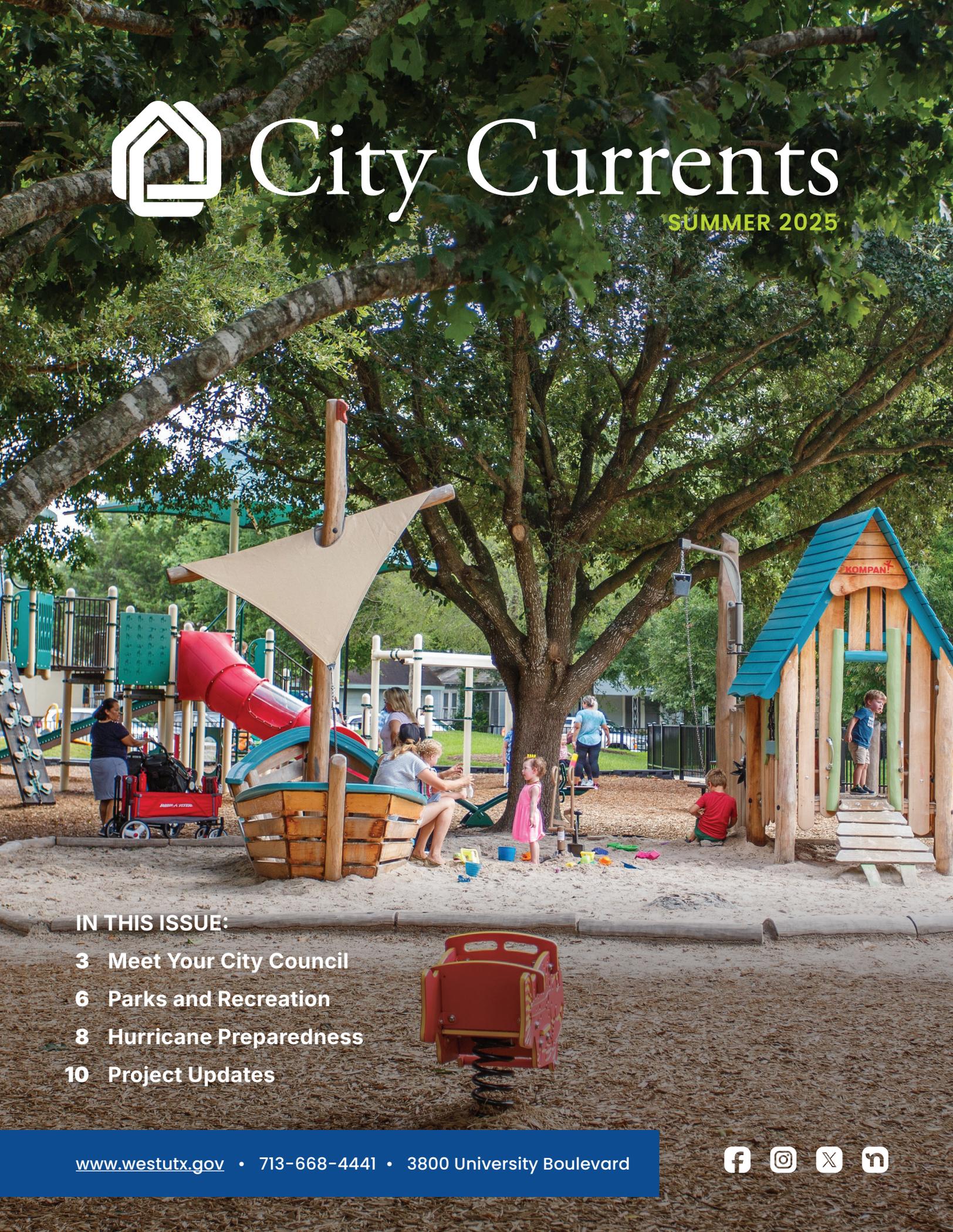




City Currents

SUMMER 2025



IN THIS ISSUE:

- 3 Meet Your City Council
- 6 Parks and Recreation
- 8 Hurricane Preparedness
- 10 Project Updates





ON MAY 3, we concluded our General Election to select our next City Council and our Special Election to decide on three proposed changes to the City's Charter and whether to issue debt to construct a new Community Building, Senior Center, and Library.

