



City Currents

FALL 2025

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FROM THE CITY

Fiscal Year 2026 Budget

THE CITY'S BUDGET PROCESS for 2026 prioritizes existing services as its baseline, and City Council members and City staff continue to evaluate ways to enhance these existing services while maintaining one of the lowest property tax rates in Harris County. The annual budget process also looks at ways to add new services based on community feedback collected throughout the previous year.

The FY2026 budget focuses on the following areas:

- Operations: Utility infrastructure, storm drainage, and technology

- Public Safety: Police, fire, and emergency medical services
- Facilities: Parks and green spaces, along with fitness and recreation centers
- Quality of Life: Zoning and land-use enforcement measures to help maintain West U's small-town feel

For more information about the annual budget process, please visit www.westutx.gov/fy2026.

Sidewalk Construction is Underway in a Big Way!

Sidewalk replacement and repair efforts are well underway for the sidewalks identified in the METRO Sidewalk Program. This grant project consists of \$500,000 in funding for new sidewalks and involves approximately 2,000 square yards of repairs and replacements. This grant has been made possible through the Federal Transit Administration's "Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities" (49 U.S.C. 5310) program. The goal of this project is to improve walkability to essential transportation and recreational amenities around the city.

Later this fall, the City Council will consider additional sidewalk repairs for the remainder of the city. Stay tuned for more information!

For more information about the Sidewalk Replacement and Repair program, and to view planned repairs, please visit www.westutx.gov/sidewalks.

New Pets and Parks & Rec Programming Ordinance Update

In April, West U's City Council adopted a new ordinance regarding how pets and other animals interact with West U parks and facilities. Under the new ordinance, certain exemptions may allow the Parks and Recreation Department to host educational programming such as dog obedience classes and therapy animal events, with additional potential options in the future!

Stay connected with all West U Parks and Recreation news and events by visiting www.westutx.gov/parks.

FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

Answering the Call to Address Deficiencies in Our Facilities

WEST U FACES the ongoing balancing act of long-term strategic planning with immediate calls to action. We must continue to develop thoughtful, sustainable plans to guide infrastructure maintenance, facility improvements, and top-of-the-line City services – all while maintaining the ability to respond to our community's needs. I am proud to have supported these plans during my time as a councilmember and as mayor, and hope that future Councils will continue to invest in responsive fiscal management.

Based upon the results of the recent election on Prop D and not move to building a new community building, senior center and library, the call before us is to address space limitations and deficiencies in our existing public safety facilities for police and fire. The fire station was constructed in 1956 and over the years fire services have changed dramatically and have outgrown our existing station, which lacks proper storage for personal safety gear, storage space for equipment, tools, general and emergency operating supplies and adequate space in fire bay.

Time and time again I hear from neighbors about the need to prioritize investments in public safety. Whether

it involves infrastructure enhancements (like Virtual Gate) or the desire to see more officers on patrol, investing in public safety is a top priority we all share. Much like the challenges with the existing Fire Department, the current build-out of the Police Station is not sufficient to accommodate the future direction of our police department staffing. Addressing the needs of our police and fire stations will also help recruit and retain top talent in the competitive public safety market – giving our men and women in uniform the state-of-the-art facilities they need to do their job in keeping West U safe.

Just as those who wear the West U Badge answer our calls to action without hesitation, Council and residents alike should be ready to answer the call to address gaps in our existing public safety facilities. While there has been robust discussion on the Facilities Master Plan, I believe the time is now to prioritize what we all have in common: keeping our city safe for today and into the future.



Mayor Susan Sample

A Message from Mayor Pro Tem John Barnes



Mayor Pro Tem
John Barnes

OUR LIBRARY, Community Building, and Senior Center at 6104 Auden St. are a centerpiece of our community, and their fate was the determinative issue of the May bond and council elections, in which a clear majority rejected plans to relocate them. On July 14th, City Council unanimously approved the creation of a Facilities Utilization Task Force. This Task Force, which I was privileged to co-sponsor with Council Member Rainsberger, will be composed entirely of residents, with care taken to include input from all sides of the former debate. This group's purpose will be to:

- Identify how residents currently use these buildings, both individually and collectively
- Determine the additional uses that residents want from these buildings
- Ascertain how the desired uses may change in the future as technology, population, and demographics shift.

The Task Force's meetings will be public and its processes will be fully transparent. Its report will serve as a guide for current and future City Council members as to how to renovate, improve, and, as necessary, replace these buildings, so that all West U residents will be able to benefit from the amenities they provide.

If you are interested in serving on this Task Force, please visit www.westutx.gov/boards.



