

# City Currents

Winter 2023



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And More Helpful Information About Your City!



## City Council Adopts FY 2023 Budget & Lowers West U Property Tax Rate

At its September 26 regular meeting, City Council adopted the City's 2023 operating budget. The \$49.3M operating budget reinforces the City's priority of providing high service levels, protecting residents' quality of life, supporting public safety, and continuing to invest in infrastructure.

Notable items funded in the 2023 budget:

### QUALITY OF LIFE

**The City's Centennial Celebration** – West U turns 100 in early 2024 and this budget includes funds for our 100-year celebration.

**Recreational & Senior Programming** – Increases funding for programs as we return to pre-pandemic levels.

**Pedestrian and Vehicle Mobility** – Continues work on repairing streets and sidewalks for safety.

### SERVICE LEVEL

**Communication Specialist** – funds an additional staff member in Communications to build upon our improvements in citywide communications and community engagement efforts.

**Law Street Water Line** – Constructs a new water line in the 4100 and 4200 blocks of Law Street, which brings those homes onto West U's water service.

### SUSTAINABILITY

**Smart Irrigation** – Funds installation of smart meters in City parks and along the Edloe Street Pathway to reduce the City's water consumption.

**Electric Vehicle** – Provides funds for the trial replacement of a gas vehicle with an electric vehicle.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

**Public Works Maintenance Facility** – Funds the construction of a new 21,200 sq. ft. facility that will be a new centralized home for Public Works Maintenance and Operations that are currently spread over multiple locations.

**Community Building / Senior Center / Library** – Funds the design work for a new facility for services to senior citizens, the library, and the community in the City Center.

**Water Line Replacements** – Begins replacement of old cast iron water lines dating back to 1939.

City Council also approved a 2022 tax rate (\$0.277402) that is lower than the 2021 tax rate (\$0.278522), which ensures West U remains one of the lowest tax rates in Harris County. Revenue generated from the City ad valorem taxes provides the primary funding for municipal services (please see Budget at a Glance on page 4).

Lastly on a separate note, City Council approved the sale of \$47.56 Million in Certificates of Obligations (bonds) to fund upcoming infrastructure projects identified in the Foundation for the Future plan. This ongoing effort will coordinate with the City's 5-year Capital Improvement Plan. For more information about the Foundation for the Future plan visit, [www.westutx.gov/foundation](http://www.westutx.gov/foundation).

For more information about the 2023 budget and the 2022 property tax rate, please visit [www.westutx.gov/2023budget](http://www.westutx.gov/2023budget).



# From the Mayor's Desk

## 2022 – Another Successful Year in the Books!

As we come to the end of another year, I want to take a moment to thank you all – and my fellow Council members – for your support for this community. I also want to thank City staff for their work in delivering the services we have come to enjoy.

Over the last year, our Council and staff have been busy working to ensure that West U remains one of the most desirable cities in the Houston metro area to live in and to raise your family.

Below are just a few of our 2022 highlights and successes:

### Public Safety:

- We continued to prioritize funding for public safety, which accounts for approximately 44% of the General Fund Budget, and we also implemented a step program for compensation to remain competitive in this tight labor market for police and fire personnel.
- This past summer, we completed the Virtual Gate project, which surrounds the city with automatic license plate readers and security cameras that will provide our police officers with an additional tool to solve crimes. This system will also serve as a deterrent to criminals coming into West U to commit crimes.

### Infrastructure:

#### Streets and Drainage

- o Buffalo Speedway Street and Drainage Improvements – These improvements are substantially completed, and will be fully completed in February/March of 2023. This project replaces a 65-year-old street and also upgrades a 76-year-old drainage system.
- o Eastside Street and Drainage Improvements – The construction design is completed, and construction will begin in early 2023. This project replaces streets, upgrades drainage along University Boulevard east of Buffalo Speedway, and improves multiple other streets in the area.
- o Westside Street and Drainage Improvement – The preliminary design is nearing completion, and construction design will start in early 2023. This project will replace streets and upgrade drainage throughout the west side of town (from Community Drive to College Street, and from Law Street to Bellaire Boulevard).

#### Utilities

- o Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements – Design is completed, with construction expected to begin in the first part of 2023. This project will provide improvements for treating wastewater – and also for protecting against floodwater damage in order to prevent a multi-day plant shutdown, such as was experienced during Hurricane Harvey.
- o Water Modeling Study of Our Existing Water System – This study was conducted to ensure that our water service will be able to meet the changing needs of our city. Information from this study will help our Council and staff identify necessary improvements over the coming years.