First, I want to welcome our new 2025–2027 council members: Kalie Rainsberger, past council members John Barnes and John Bertini, and returning council member Clay Brett. I look forward to working with everyone over the next two years!

Additionally, all three Charter revisions were approved by voters and are covered in another article later in the newsletter. One item I want to touch upon is the failure of Proposition D, the City's proposal to construct a new library, senior center, and community building. This vote was close, and while I hoped for a different outcome, the voters have provided feedback on this portion of the Facility Master Plan. One of

the issues before the incoming Council will be addressing the future phases of the Facilities Master Plan and the deficiencies with the existing fire and police stations to ensure our public safety employees have the necessary tools and space.

Lastly, I want to thank our outgoing council members for their contributions – Mayor Pro Tem John Montgomery and Council Members Shannon Carroll and Matt Hart deserve a warm “thank you” for their service on our City Council over the years. The dedication and time commitment are a burden to your professional and personal life, but one worth bearing. I want to thank John, Shannon, and Matt for their commitment to serving on the City Council and working to make West U one of the best communities in the nation.

I also want to thank you for electing me to represent you as Mayor. It is an honor and a privilege that I do not take lightly, and I look forward to working with the new Council to make West U even better!



Mayor Susan Sample

Elected in 2021, Susan Sample is serving her third term as Mayor of the City of West University Place. She previously served two terms as Mayor from 2015 to 2019, and was on the City Council, serving as Mayor Pro Tem in both terms, before being elected for her first term as Mayor. She is a native Houstonian and has been a West U resident since 2005. A product of HISD schools, Susan went on to do her undergraduate work at Rice University and obtained a law degree and a master's in accounting from the University of Texas. She is currently a shareholder in the law firm of Munsch Hardt Kopf & Harr, P.C., and previously worked for Norton Rose Fulbright in the Tax Controversy section.

Prior to being elected to the city council, Susan served on the board of directors of Friends of West U Parks. She currently serves on the board of SPARK Park as vice president and is a sustaining member of the Junior League of Houston. Professionally, she serves on the boards of the Houston CPA Society and the Texas Society of CPAs. Susan is married to Michael Larsson and has 13-year-old twins.



MEET YOUR CITY COUNCIL

Members will serve from June 2025 to May 2027



John Barnes

John Barnes is a third-generation resident of the City of West University Place, residing here since 2003. Having previously served on the Council from 2019 - 2023, John has been the liaison to both the Senior Services and Recycling and Solid Waste Reduction Boards and regularly volunteers with the Good Neighbor Team. John is also a member of the Rotary Club of West U, and he is the President of the Sentinel Club, a 40-year-old non-profit benefiting West U police, fire and EMS, as well as the Vice President of the West University Garden Club.

John has practiced law for over 27 years, serving a diverse array of clients, both local, national and international, in the real estate, construction, financial, energy, retail and non-profit industries. A litigator as well, John has practiced before district and appellate courts throughout Texas, as well as the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit and the United States Supreme Court.

John and his family attend St. Luke's United Methodist Church, where he met his wife, Susan.



Clay Brett

Clay is a Partner at Baker Botts LLP and the co-head of its energy private equity practice. Prior to Baker Botts, Clay served on the investment committee of the York Tactical Energy Fund, before that serving as the General Counsel of Millennial Energy Partners. Early in his career, Clay practiced corporate law at Bracewell LLP and Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP. Clay has served on the boards of the Houston Center for Literacy, Shelters to Shutters – Houston and the West U Zoning Board of Adjustment. He is the founder of HSC National Golf Club, and plays out of Houston's Westwood Golf Club and Nairn Golf Club in Scotland. In 2025, Hart Energy recognized Clay as one of 40 leaders of the American energy industry under 40 years old.

