

# Cocoposts

Albuquerque People, Places, Politics and Planning

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Sunday, April 30, 2006

## Old Spanish Trail

San Antonio APA Conference - part next



From the [Old Spanish Trail Centennial](#) site:

*OST100 has been organized to locate, revitalize and preserve the roadway, businesses and historic sites of the original 1920s OLD SPANISH TRAIL auto highway for a decade long Centennial Celebration with a 2029 motorcade grand finale from St. Augustine, Florida to San Diego, California.*

Yep. They're planning for a ten year long party that won't begin for another 13 years to celebrate this earliest of auto routes. Bridging the waterways of the Gulf States was a formidable challenge at the time. For the 2019 Centennial, the challenge may be to retain physical remnants of the road in the face of rapid suburbanization along it's once remote stretches.

The woman devoted to this effort and to the 32 mile portion in Bexar (pronounced *bear*) County, Texas - Charlotte Kahl, wore a hand quilted vest showing the route and described the road and associated development between



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the first and second World Wars. She told us they paved it using whatever they had - brick, clay and seashells; wooden planks in the desert.

In Bexar she said they paved it with *Uvalde County Limestone Rock Asphalt that glittered in the sun like crushed jewels*. She loves this old road and her interest was infectious. It almost made me wish I lived in Deming or Lordsburg where OST crossed New Mexico.



The OST out of San Antonio northwest followed Fredericksburg Road. A mile long section is designated as one of San Antonio's 7 Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Districts - a **community development corporation effort** called the **Deco District on Fredericksburg Road**.

The route then crosses the Balcones escarpment up to hill country near Leon Springs where KB Homes, among many others, is doing residential subdivisions - plopping boxes in horse pastures. KB commemorated the OST with a marker. But all the vehicles needed to serve these houses will require road widening that will eventually obliterate the old roadbed.



The OST Centennial committee will encourage preservation of original 1929 OST design features and use of similar design

elements in new development. These include stonework mile markers, County and property gateways, walls and campgrounds.



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