit is 15 mph) helps to reduce the washboard on the road. Avoid driving in the same ruts that the last driver used, this will help prevent streams of water from forming to run down the middle of the road. If you have tires with poor tread, consider investing in new ones. Use 4x4 or good snow tires during the winter months. Carry a tow strap and chains (just in case). If your driveway culvert is blocked, please clean it out and survey the ditches along your property line for debris blocking drainage.

**SNOW** will start accumulating soon. **Neil's Excavation (884-2290)** has the contract to plow snow off of the main roads this winter. ATMD would like to remind you of the following:

**\*Driveway plowing is the property owner's responsibility.** Plan ahead and make your arrangements before 3 feet of snow blocks your driveway. Check the bulletin board for contractors interested in plowing driveways.

\*Clearly mark obstacles along your drive-way and road right of way for snow removal.

Unmarked items may be damaged during a large snow storm.

\*Make sure vehicles are parked in your driveway, not partially blocking the road. Heavy snowfall conditions make it very difficult for drivers to see unexpected obstacles in the roadway. Vehicles parked on the road that create a dangerous situation may be towed at owner's expense.

\*Please be considerate of your neighbors and of maintenance and emergency equipment on our roads, drive cautiously, slowly and expect to meet traffic.

## **Road Guidelines**

ATMD is investing a lot of your money into road maintenance and improvements over the course of the next 20 years. With that in mind, the following Guidelines were adopted at the board meeting on June 9, 2005.

**\*Speed limit on all roads is 15 mph**

**\*No parking on roadways at any time**

**\*No plowing snow or dirt across road**

**\*ATMD is not responsible for driveway snow removal**

**\*Driveways must have proper drainage,** property owner may be held responsible for damage to the road caused by improper drainage.

\*Road Impact Resolution #2005-5 was approved October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005 to minimize damage to roads caused by construction and development. You may be held responsible for damage to the road caused by vehicles accessing your property.

\*Contact ATMD prior to any work on your property that may impact the district roads, including, but not limited to: installation of culverts, water, electrical lines & driveway construction.

**DSL** If you are interested in DSL service in Aspen Trails, contact Jennifer Bayer (382-2714). She is working with local providers to try to arrange for service. A commitment by 25 property owners is necessary to start service.

**Fees** Help offset administrative costs of the district, they include: Transfer of ownership fee \$50 per lot, Returned check fee \$50, Document Request fee \$1.25 per page, Late payment fee 12% per year accruing monthly, Collection Charge for lien proceedings \$50.

## **Beware of Suspicious Activity!**

The subdivision has recently been plagued by home break-ins and package thefts at the mail boxes. When you witness unusual behavior let your neighbors know or report it to the authorities.

**Late Assessments 2006** Assessments were due July 31, 2006. Uncollected assessments present a cash flow problem for the district limiting the amount of roadwork that can take place each year. Properties still owing for 2005 past due assessments have had liens placed against them. Past due assessments for 2006 accumulate finance charges at 1% per month. Please call if you need to make payment arrangements.

## **Property Taxes for ATMD**

January 2007 property tax bills will have ATMD levies for approximately 15 mills. Roughly 10 mills will go towards repayment of the general obligation bond debt for major road improvements that were done in the summer and fall of 2004. 5 mills of the levy will be used for ongoing operations and maintenance needs of the metro district. Increased property values, new construction, and property sales affect the amount of tax collected each year. To estimate your ATMD tax bill attributed multiply 0.015 (the combined mill levy) times your assessed property value.

## **2007 Annual Assessment**

A \$300 road maintenance assessment can be expected for the 2007 fiscal year. The final budget for 2007 will be approved during the board meeting on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Full payment will be due by July 31, 2007 unless arrangements are made in advance with the treasurer.

## **Package & Mail Information**

**Misdirected mail** – If you receive mail that is not yours, please write “misdirected” on the envelope and place it in the back of your mail box. Please do not leave mail attached to the bulletin board or laying on top of the mail boxes.

**Mailbox shortage** - If you would like to have a mail box in the subdivision please contact Judy Bolton. We are assessing demand and looking into options to obtain an additional stand with a mail slot if there is sufficient interest.