Clay was born in El Paso and grew up in Beavercreek, Ohio, attending Archbishop Carroll High School. He is a graduate of the University of Florida, where he was a member of Florida Blue Key and received the William Rion Most Outstanding Graduate Award, and Vanderbilt Law School.

Clay and his wife, Lindsay, have lived in West U since 2016 and have two children.



**Kalie Jackura
Rainsberger**

Kalie works as a stay-at-home mother of two young children. She is a former Accenture business consultant and Rice University project manager. She graduated from the University of Texas with a B.A. in Economics and History.

Kalie moved to West University Place in 1992, at the age of 7. For many years, she was a West U Softball Association player, a West U Soccer player, and a West U Swim Team member. She attended West University Elementary School, River Oaks Elementary School, Duchesne Academy, St. Vincent de Paul School, and Lamar High School.

Kalie now spends her free time with her own children, enjoying the same parks, pool, and activities that she loved as a child. She has always been interested in design, architecture, and historical preservation, and these passions were certainly inspired by her childhood, and current, "old stock" West U homes. Kalie was a member of the West University Centennial Committee and completed the West University Citizens Academy.



John Bertini

John Bertini has called West University Place home all his life. He and his wife, Karen, established their home in WUP, as have their married children, who will soon introduce fourth-generation WUP residents. He attended Trinity University and completed medical school and urology residency at Houston's University of Texas Medical School. John is now semi-retired, reallocating his time to farming, several boards of directors' duties, and teaching.

John holds multiple concerns for WUP. Foremost is assuring a safe environment, achieved by superior public safety services. He is concerned about providing a high level of public works services, including fresh drinking water, treatment of wastewater, disposal of refuse materials, and infrastructure maintenance. He advocates that taxpayer funds be spent wisely and reserves preserved for emergencies.

Our recreational facilities, senior services, and the county library must be supported. As an employer, WUP must be attractive to retain civil servants who can deliver consistent and courteous services. John seeks to preserve WUP's history, nurture green spaces and parks, and enhance sidewalks. He hopes to promote a respectful search for consensus to benefit WUP.

MAY 3, 2025, GENERAL AND SPECIAL ELECTION RESULTS

RESIDENT RESOURCES

ON MAY 3, West U residents turned out to participate in the City's General and Special Election. The turnout demonstrated strong civic engagement, with approximately 3,360 voters casting their ballots during Early Voting, by mail, and on Election Day.

West U voters elected four City Council members and had the opportunity to vote on four special propositions.

West U voters approved Propositions A, B, and C. When the election results were canvassed and the ordinances were adopted, the amendments to the City's Charter were implemented.

A majority of voters did not support Proposition D, which proposed a \$15.05 million plan for constructing a new Community Building, Senior Center, Library, and improvements to community open space as part of Phase II of the Facilities Master Plan. In the coming months, the City Council will discuss the future of the Facilities Master Plan.

To view the election results, please visit

www.westutx.gov/elections.

Flood Hazard Awareness

West U has seen its fair share of flooding, so now is a good time to make sure you're prepared for the next flood.

- Maintain flood insurance on your home. There is a 30-day waiting period before a new policy takes effect. Basic homeowner's insurance does not cover damage from floods.
- Check with the Community Development Department to see if a permit is needed before you make enhancements or repairs to your home.
- Consider permanent flood protection measures such as marking your fuse or breaker box to show the circuits to the floodable areas.
- Protect your home's foundation by making sure your downspouts drain away from your house.
- Keep trash out of ditches and streams and avoid dumping pollutants in the sewers. Debris can clog waterways and cause backups that increase the flooding risk.

- If you encounter flooded roads, remember to Turn Around, Don't Drown®.
- Make an emergency supplies kit and prepare a family evacuation plan. Sign up for West U READY to receive emergency notifications in the event there is an emergency that poses an immediate risk to health, life, or property.