#### Pedestrian Mobility

- o Two items that will help West U remain a pedestrian-friendly community include our:
  - ◇ Sidewalk Repair and Replacement Program – This program ensures that problematic sidewalk areas are replaced or repaired each year.
  - ◇ Edloe Street Pathway Project – A new pathway will be constructed along the east side of Edloe Street between Albans Road and Georgetown Street. The design for this project is completed, and construction is anticipated to begin during the first part of 2023.

#### Facilities

- o Facilities Master Plan – This Council-approved plan identifies long-term locations for the City's buildings prior to expending funds on maintenance/renovations to the existing buildings.
- o New Public Works Facility – A new 21,000-sq-ft facility, which has been approved by Council, will be constructed on City-owned property at the corner of Westpark Drive and Dincans Street. This is the first segment of the Facilities Master Plan, with design expected to be completed in early 2023 and construction to begin in summer/fall 2023.

These items are just a few of the larger projects that were on our agenda in 2022. Additionally, I would be remiss in not expressing my and Council's appreciation to the dedicated staff who provide all the important daily services that help make West U one of the best communities to call home!

Here's to closing the books on a successful 2022, and to looking forward to the exciting things to come in 2023.



# A Message from Council Member Shannon Carroll

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Happy Holidays to you and yours! As 2022 rings to a close, I'd like to reflect on and highlight some of the projects and achievements I am so proud to have been a part of this year as a member of your West University Place City Council, and look ahead to what lies in store for our great city in 2023 and beyond!

**Buffalo Speedway Project** – With the completion of construction on Buffalo Speedway in the coming months, residents will experience improved drainage and enhanced intersection visibility and street accessibility. The ribbon on top of this long-awaited gift will be the beautiful West University Place logo brick pavers put in place along Buffalo Speedway at the intersections with Sunset, Rice, and University. What a testament these pavers will be to the beauty and longevity of our Neighborhood City!

**Budget Passage** – Following a September workshop and subsequent budget meetings, the 2023 city budget was recently approved and adopted. Of note are new water rates, updated rec center fees, and, (if Santa is good to us – maybe even the city's first electric vehicle)!

**Edloe Street Pathway** – Following initial discussion in January, Council voted 4-1 in favor of the pedestrian friendly walkway that will run along the east side of Edloe from Albans to Tiny's #5. Featuring enhanced landscaping, lighting, and benches, the trail will provide a beautiful, safe pathway for residents to walk, run, and enjoy the outdoors.

**Facilities Master Plan** – After a series of open town halls, resident feedback sessions, workshops, and meetings over a period of several months, Council adopted the Facilities Master Plan with an eye toward the long-term future.

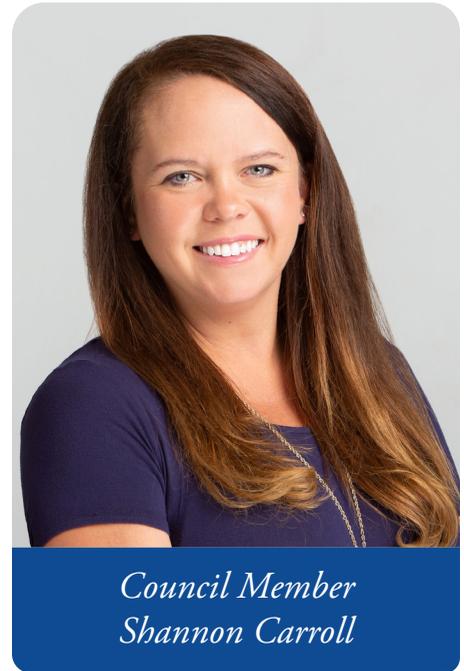
**Construction of the new Public Works Facility** will begin in 2023, and over the subsequent years, there will be updates to the Community Building, Library, Fire Station, and City Hall. This multi-year plan will enhance and increase the functionality of City buildings, departments, and best in class services that residents have come to appreciate.

**Sustainability in Action** – Received by Council in June, the report from the Sustainability Task Force was the culmination of months of tireless work by its members. Detailing recommendations for Energy, Green Space, Recycling, Transportation, and Water, the report will serve as a blueprint for the coming years. It aims to help us to stand out as a leader in awareness and implementation of sustainable and environmental initiatives in our city.

**Virtual Gate** – In June, the ribbon cutting ceremony for our Virtual Gate was held to much fanfare. With the addition of the gate to the city boundaries, our hardworking police officers are aided in their efforts to protect and keep safe our residents and all of those visiting our great city!