**Packages** – Generally US Mail packages will go into the numbered parcel boxes or a note will be in your box with instructions. UPS and FedEx packages are placed in the big package box near the mailboxes; they're not usually delivered to your door (especially in bad weather). Since many of our road names are duplicated elsewhere in the county, it is very helpful to make sure all packages and mail delivered to you show Aspen Trails subdivision as part of the address. If you are expecting a package, track it closely with your shipper, especially if you are new to the area.

## **Property Sales and Rentals**

14 properties have already sold this year. When your property sells, or you rent it out, please advise the new residents of information they should know about living in our community and notify the board of changes in your contact information (name, phone number, mailing address or email addresses).

## **Roadwork Priorities**

Last spring board members reviewed roadwork priorities formulating a plan for short and long term improvements. The following list summarizes our plan

### **Summer/Fall 2006 priorities**

- 1-Preserve improved roads by addressing drainage issues & gradually adding roadbase.
- 2-Basic maintenance, snowplowing, grading & ditching of primary & secondary roads
- 3-Mirrors installed for visibility on curves
- 4-Signs replaced/installed where needed
- 5-Hazard tree removal & erosion control
- 6-Grit barrel for Sierra Dr hill
- 7-Complete covered bulletin board/newspaper slots at mailboxes

### **Annual Priority**

- 1-Provide basic maintenance grading, ditching, and snow plowing of primary & secondary roads.
- 2-Preserve improved roads by addressing drainage issues & gradually adding roadbase.
- 3-Review roads for improvement work as funds allow, focusing on road sections which will provide greatest cost benefit for maintenance.
- 3-Monitor /resolve hazardous road situations

### **20 Year Road Improvement priorities**

- 1-Trew Creek-primary road
- 2-Sierra Dr-primary road up to Bear Run, secondary beyond Bear Run
- 3-Aspen Dr -primary road up to Ridgecrest, secondary to Hideaway, tertiary to Chipmunk
- 4-Bear Run-secondary road, alternate access
- 5-Ridgecrest-secondary
- 6-Sierra Circle (upper and lower section)-secondary
- 7-Elk Lane-secondary
- 8-Turkey Trail-secondary
- 9-Bear Crossing-secondary
- 10-Hideaway Dr-tertiary
- 11- Sierra Circle (middle section)-tertiary
- 12-Chipmunk Circle-tertiary
- 13-Aspen Dr/Deer Trail (section west of Trew Creek)-tertiary

**\*This is a general plan for improvement which will be reviewed as road conditions and growth occurs in the neighborhood.**

## **Board Meeting Schedule**

Notices for meetings will be posted 3 days prior to the meeting at the mail boxes, Helen's Store, La Plata County Court House and the Black Dog (when they re-open). Time, place and agenda items will be posted on the notice. The 2007 meeting schedule will be set at the first meeting of the year. ATMD board meetings are open to the public. You are welcome to attend.

## **Trash – Please don't be a litter bug!**

Dumpsters are for paying customers of Waste Management. The cost is about \$19 per month. If you use them without paying you are cheating your neighbors. When there is no room inside the dumpster take your trash home and wait for the bins to be emptied. Trash piled on top of, or next to the dumpster is an unwanted invitation to wildlife and a littering nightmare. \*Dumpsters are for household waste only, not for remodel jobs, disposal of old furniture, water heaters, hot tubs, mattresses, etc. Large items of this type must be taken to the landfill or transfer station instead.

## **Volunteer for the Board of Directors**

Currently 5 directors serve on the metro district board. We will have a vacancy at the beginning of 2007 to fill. Board members can receive \$25 per board meeting as compensation for their service to the district. If you are interested in serving on your board, contact a current board member for more information. Become a part of the Aspen Trails solution! Qualifications for board members are as follows: 1. A resident of the District for not less than 30 days, 2. Must be the owner (or spouse of the owner) of taxable real or personal property situated in the District, or a person obligated to pay taxes under a contract to purchase taxable property, 3. Registered to vote in Colorado, 4. No felony convictions.

**Advisory Board** Seasonal residents recently voiced concerns about taxation without representation. We would love to ask for seasonal volunteers to help make your voices heard. Contact a board member if you are interested.

## **Board Member Contact Information**

**O Ryan Gassaway, Chairman, 375-9420**

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362 Sierra Circle,

**Jennifer Bayer, Snow Removal, 382-2714**

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**Judy Bolton, Secretary/Treasurer, 247-0893**

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**Ryan Bidwell, Snow Removal, 259-1478**

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**Brendan Cusick, Construction, 259-9336**

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