FALL SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES IN WEST U

THE CITY IS COMMITTED to providing various eco-friendly opportunities for its residents. West U residents are encouraged to take advantage of the following services this fall:

- **Candy Wrapper Recycling** – Help keep candy wrappers out of landfills this Halloween, and year-round, by dropping off empty wrappers at the Public Works Administration Office.
- **Pumpkin Collection for Yard Waste** – The City will collect whole (uncarved and undecorated) pumpkins with yard waste from November 3 to December 1.

- **Biannual Recycling Event** – The Public Works Department will host its Biannual Recycling Event from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, November 1, at 3826 Milton St. At this event, residents will be able to recycle mattresses, e-waste, household metals, and textiles, and shred up to five banker boxes of paper.

For more information about these programs, please visit www.westutx.gov/specialevents.

Upcoming City Observed Holidays

On the following days, City offices will be closed, and there will be a modified curbside collection schedule. Emergency services will still be available.

Thanksgiving Holiday – Thursday, November 27

There will be no curbside collection on Thursday. Trash, recycling, and yard waste normally scheduled for Thursday will be collected on Wednesday, November 26.

Day after Thanksgiving – Friday, November 28

Trash, recycling, and yard waste will be collected per the normal Friday schedule. City offices will reopen on Monday, December 1.

West University Tree Trust Program

The Tree Trust program was established to ensure the regeneration of the city’s urban forest. The Tree Trust is funded by payments from residents and contractors who remove trees for the construction of homes, garages, pools, and other structures when they do not have enough space on their lot for the minimum required plantings.

Each fall, residents may apply for a tree, at no direct cost, to be planted in the public realm adjacent to their property (such as the right of way or front/corner side building setback). Applications are being accepted through Friday, November 28. For more information, please visit www.westutx.gov/treetrust.

West University Place Notifications

The City has two subscription groups residents can be a part of to stay in the know!

NotifyMe is the City's day-to-day notification system that allows residents to customize what notifications they receive. Select from community news, parks and recreation happenings, project updates and more!

West U READY is the City's emergency notification system that is only used during incidents that pose an immediate danger to life, property, or safety.

Residents must opt-in to both systems. To sign up, or update your account, please visit www.westutx.gov/notifyme or www.westutx.gov/westuready.

New Look, Same Web Address: West U Website Redesign Coming Soon

The City is excited to share the upcoming redesign of its website, aimed at making your digital experience smoother and more user-friendly. While the content and services remain the same, updates to the look and layout make it easier for users to navigate what they're looking for. Whether you're paying your utility bill, exploring city programs, or catching up on the latest city news, the redesigned site aims to deliver a more welcoming and accessible online experience.

The new look and layout will go live later this year!

Flood Hazard Awareness

West U has seen its fair share of flooding, so it's important to be prepared for future events. Maintain a flood insurance policy to protect your home and belongings. Keep your emergency supply kit updated and store it, along with any valuables and insurance documents, in a waterproof container. Before making any modifications or changes to your home or property, check with the Community Development Department to determine if a permit is required. Lastly, make sure to keep trash and debris out of ditches and streams, as these can clog waterways and increase the risk of flooding to your neighbors.

Serving your Community through Boards & Commissions

The City has several volunteer boards and commissions that allow residents to participate in community decision-making. Board and commission members work directly with city staff in an advisory capacity, examining in-depth issues such as park usage, planning and zoning, and providing recommendations for the City Council.

Applications are currently being accepted and will close on Friday, September 26.

For a complete listing of the City's boards and commissions, their list of duties, and to apply, please visit www.westutx.gov/boards.





WEST UNIVERSITY PLACE first responders are excited to invite the community to the third annual National Night Out Block Party from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 7, at the Colonial Park West End Decks.

This evening of connection and celebration offers residents a great opportunity to engage with the first responders who work every day to keep West U safe. The event will feature a variety of emergency vehicles on display, along with the gear and equipment that first responders use in

the field. Families will be able to enjoy outdoor games, take photos with officers and firefighters, and explore interactive exhibits.

The National Night Out Block Party is all about building strong neighborhood bonds and highlighting the importance of safety and awareness.

Interested in volunteering? We'd love to have you join us! Contact Officer Katie Wilson at 713-668-0330 to learn more about how you can get involved.

Enjoy Your Fire Pit Responsibly

As cooler weather sets in, it is important to consider fire safety before igniting outdoor recreational fire pits. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends the following tips:

- The fire pit's location is important. Clear low-hanging branches near the fire pit and avoid placing them near other structures.

- Use a screen to prevent embers from escaping.
- Have a garden hose or fire extinguisher nearby.