Finally, during this season of thanks, I would like to say thank you to every resident who has reached out to offer your feedback on a myriad of issues. I would like to give special recognition to the city employees who keep West U running, and to our many residents who volunteer and give their time to our boards, committees, and organizations. You all are truly the gifts that keep on giving, and for each of you this holiday season, I am thankful!

- Council Member Shannon Carroll

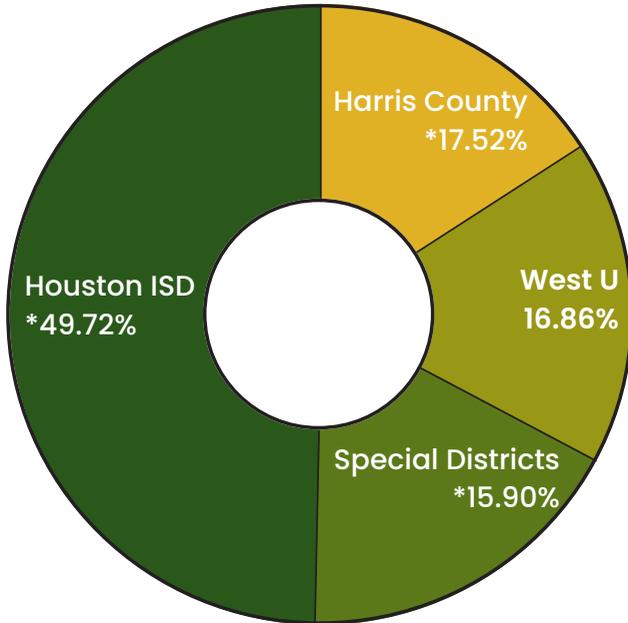


*Council Member  
Shannon Carroll*

# Budget at a Glance

The Budget at a Glance provides residents a simple overview of how the City's budget operates, and a clear understanding of where your tax dollars go.

## Where Do Property Taxes Go?



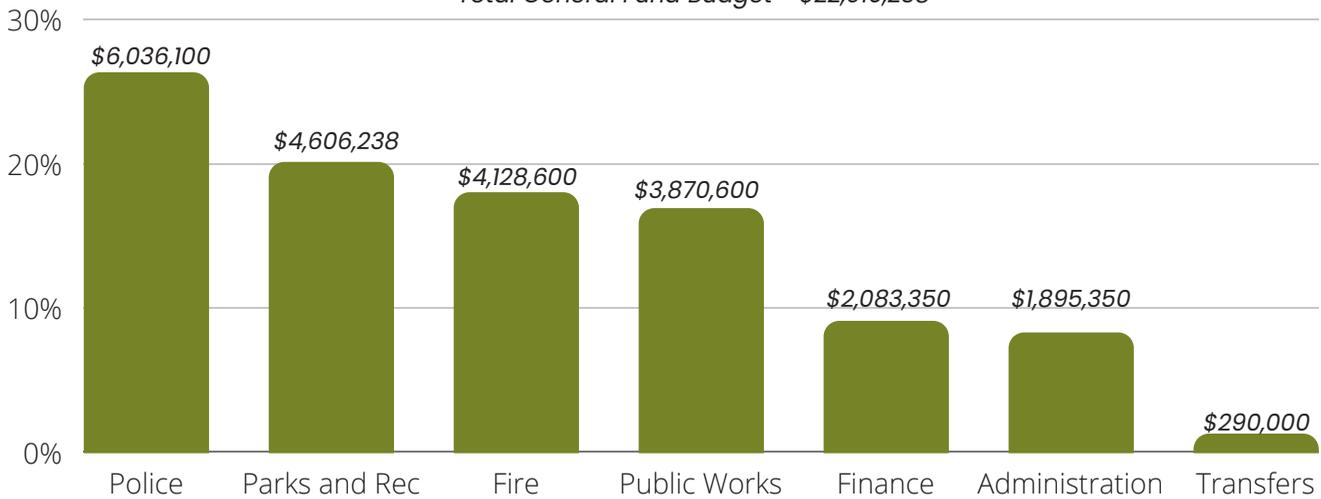
\*Based off of Proposed Budget

## Comparable Property Tax Rates



## General Fund Expenditures by Department

Total General Fund Budget - \$22,910,238



[www.westutx.gov/2023budget](http://www.westutx.gov/2023budget)

# Facilities Master Plan

## News You Can Use

In 2021, West U's City Council adopted the completion of the Facilities Master Plan (FMP) as a top priority for 2021–2022. Since then, City staff and the City's architecture consultant (PGAL) have initiated Phase 1 of the plan. Let's break down what the Facilities Master Plan means to you, the resident.