Solid-Waste Service Discount for Seniors and Disabled Persons

The City reduces the cost of solid-waste pickup for customers who are over 65 or disabled. To obtain this discount, senior residents are required to provide a copy of their driver's license or some other valid identification as age verification. Residents who get a disability exemption for property tax purposes also qualify to receive the discounted rate, as long as appropriate documentation is provided. No retroactive refunds will be given for any time before the application is filed.



West University Place Citizens Academy

The City is offering residents an opportunity to see, firsthand, how their City operates. This unique experience will give residents a closer look at day-to-day City operations and what it takes to run a city of approximately 15,000 people.

Online registration will begin at 9 a.m. on August 6 at www.westutx.gov/citizensacademy.



PARTY ON THE PATIO CONCERT SERIES

THANK YOU TO our returning generous sponsor Mary Frances Anderson DuMay, who is a broker associate with Greenwood King Properties, a West U resident, and a longtime Friends of West U Parks supporter. She has been the concert series sponsor since 2021 and has committed to this sponsorship through 2026. The concerts are scheduled for four consecutive Fridays in June from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. at the Colonial Park Pool Deck, 4130 Byron St. These concerts are free to West U residents, so dust off your lawn chairs and get ready to enjoy some live music this summer.



GREENWOOD KING PROPERTIES



Concert Schedule:

June 6 Silver Seger Band	June 20 Runaway Radio
June 13 The Big Blue	June 27 AM/FM Band

Fathers & Flashlights

The dates are set for **November 8-9!**

Event Co-Chairs are Angela Androphy, Kelly Hill, and Deanna McQuade. Registration will open for returning campers, eligible underwriters, and sponsors on Wednesday, August 27 at 9 a.m. and first time campers on Wednesday, September 3 at 9 a.m.



SAVE THE DATE

Next Year's Park Lovers' Ball is set for Saturday, February 14, 2026, at the Post Oak Hotel!

Fundraising Year-Round

While Fathers & Flashlights and Park Lovers' Ball are the largest Friends fundraising events, there are other ways to support parks and green spaces year-round. These include business and community partnerships, memorials, honorariums, pavers, benches and tree sales. To receive Friends information (including how and when to register

for the annual Fathers & Flashlights event) or to update your email address with us, please visit www.westuparks.org.

Questions? Please call Friends Executive Director Donna LaMond at 713-662-7430 or email her at DLaMond@WestUTX.gov.



THE RESULTS ARE IN...

THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT partnered with a data collection consultant, OnPointe Insights, LLC, to conduct a survey for residents to provide input on potential improvements to the Recreation Center facility, as well as Tennis/Pickleball improvements. The survey garnered excellent results with 1250 respondents. The data collected helps staff, the Parks and Recreation Board, and city leaders understand the community’s needs, priorities, and concerns. To view the results dashboard, please visit www.westutx.gov/survey.

What’s next?

The City will re-evaluate the Recreation Center to optimize

existing space to align the facility with current and future community recreational needs.

We are pleased to inform you that the recommendations put forth by the Tennis/Pickleball Committee—following a thorough review of court reservation data and survey results—were officially approved by the Parks and Recreation Board on May 7.

Based on strong community interest and careful consideration, the following updates were implemented at the Wier Park tennis and pickleball courts:

- Striping for two additional pickleball courts
- Modifications to the divider fence

Park & Recreation Month

Special Events:

Independence Day Parade and Pool Party

July 4, 8:45 a.m. – Noon

Ice Cream at the Colonial Park Pavilion

July 9, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Hotdogs at Judson Park

July 16, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Foam and Glow Members Only Pool Party

July 26, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Sugar Rush at Whitt Johnson Park

July 30, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

This July, West U’s Parks and Recreation Department is celebrating this year’s National Recreation and Park Association theme – “Build Together, Play Together”, which reminds us of the contributions of more than 160,000 full-time park and recreation professionals – along with the hundreds of thousands of part-time and seasonal workers and volunteers who maintain our country’s parks.