Following these recommendations will enable you to safely enjoy your fire pit this fall and help prevent accidental fires.

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





FRIENDS IN ACTION

PARKS & RECREATION

EARLIER THIS YEAR, the Friends of West University Parks funded two improvement projects. The Parks and Recreation Department enhanced Colonial Park West End, creating a more welcoming environment for visitors. In addition, the tennis and

pickleball courts at Wier Park were restriped, resulting in the addition of two new pickleball courts.

The City extends a special thanks to the Friends of West University Parks Fund for its generosity in funding these improvements.

We've Got an App for That!

The West U Parks and Recreation Department now has its own app! Features include: class and court reservations, membership and private lesson swipe-in, as well as in-app communications from the department, and more! Download *Play West U* through your mobile app store today.

Full Moon Fest

The Parks and Recreation Department will host its annual Full Moon Fest on Friday, October 24, starting at 5:30 p.m. at Colonial Park. Partake in an evening of Halloween fun including face painting and the community-favorite Halloween costume contest. After the event, stick around for Movies in the Park beginning at 7 p.m.

West U Halloween Dash and Kids' Fun Run

Presented by King & Spalding

Registration for the 14th annual West U Halloween Dash and Kids' Fun Run is currently underway! The race will take place the morning of Saturday, October 25. The dash is a chip-timed 5K race through the tree-lined streets of West U. The Kids' Fun Run is a non-competitive one-mile run or walk. Proceeds from the event will benefit the West U Parks and Recreation Department. For more information and to register, please visit www.westutx.gov/funrun.

Movies in the Park

Grab your picnic blankets and lawn chairs and enjoy an outdoor movie at Colonial Park. Admission is free. Each show will begin at 7 p.m.

- October 17 – A Minecraft Movie
- October 24 – The Wild Robot

Winter Registration

Looking for your next fitness class or children's camp? The Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of programming for youth and adults. To see a complete listing of offerings, please visit www.westutx.gov/reg.

- Resident registration will begin on Wednesday, December 3.
- Non-resident registration will begin on Wednesday, December 10.

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Christmas Tree Lighting

Monday, December 1, at 5:30 p.m.
6104 Auden St.

Sing-Along Choir with Karen Kenny: On Monday, September 4, join this community choir that welcomes people living with dementia, along with their care partners, and any volunteers who are interested in singing! Prior experience is not required, and music will be provided. This program will be held at the Community Building and will begin at 10 a.m.

Mah Jongg Lessos with Lauren LeVasseur: This is an introductory class that will use the National Mah Jongg League rules. Participants will be required to purchase their own Mah Jongg card. This six-week program will be held at the Community Building at 1 p.m. on Wednesdays and will begin on September 10. The cost of the program will be \$116.

Meet West U – Newbies and Neighbors: Whether you are new to the neighborhood or seeking to meet other residents, you're invited to join this mixer! This event is free to attend and will be held at the Community Building on Tuesday, September 16, at 11 a.m.

Living Longer Through Lifestyle Choices with Robin and Jamie: On Thursday, October 9, at 5:30 p.m., Robin and Jamie will provide a curated walking experience overview with Laura Conely, Nutritionist and Life Coach. The presentation is free to attend and will begin at the Community Building.

KPRC TV Studio Tour: On Wednesday, November 12, join the group for a trip to the KPRC (Channel 2) studio. The group will depart from the Community Building at 9:45 a.m., and the cost to attend will be \$2. Pre-registration is required.

Thanksgiving Meal Provided by Boy Scout Troop 266: On Thanksgiving Day, Boy Scout Troop 266 will provide free meals at the Community Building beginning at 11:30 a.m. Pre-registration is required by Tuesday, November 18.

Annual Christmas Concert at the Community Building: Make plans to attend this free holiday event on Sunday, December 7. Music entertainment will begin at 2 p.m. and will feature the Houston Concert Band with Conductor Chuck Throckmorton.

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*.



FRIENDS STAR CITIZENS

 [Friends of West University Parks Fund](#)
 [WestUParksFriends](#)

MAYOR SAMPLE PRESENTED the Star Citizen awards at the Friends Appreciation and Awards Luncheon on May 7. Recipients included Kristen and Scott Browning, Jordan and Andrew Jewett, and Elizabeth and Crosby Scofield for co-chairing the 2025 Park Lovers' Ball, which netted **over \$362,000**. Also recognized were Fathers & Flashlights co-chairs Kelly Beth and Charlie Hapgood (2022 – 2024), Megan and Nick Nicodemus (2023 and 2024), and Katy and Chris Turner (2023 and 2024) which had a combined net of **\$318,000** for West U parks.



