

A depression cure

Cooper canyon opening today

11-15-90

The Union and the Confederacy had the Mason-Dixon Line. Germany had the Berlin Wall. And UTA had Cooper Street.

With ribbon-cutting ceremonies set for 10:45 a.m. today, Cooper Street construction will be complete and the campus once again unified.

It's about time. The projected completion date for the construction has been pushed back twice.

Lowering the stretch of FM 157 that bisects the university began in May 1989 with a projected completion date of June 1, 1990. After an unseasonably wet fall, it was announced in January that the completion date was being pushed back to August. More obstacles — the addition of elevators to the north bridge and the discovery of an unexpected tunnel — during the spring and summer terms postponed the due date to November.

UTA News Service figures provided by the City of Arlington place the cost of the project at \$5.7 million — a \$422,964 overrun of the original \$5.3 million estimate. UTA footed 50 percent of the bill. Arlington contributed 34 percent and the Texas Highway Department provided the final 16 percent.

Completion of the project adds something to the campus' appearance with the addition of the university name and seal on the central bridge and a fountain in front of the Science Building. But more importantly, it assures a safe passage for students to cross the street. Andrew David Beck, a UTA graduate student, was killed while crossing Cooper Street in his wheelchair Jan. 25, 1989.

So today, with a parade of vintage cars symbolizing the school's enrollment and city's population through the years, three shots from the Carlisle Cannons and a few words from university President Wendell Nedderman, an 18-year struggle will come to an end (money to depress Cooper Street was first appropriated by the UT System Board of Regents in 1972).

A safe, effective and attractive Cooper Street finally opens today. Thank goodness.