Join us as we celebrate how West U is a catalyst for positive change in service equity, along with overall health and well-being because of parks and recreation.

SAVE THE DATE

The Recreation Center’s annual maintenance week is scheduled to take place August 24 through September 1.

The Recreation Center will reopen September 2.

Dates are subject to change pending coordination with contractors.

Fall Registration

The Parks and Recreation Department is proud to offer a variety of programs, classes, and camps that offer something for everyone! To view a complete listing of these offerings, please visit www.westutx.gov/reg.

Resident Registration begins Wednesday, Aug. 6

Open Registration begins Wednesday, Aug. 13

Junior Lifeguard Program

Is your future whistle worthy? Children ages 11 - 14 can join the Junior Lifeguard class and train with West U lifeguards to learn what it takes. Participants must be able to swim the length of the swimming pool. To register, visit www.westutx.gov/reg. Sessions will take place from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Monday – Friday on the following dates:

June 23 – June 27

July 14 – July 18

Fees: \$45 R, \$60 NR

A Special Thanks To...

Volunteer Race Director and West U Resident Michele Nezi Marvin and her family for spearheading the annual Halloween Dash and 5K Race for the past 13 years. Proceeds from this event have enabled West U to upgrade the Recreation Center's track by replacing the decomposed granite with rubber surface material. You can begin registering for the 14th annual race at www.westutx.gov/funrun.



FUN OVER 50

Cookies with Communicators – Thursday, June 12: Join the City's Communications Division and Police Department to learn how the City communicates with its residents. The presentation will begin at 3:30 p.m. and will be free to attend.

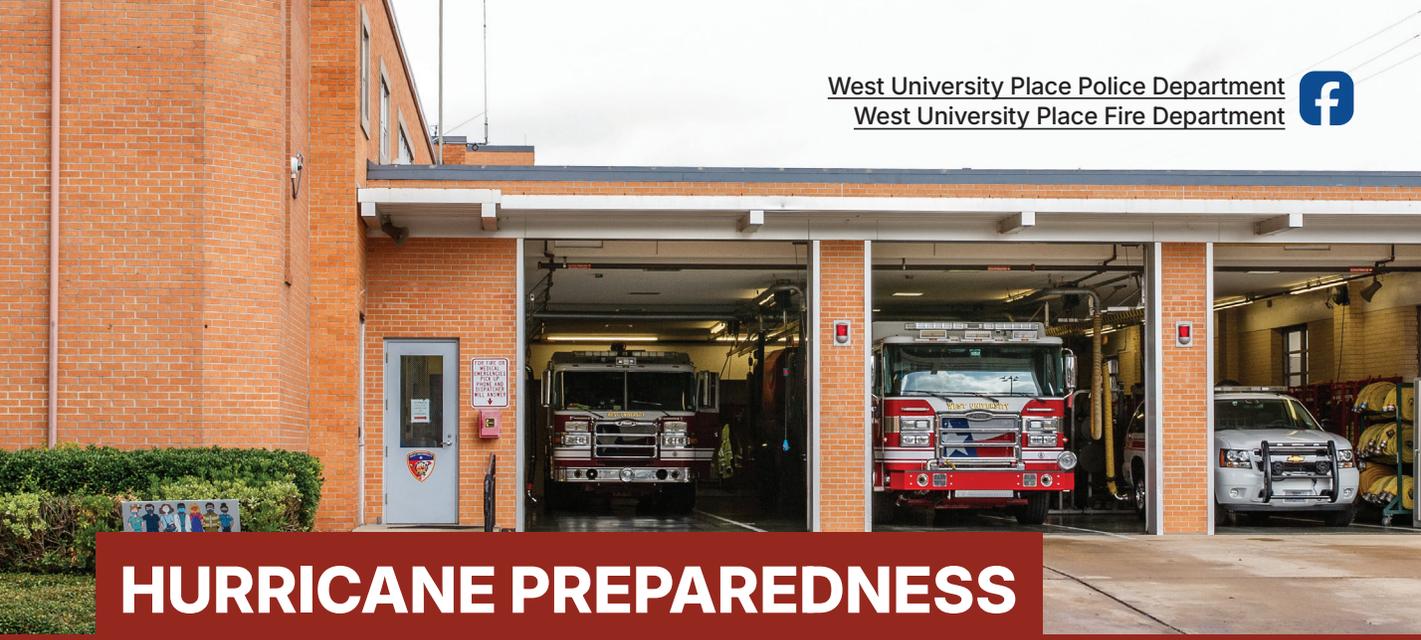
Destination Lunch at Flower Child – Wednesday, June 18: Make plans to join the group for a visit to the Flower Child restaurant, a place that is more than your typical healthy eatery. The bus will depart from the Community Building at 11 a.m., and the cost to attend will be \$6, plus lunch on your own.