### What is the purpose of the FMP?

This plan identifies the long-term location and function of City facilities.

### What are the benefits of the FMP?

A prior assessment identified needed improvements, upgrades, and expansions to the existing facilities as the city approaches turning 100 years old. Many of these facilities date back to the 1940s and 1950s, and, while their locations served well during the first half of the century, our City Council and staff wanted to ensure that these facilities are in their respective optimal long-term locations for the next 100 years. This plan also ensures that any investment in these facilities to improve usage, access, and service delivery will not be short lived.

### In the FMP, which facilities are recommended for moving?

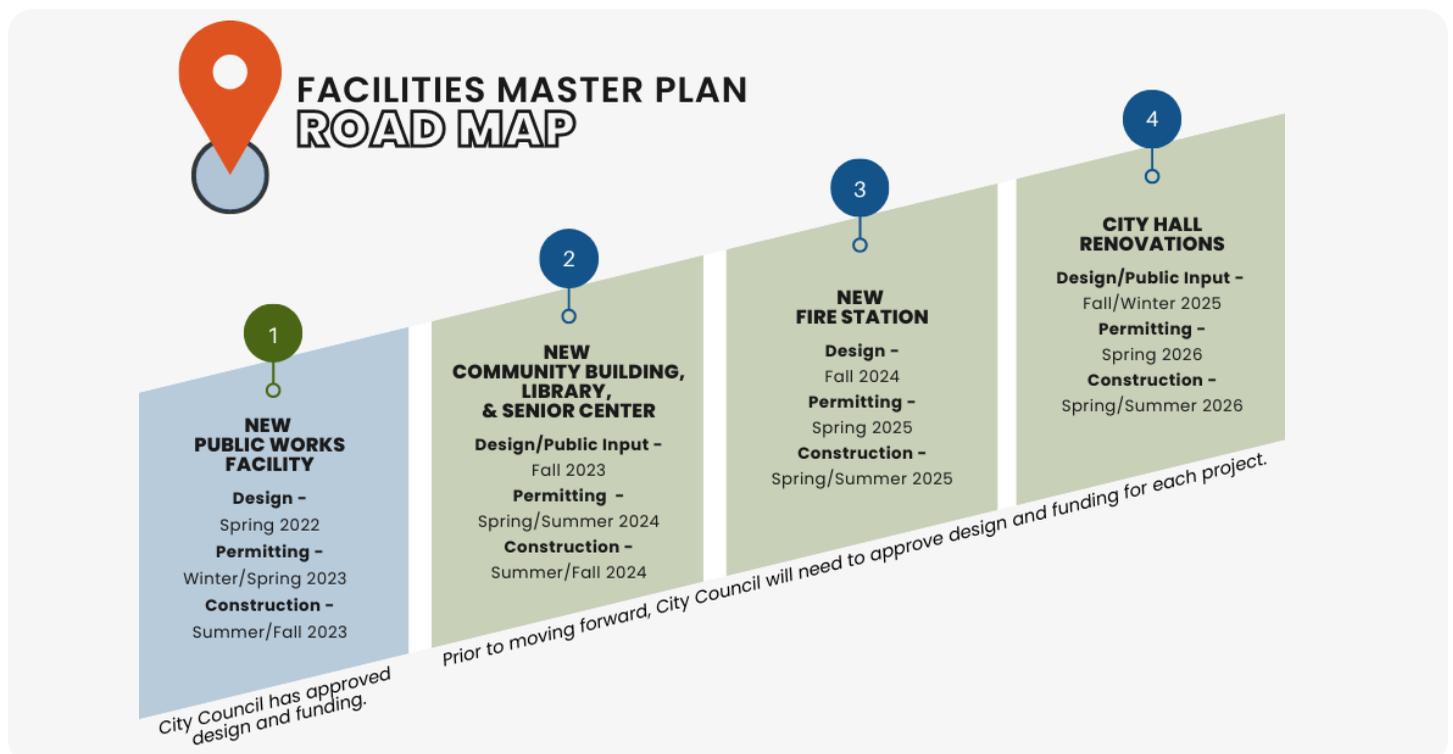
- Public Works Maintenance Facility
- Community Building, Senior Center, and Library
- Fire Station
- Police Station/Municipal Building – While this facility will remain in its current location, it will be renovated in order to expand the Police Station and to relocate Community Development, Information Technology, and Public Works Administration into the building.