The Friends of West U Parks could not achieve such success without the wonderful volunteers who are the backbone of this organization.

Fathers & Flashlights Campout

November 8 and 9

Event Co-Chairs: Angela Androphy, Kelly Hill, and Deanna McQuade

“We are looking forward to our new role with Friends and continuing this West U tradition while supporting our parks. We hope you will join us for a fun-filled event, as the Friends of West U Parks Fund is vital for the improvement and development of parks and green spaces in the city,” the Co-Chairs jointly shared.

Sponsorship and underwriting opportunities are available! Scan the QR Code to learn more.



Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital has stepped up again for West U Parks by committing to be the top Camp Founder Sponsor for the campout.

They have been generous supporters of Friends since 2015.



Park Lovers' Ball 2026

Event Co-Chairs: Michelle and Doug Huth, and Stephanie and Bryan Magers

Underwriting and Sponsorship Co-Chairs: Jennifer LaForge, Eliza Coleman, and Meagan Glover

Friends provides funding for a large portion of our park renovations and preservation projects, and this would not be possible without the wonderful support of the community. **Mark your calendars for Saturday, February 14, 2026**, and plan to join us at The Post Oak Hotel as we raise funds for our community parks.



Year-Round Fundraising

While Fathers & Flashlights and Park Lovers' Ball are the largest Friends fundraising events, there are other ways to support our parks and green spaces all year-round!

For more Friends information, please visit www.westuparks.org.

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



CITY PROJECT UPDATES

A S PART OF the East Side Drainage Improvement Project, workmanship issues were identified with roadway panels along Rice Boulevard and Duke Street that did not meet city standards. TB Construction has shifted focus back to these areas to correct the deficiencies before moving forward.

While this work is necessary to ensure quality and durability, it has delayed the start of Phase 3, which includes the installation of a new waterline along Wakeforest Avenue. Crews will transition to Phase 3 as soon as the corrective work is complete.

We understand that construction brings temporary challenges, including traffic disruptions, and we thank residents for their patience and cooperation. Please continue to follow all posted traffic signs and detours.

To receive project updates on the East Side Drainage Improvement Project, please visit www.westutx.gov/eastside. For specific questions or concerns, please contact Capital Project Manager Eduardo Barreto at 713-662-5848 or by email at ebarreto@westutx.gov.

Milton Street Water Line Project

The City is pleased to share that the Milton Street Water Line Project has seen substantial progress. ISJ Underground Utilities is currently installing approximately 3,000 linear feet of new 2 - 16 inch waterline, which spans Milton Street, Auden Street, Rice Boulevard, and Mercer Street.

This project primarily utilizes trenchless construction methods that help minimize disruption to the community while allowing for efficient and safe installation beneath existing infrastructure.

Once all sections of the new waterline are installed, the City will conduct testing to ensure that the system meets all local and state standards for performance and safety. Following successful testing, the next phase will begin with roadway replacement, followed by sidewalk reconstruction and restoration.

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

New Public Works Facility Update

Progress at the Public Works Facility at 5004 Dincans St. has been fast at work! Over the summer, the contractor installed the underground electrical, sewer, and water utilities; poured the concrete foundation; and installed the framing - really bringing this project to life. The contractor remains on schedule for completion in February 2026.

The new Facility will house most of the Public Works operational divisions - so residents will not notice any changes to service level. Residents may, however, see less Public Works vehicle traffic along Amherst Street since the new base for operations will be at the Facility off Dincans Street. Community Development services will not be relocating and will remain at the existing Public Works Administration Building located at 3826 Amherst St.

JUNK MAIL BY THE NUMBERS

-  **61% of all mail is unsolicited.**
-  **60% ends up in the landfill.**
-  **44% of that is thrown away unopened.**

100,000,000

Trees are cut down each year to produce junk mail

Each house receives **850 PIECES** of junk mail per year

51,000,000

Tons of additional greenhouse gases result from producing junk mail annually

The amount of junk mail received annually in West U is equivalent to the weight of **1 BOEING 737**



Scan the QR Code to find resources to opt out of junk mail.
Brought to you by the Recycling & Solid Waste Reduction Board.

Sources:

- healtheplanet.com/100-ways-to-heal-the-planet/junk-mail
- volofoundation.org/news/fighting-junk-mail-is-helpful-for-the-environment
- lemonstripes.com/lifestyle/sustainability/reducing-junk-mail



City Currents



City of West University Place
3800 University Blvd.
West University Place, TX 77005

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

CITY OF WEST U OFFICIALS

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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.