Lanier Theological Library and Lunch – Monday, July 7: Mark your calendar to attend a docent-led tour of this historic library.

The group will stop for lunch at the Derby Restaurant. The bus will depart at 9 a.m., and the cost to attend will be \$6, plus lunch on your own.

Space Explorers: The Infinite Experience – Friday, August 15: Get ready for an immersive virtual-reality experience that will send you to outer space. This group will travel to Midtown for this one-of-a-kind field trip. The bus will depart from the Community Building at 11 a.m., and the cost to attend will be \$33.

West U Senior Services has a variety of exercise classes available at the Community Building. Try a sample class to see if it will be a good fit for you! A full listing of offerings is available in the *Play West U Activity Guide*.



THE ATLANTIC HURRICANE Season runs from June 1 to November 30, which means that now is the time to prepare. Early preparation is essential for protecting your home and family before a hurricane arrives. Preparation includes:

- **Securing Your Home:** Minimize potential damage to your home by securing it against high winds and flooding. Trim trees and shrubs near your home and inspect your roof for any weak spots or loose shingles.

- **Assembling a Disaster Kit:** A disaster kit is necessary pre- and post- storm. Your kit should include non-perishable food items, water, first-aid supplies, medical supplies, and personal hygiene items. Additionally, don't forget your pets' needs.
- **Monitoring Local News:** Stay informed about incoming storms by monitoring local news channels, weather apps, and even social media.

Steps to Safer Streets

Pedestrian safety is a shared responsibility for both drivers and those on foot. Whether you are walking to school, exercising, or simply enjoying a stroll, staying alert and following safety guidelines can help prevent accidents and save lives. Here are some key tips to remember:



- **Use Designated Crosswalks:** Always cross the street at marked crosswalks or intersections. Avoid jaywalking, as drivers may not expect pedestrians to cross outside these areas.
- **Stay Visible:** Wear bright or reflective clothing, especially during low-light conditions. When walking at night, also carry a bright flashlight to make you more noticeable to drivers.
- **Follow Traffic Signals:** Obey pedestrian signals and signs. Even when you have the right of way, don't assume that a driver sees you.
- **Avoid Distractions:** Keep your attention on your surroundings. Avoid using phones or headphones that can prevent you from hearing vehicles approaching.
- **Walk on Sidewalks:** Always use sidewalks when available.

Drivers also play a crucial role in pedestrian safety by reducing speed in pedestrian-heavy areas, staying attentive at crosswalks, and never driving under the influence.

West University Place Citizens Police Academy

The West University Place Police Department is proud to announce the launch of its first-ever Citizen Police Academy — an exciting new program designed to give residents a behind-the-scenes look at how their police department operates.

This engaging 8-week program begins July 31 and meets once a week, with each session focused on a different aspect of law enforcement. Participants will dive into topics like patrol operations, criminal investigations, emergency communications, and more. Through classroom discussions, facility tours, and hands-on demonstrations, residents will gain a deeper understanding of the daily responsibilities and challenges faced by officers.