### Where will the new facilities be located, and how will existing facilities be expanded and/or updated?

The FMP identifies four phases of construction and renovation:

- Phase 1\* – Construct a new Public Works facility on City-owned property at 5004 Dincans Street. Design is underway, with construction expected to begin in summer/fall 2023.
- Phase 2 – Construct a new Community Building, Senior Center, and Library on the old Public Works site at 3826 Amherst Street.
- Phase 3 – Construct a new Fire Station at 6104 Auden Street, which is the site of the old Community Building, Senior Center, and Library.
- Phase 4 – Renovate the existing Municipal Building to accommodate the expansion of the Police Station and also to relocate those services identified above into the building.

**\*Note:** Phase 1 is the only phase approved by the City Council at this time. Phases 2–4 will require future approval by the Council.



# Resident Resources

## Go Green into the New Year!

The holiday season is a joyous time of year, filled with friends and family, gifts, and some of our favorite meals. When planning your Christmas and New Year's gatherings, take into consideration how you can reduce, reuse, and recycle. Here are a few tips to consider:

**Reduce** – Energy consumption during the holidays can be reduced by using solar decorations and by utilizing timers to help you control how long your holiday lights stay on.

**Reuse** – Do you have old shoe boxes or shipping containers? Reuse the supplies that you already have on hand to prepare gifts for your loved ones.

**Recycle** – Stick to recyclable items when planning your festivities, such as using gift paper without metallic or glitter designs, along with cardboard boxes and cartons, and glass containers.



### Christmas Tree Recycling - December 26 – January 13

Each year the City of West University Place Public Works Department collects live Christmas Trees with yard waste and takes them to a local composter to be recycled as mulch. To participate in this program, remove all decorations, lights, foreign objects, and stands from your tree and place them out during your yard waste collection day. Trees that are flocked or have any foreign items attached to them will be collected with normal household trash and disposed of in the landfill.

### Christmas String Light Recycling - November 21 – January 13

In conjunction with the Houston Zoo, the City will be accepting holiday strings lights for recycling at the following locations:

City Hall – 3800 University Blvd.

Public Works Administration Office – 3826 Amherst St.

West University Place Recreation Center – 4210 Bellaire Blvd.

## May 6, 2023 General Election

On May 6, 2023, registered voters of West University Place will vote to elect a mayor and four council members. The mayor and council members are elected from the city at large for two-year terms and can serve three consecutive terms. If you are interested in serving your community by serving on City Council, you must be:

- At least 21 years of age
- A resident of West U, and have resided in the city for at least 12 months immediately preceding the election
- Qualified to vote in the city

The first day to file for a place on the ballot is Wednesday, January 18, 2023, and the last day to file is Friday, February 17, 2023, at 5 p.m.

### Other important election dates are:

- First day to apply for a ballot by mail: Monday, January 2, 2023
- Last day to register to vote: Thursday, April 6, 2023
- Last day to apply for a ballot by mail: Tuesday, April 25, 2023

For more information please contact City Secretary Thelma Gilliam at [tgilliam@westutx.gov](mailto:tgilliam@westutx.gov) or at 713-662-5813; or visit [www.westutx.gov/elections](http://www.westutx.gov/elections).

## Serving your Community through Boards and Commissions

The City of West University Place has seven volunteer boards and commissions that allow residents to participate in community decision making. These boards and commissions work directly with City staff to examine in-depth issues such as park usage, planning and zoning, and provide recommendations to City Council.

Become a volunteer member of one of these boards or commissions, and be on the frontline of changes that happen in your community. The City will begin accepting applications for the next term in the summer of 2023. Members serve two-year terms, with the exception of the Friends of West University Parks Fund Board, for which members serve three-year terms.

To find out more about the City's boards and commissions and the responsibilities of each, visit [www.westutx.gov/boards](http://www.westutx.gov/boards).

Residents interested in serving on the Friends of West University Parks Fund Board should contact Friends Executive Director Donna LaMond at [diamond@westutx.gov](mailto:diamond@westutx.gov).

## Don't Miss Out on a Discount – FEMA Risk Rating 2.0

The City of West University Place wants to remind you to take time to review your home's flood insurance coverage to ensure that it is up to date. FEMA's new Risk Rating 2.0 for flood insurance aims to bring structures to their actuarial rates based on individual risk. This program may have a direct impact on your flood insurance premiums. The City of West University Place works hard to protect its residents by participating in the Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS is a voluntary, federal program that rewards communities for implementing higher standards in exchange for discounts on flood insurance premiums for citizens.



