

WEST U ESSENTIALS MAGAZINE – SEPTEMBER 2019

WEST UNIVERSITY MAYOR INSIGHTS

Information is the key

By Mayor Bob Higley

Reliable information on a timely basis is one of the essentials for dealing with your family, friends and work. Your City Council and city management understand this dynamic and are working to improve how the city disseminates reliable information to our home-owning taxpayers and others who have chosen West U as their home or workplace.

One of our first improvements is a redesign of the official city website. The goal of the redesign is to improve the look and functionality of the site — in the simplest term, making it more user-friendly. The redesigned site was launched in mid-August, and feedback has been favorable.

Still, we are not yet completely satisfied with our website, and over the coming months, we will be making additional improvements.

Take a look for yourself at westutx.gov, and let us know your thoughts.

Our action plan to improve our information system also includes:

- Mailing a survey in mid-September to about 2,500 homeowners, seeking their feedback on how to communicate routine and emergency information most effectively.
- Reviewing the results of the survey to help us in implementing our initial communications game plan.

And there's another component to good communication: Knowing what information sources to trust.

Please understand how important it is for residents to rely on the city's official website and social media platforms — including signing up for alerts — to obtain accurate and timely information. The promulgation of information on unofficial sites that is not based upon facts is counter-productive, bordering on irresponsible. They may be good places to find a new orthodontist or yard crew, but we have already had situations where false rumors have created panic, or information that should have been relayed immediately to authorities was passed along online for a reaction from the internet "hive mind."

Our goal as city leaders is to deliver reliable information on a timely basis to our residents in a "24/7" world in formats that they favor. Reaching that goal is an ongoing and changing process that will take time. The success of the improvements will depend on residents, City Council and city staff working together.

I am excited about the coming challenges and changes. Stay tuned!

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