The goal of the academy is to build stronger connections between the police department and the community by promoting transparency and encouraging open dialogue. Participants will have direct access to the officers and staff who serve West U every day.

“We appreciate the opportunity to share our mission and the work we do every day,” said Chief Ratliff. “The Citizen Police Academy allows us to highlight our commitment to public safety and build stronger relationships with the community we serve.”

Whether you’ve always been curious about police procedures or simply want to learn more about how your department functions, this program offers a unique and informative experience. The West U Police Department is excited to welcome participants and looks forward to offering this in-depth look at life behind the badge.

Registration opens June 9 at www.westutx.gov/cpa. Spots are limited, so mark your calendar and sign up early!

West U READY Test Alert

Tuesday, June 10 at 11 a.m.

West U READY is the City’s emergency notification system.

Residents who sign up for these alerts will receive

notification in the event there is an emergency that poses an immediate risk to health, life, or property.

To sign up or update your contact information, please visit www.westutx.gov/westuready.



DIRECT LINK: HOME ALARM MONITORING EXCLUSIVE FOR WEST U RESIDENTS

Tragedy can strike when you least expect it, so it is important to do what you can to protect your home. A good security system can provide you with peace of mind, but a great one will help you sleep well at night. The Direct Link home alarm service connects you directly with the West University Place dispatch center, instead of with a third-party center.

To sign up for services or for more information, visit www.westutx.gov/directlink.

- No middlemen
- Only \$35/month
- Simple billing
- Mobile app (at an additional cost)



CITY PROJECTS

East Side Drainage Improvement Project Package 2

THE EAST SIDE Drainage Improvement Project remains on track as crews work to complete Phase 3, a critical component of Package 2.

Phase 1 has been completed, which included the installation of storm sewer pipes, ranging from 18 inches to 60 inches in diameter, along with reinforced concrete pipes, junction boxes, inlets, and roadway paving on Duke Street from Buffalo Speedway to Wakeforest Avenue. Phase 2 has also been completed, which included the installation of a new water line, along with additional junction boxes, and the repaving of the roadway on Rice Boulevard from Wakeforest Avenue to Kirby Drive.

Currently, crews are focused on Phase 3 & 4 which involves removing the existing roadway, upsizing storm sewer pipes, and installing a trenchless 8-inch waterline along the 5900–6300 blocks of Wakeforest Avenue. This work is progressing as scheduled, with the entire project anticipated to be completed by summer 2026.

City officials recognize the temporary challenges that come with construction, including traffic disruptions and detours. Residents are encouraged to remain patient and to adhere to all traffic safety laws. The City is actively working alongside project engineers and contractors to minimize inconveniences, ensure safety, and promptly address any concerns.

For updates and more information about this project, please visit www.westutx.gov/eastside. If you have questions or concerns, contact Capital Project Manager Eduardo Barreto at 713-662-5848 or via email at ebarreto@westutx.gov.

Milton Street Water Line Project

The Public Works Department is set to begin the Milton Street Water Line Project this summer to improve water distribution and infrastructure reliability. This project will include the replacement of approximately 5,500 linear feet of old cast iron water lines with new, durable PVC water lines to enhance system performance and minimize future maintenance needs.

To minimize disruptions, the majority of these new water lines will be installed using trenchless methods,

thus reducing impacts on roadways, trees, and residential driveways.

For more information about this project, please visit www.westutx.gov/milton.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvement Project

In March, the City awarded the Phase 1 contract for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvement Project to Persons Services Corp. (PSC). The project officially broke ground in April. This significant milestone marks the beginning of essential upgrades aimed at bolstering the plant's resilience against severe weather events.