For more information, contact your flood insurance provider or visit [www.westutx.gov/floodinsurance](http://www.westutx.gov/floodinsurance). For assistance from the Public Works Department, you may call 713-662-5839, email [pwinfo@westutx.gov](mailto:pwinfo@westutx.gov), or visit the Public Works offices located at 3826 Amherst St.

## Water, Sewer, and Solid-Waste Rate Increase in 2023:

Effective January 1, 2023, West University Place utility rates will increase by 6% for water, 3% for sewer, and 3.5% for solid waste. Since West U bills in the arrears, the new rates will be reflected on your February 2023 utility statement. For more information visit [www.westutx.gov](http://www.westutx.gov).



# Public Safety



West University Place Police Department



West University Place Fire Department

## Keep your Home and Family Safe during the Holiday Season

The holiday season is upon us, and the West University Place Police Department would like to remind residents of a few crime prevention techniques to prevent yourself from becoming a victim

### When traveling:

- Keep home lights on a timer.
- Have mail and newspaper deliveries paused until your return.
- Contact the West U Police Department to add your home to the Vacation House Watch program.

### At home:

- Keep all doors and windows locked.
- Keep the outside of your home well lit.
- When arriving home from shopping, check your surroundings before opening the garage or getting out of your vehicle.
- Always remove packages and items of value from your vehicle.
- Do not display gifts in plain sight of windows or doors.

### While shopping:

- Shop with friends, as groups are less likely to be targeted.
- Do not carry large amounts of cash.
- Have your car keys ready before leaving the store.
- Shop during daylight hours. If shopping in the evening hours, park in a well-lit area.
- Lock all valuables in the trunk.
- Ask security to escort you to your vehicle if you feel uncomfortable.

## Direct Link – Home Alarm Monitoring Exclusive to West U Residents



Tragedy can strike when you least expect it, so it is important to prepare. 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 a third-party center.

### Enjoy features like:

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

For more information about the Direct Link Alarm Monitoring System visit, [www.westutx.gov/directlink](http://www.westutx.gov/directlink).



with **BADGES**

WEST UNIVERSITY PLACE COMMUNITY BUILDING  
FEBRUARY 10 | 6:30 - 8:00 P.M.

ONLINE REGISTRATION OPENS MONDAY, JANUARY 9

[WWW.WESTUTX.GOV/WUPDEVENTS](http://WWW.WESTUTX.GOV/WUPDEVENTS)

## Space Heater Safety

There is something so cozy about being warm and curling up next to a fireplace or space heater on a cold day. But to enjoy these items safely, you need to make sure these items are serviced and inspected prior to their use in order to avoid fires and carbon monoxide emergencies.

Heating units should be serviced and checked for any possible carbon monoxide issues. Often referred to as the invisible killer, carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is created when fuels such as gasoline, wood, coal, and propane do not burn completely. To protect everyone against this silent danger, the West U Fire Department encourages residents to have carbon monoxide detectors in their homes.

If you plan to use a space heater this winter, be sure to purchase one with an automatic shutoff in case the heater gets tipped over. The heat from the front of the unit is enough to cause a fire.

When using a space heater, keep it at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn. Inspect the plug for any broken or frayed wiring. You should also plug it directly into an electrical outlet with sufficient capacity and never use an extension cord. Before leaving the room where the space heater is operating, be sure to turn the unit off – especially before retiring for the night.

# Parks and Recreation

## Polar Bear Pool Party – Sunday, January 1



On New Year's Day, Colonial Pool will be open for swimming for those of you who are brave enough to endure cold weather and chilly water! Come out to Colonial Park Pool on Sunday, January 1 from 1 - 3 p.m. for the second annual Polar Bear Pool Party. Colonial Pool members will get in free. For residents who don't yet have their memberships for 2023, the event fee will be \$6, and for non-residents guests, it will be \$12 (West U residents must accompany guests). If you want to purchase your 2023 membership, this is a great time to get it in advance! And for those of you who aren't made of Polar Bear material, you can enjoy eating poolside treats while watching your family and friends take their chilly dip in the water. For more information on this fun event visit [www.westutx.gov/parks](http://www.westutx.gov/parks) or call the West U Recreation Center at 713-662-7420.