The project encompasses several critical improvements:

- **Elevated Control Building:** Constructing a new control building elevated 14.15 feet above the 500-year flood level to safeguard vital operational equipment and personnel.
- **Enhanced Emergency Power Generator:** Raising the emergency power generator to 5.3 feet above the 500-year flood level to ensure uninterrupted functionality during emergencies.
- **Upgraded Lift-Station Equipment:** Elevating lift-station equipment and controls by 5.3 feet above the 500-year flood level and installing a new lift-station with submersible pumps to replace the existing intake basin and screw pumps, thereby reducing vulnerability to flood-related issues.
- **Reinforced Electrical Infrastructure:** Transitioning main electricity lines from pole-mounted setups to concrete pad-mounted transformers to enhance resilience against wind-related storms.



WEST U RECYCLING & SOLID WASTE REDUCTION BOARD

Composting in Your Neighborhood

For the past two years, a growing number of West U residents have signed up to compost their food waste through curbside pickup. For a small monthly fee, local companies, such as Moonshot Composting and Zero Waste Houston, will pick up your food scraps from your driveway once a week.

“This is an easy way we can turn everyday waste into an opportunity to support the environment from home,” says Kasteena Parikh, a West U resident of 25 years. “[I] love that West U offers composting programs that make participating so convenient,” She added.

Composting reduces the amount of waste that the City sends to landfills, and also reduces greenhouse gases, such as methane, that are released when organics, like food, decompose in a landfill. West U resident Chris Cander sums it up perfectly: “Composting in an urban setting allows me to minimize waste, lower my carbon footprint, and contribute to the health of our environment. The beauty of composting is that even one family’s effort can support our local ecosystem.”

Not sure how to get started? Maybe you are like West U resident Dee Dee Dochen, “[I] always thought composting

This is an **easy way** we can turn everyday waste into an opportunity to support the environment from home.”

Kasteena Parikh, West U resident

was a good idea, but had never taken the time to set up a composting system because it seemed too much of a hassle.” But once Dochen signed up for the program, she found that “composting is so easy...it’s gotten to the point where I can’t bring myself to throw food waste into a regular trash can.”

Composters may also notice a difference in their trash once they start composting regularly. Dochen has discovered that “between composting and recycling, I have such little regular trash now, that I only need to put trash out once a week, not twice.” Also, your trash bags may no longer smell or attract night-time creatures, allowing you to put out your trash the night before. Speaking of smell and critters, compost subscribers are provided with an airtight, 4-gallon bucket for holding the food waste. They are easy to clean and do not attract bugs or animals.

As for what you can compost, collection companies take just about everything! You can compost anything that was grown or harvested, plus meat, poultry, and seafood.

Ready to get started? The City of West University Place has vetted two qualified vendors for curbside composting. For more information, please visit www.westutx.gov/foodwaste.



City Currents



City of West University Place

3800 University Blvd.
West University Place, TX 77005

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
HOUSTON, TX
PERMIT NO. 134

City Currents is a newsletter for the Residents of West University Place

CITY OF WEST U OFFICIALS

City Council Members

Mayor Susan Sample
John Barnes
Clay Brett
Kalie Jackura Rainsberger
John Bertini

City Manager

Dave Beach
dbeach@westutx.gov

City Secretary

Tracy Garcia
tgarcia@westutx.gov

For questions and comments about City Currents, contact Communications Manager Bianca Cuccerre at bcuccerre@westutx.gov or call 713-662-5350.

MEETING REMINDER FOR CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS

City Council

Meetings are the second and fourth Monday of each month starting at 6:30 p.m.

Building and Standards Commission

Meetings are the first Thursday of each month starting at 6:00 p.m.

Zoning and Planning Commission

Meetings are the second Thursday of each month starting at 6:15 p.m.

Zoning Board of Adjustment

Meetings are the fourth Thursday of each month starting at 6:30 p.m.

Recycling and Solid Waste Reduction Board

Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month starting at 6:30 p.m.

Parks and Recreation Board

Meetings are the first Wednesday of each month starting at 6:30 p.m.

Senior Services Board

Meetings are the second Thursday of each month starting at 2:00 p.m.

For more information on how to attend these meetings, please visit www.westutx.gov/agendas or call the City Secretary's Office at 713-662-5813.