## Go Gaga at Judson Park

Improvements were completed at Judson Park this fall and feature a new Gaga Ball area which is the perfect addition for those beginning to age out of traditional play equipment. The Parks and Recreation Board and staff worked in conjunction with a citizen user group on improvement recommendations for Judson Park. Improvements include repainting the current play structures and fencing, replacing the artificial safety turf in the 2-5 year old play area, resurfacing the tennis courts with new pickleball lines, and installing solar and LED lighting. Special thanks to the Friends of West University Parks Fund, Inc. for approving funding to cover all improvement expenses.

## New Park Regulations

The matter of "for profit" activities occurring in West U's municipal spaces was identified as a Management Priority in the City's 2021-2022 Strategic plan. Since then, the topic has had considerable discussion by the City's Staff, Parks and Recreation Board, and Tennis & Pickleball Committee. City Council unanimously passed the second and final reading of the ordinance regulating commercial activities at its August 8 meeting, with an effective date of October 1, 2022. The Parks and Recreation Department strives to deliver various programs and activities in an equitable manner for all West U residents. For more information on the process, please visit, [www.westutx.gov/parks](http://www.westutx.gov/parks).

## West U Piranhas Tryouts

Registration for the West U Piranhas swim team begins for returning swimmers on Sunday March 19. Registration for new swimmers will begin Thursday, March 23. For more information, visit [www.westupiranhas.swimtopia.com](http://www.westupiranhas.swimtopia.com).

## Summer Camp Registration

Does your child need summer plans? The West University Place Parks and Recreation Department has the perfect camp for every child! Spaces are limited. Please visit [www.recweb.westutx.gov](http://www.recweb.westutx.gov) for a complete listing of camp descriptions, dates, and times, or call 713-662-7420 for more information.

**Camp Registration Information:**

**Resident Summer Camp Registration:**

begins Friday, February 3

**Open Summer Camp Registration:**

begins Friday, February 10

**Kidventure Camp:**

Please visit [www.kidventure.com](http://www.kidventure.com) for more info.

## Kidventure Holiday Camp

**Fees:**  
Winter: R \$275, NR \$305  
Spring Break: R \$320, NR \$350

**Times:**  
8:00 am – 3:00 pm with the option to purchase post camp till 6:00 pm.

## Building Brains Camp

Campers will build real working machines and motorize them. S.T.E.M lessons include gears, levers and pulleys. Engineering curriculum that includes solar and pneumatic energy.

9:00 am – 12:00 pm  
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
Dec 19 – 23  
Dec 26 – 30

9:00 am – 4:00 pm  
Dec 19 – 23  
Dec 26 – 30  
Fees: Half Day \$350, Full Day \$450

## Fun Over 50

[www.westutx.gov/seniors](http://www.westutx.gov/seniors)

### John Fairey Garden Tour

Thursday, December 1 or Wednesday, December 14, a docent-led tour will be provided of the John Fairey Garden grounds in Hempstead. Enjoy walking through these beautiful gardens and shop the nursery. Lunch overlooking the pond and grounds is included. Registration is \$50. For more information call 713-662-5895.

### Annual Christmas Concert Sunday, December 11

Join us for a free Christmas concert! The Concert Band, directed by Conductor Chuck Throckmorton, will take the stage in the Community Building at 2 p.m on Sunday, December 11.

### AARP Tax Help

One hour appointments for in person tax preparation for the upcoming tax season will begin in February! This program is free, and will take place on Fridays in February from 9 a.m to 12 p.m. Schedule your appointment by calling Senior Services at 713-662-5895.

### Adults with Aging Parents Thursday, January 12

This program is designed for family members, caregivers, and loved ones of senior drivers. This presentation has been developed to help those concerned about a loved one's ability to drive safely as a result of the aging process. This complimentary presentation will take place at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 12, in the Community Building.

### Free Family Comedy Night Friday, January 27

Make plans to enjoy an evening of laughs at the Community Building with the Green Light Comedy Players, a fast-paced, troupe dedicated to bringing laughter to the Houston area. This event is guaranteed to bring joy to audiences of all ages. Their performance will be at 6 p.m. on Friday, January 27.

### A Safe Drive through the Aging Process Monday, February 13

Join West U Senior Services for a complimentary presentation developed specifically for senior drivers. A practical, entertaining, and realistic approach to the issue of senior drivers and the aging process. This presentation will take place at 1 p.m. on Monday, February 13, in the Community Building.

West U Senior Services has many exercise classes available. Try a sample class to see if it will be a good fit for you before you buy. A full list of classes is available in the Hi, Neighbor newsletter on the City's website.

# Friends of West U Parks

 Friends of West University Parks Fund

 FriendsOfWestUParks

## Save the Date!

### Park Lovers' Ball - Saturday, February 11

The elegant and glitzy Four Seasons Hotel Houston will be the setting for the upcoming Park Lovers' Ball – Co-Chairs and longtime friends Whitney Walsh and Mitra Woody have teamed up to create a memorable evening including the popular wine pull, whiskey blackjack, silent and live auctions, big board, dinner and dancing to the tunes of Adrian Michael and the Greenway Band. We are pleased to announce that the event will honor Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital for their many years of generous support.



Whitney Walsh

“ Even though I am a native Houstonian, living in West U for the past 20 years has given me a new perspective of Houston. Before we had children, my husband and I met our neighbors during our evening walks. My first volunteer Board experience was serving on the Friends of West University Parks Board. Now, three children later, we have enjoyed full use of each of the West University Parks, camps and swim lessons at the Recreation Center and volunteering with the West University Senior Services. We are grateful for this family-focused community, its exceptional city services and the neighborhood friendships West U continues to develop over the years. Mitra and I welcome you to join in on planning the upcoming Park Lover's Ball!”



Mitra Woody

“ I'm excited and honored to be co-chairing the 2023 Park Lovers' Ball with Whitney Walsh on February 11th. The theme for this year's ball is "A Park for All Seasons," capturing the essence of how our parks serve the community not only throughout the year, but also in different seasons of our lives. My children have grown up running around our parks and now my oldest meets his friends to play basketball. I know we will continue to use and appreciate the parks for years to come. I hope you will plan to join us in celebrating our parks and raise the needed funds to support the improvements necessary to our West U parks.”

Auction co-chairs **Jordan Jewett** and **Catherine Hamilton** are putting together a great auction for gala attendees. If you have an experience or another great item to add to the auction line up, we are accepting auction donations via the QR code to the right.

Park Lovers' Ball table sales and seats can be purchased via the QR code to the right.



Underwriting and Seats



Auction Donations

## Fathers & Flashlights

A tremendous thank you to the 2022 **Fathers & Flashlights Camp Founder and Title Sponsor Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital!** The event co-chairs, Kelly Beth and Charlie Hapgood, Katie and Chris Hill and Sarah and Mark Knysch couldn't be more pleased with the success of the popular neighborhood campout held in early November. "On behalf of Friends of West U Parks, we are so happy to be able to host this great family fundraising event for our community each year. Everyone enjoys it so much!" exclaims Friends Executive Director Donna LaMond.

A big shout out and thank you to our Camp Heroes; Gibson Dunn, Texas Children's Hospital, and our many other generous underwriters and sponsors including Dr. Julie Longoria and Dr. Stephen Chen/ West U Smiles Pediatric Dentistry & Orthodontics, Kirkland & Ellis, Russo Home Renovations, Maggie Garza, Realtor/Compass & Elizabeth Borski/Old Republic Title, Kristine Martinez and Freddie Manahan-Realtors/Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty, David B. Atkins, Debbie Crow, Kristine Martinez, Margaret Vinson, Laura Mayer, and Stormy Hayes-Knipe-Realtors/Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty, Heidi Dugan, Realtor/Greenwood King, Rice Emergency Room, Frost Bank, SCT Coffee, The Pit Room, Chick Fil A Holcombe & Buffalo Speedway, Goodsmith Home Care and Repair, Village Plumbing & Air, Lauren and Brandon DeFrehn, Laura Mayer-Realtor/Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty, Tiny's Milk & Cookies plus many others. Please visit the Friends website to see the complete list of our generous supporters at [westuparks.org](http://westuparks.org).



GIBSON DUNN



To stay up to date on Park Lovers' Ball and Fathers & Flashlights plus other Friends news, please visit the Friends website at [www.westuparks.org](http://www.westuparks.org) and sign up to receive Friends emails. Volunteers are the backbone of Friends of West U Parks. If you are interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities, please contact Friends Executive Director, Donna LaMond, at [DLaMond@WestUTX.gov](mailto:DLaMond@WestUTX.gov) or 713-662-7430.

Friends fundraising continues year around with business partnerships, memorials and honorariums, pavers, benches, and tree sales.

# Public Works

## Buffalo Speedway Project Update:

Over the last year and a half, the Contractor (SER) through assistance by City staff, project engineers and the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), have completed approximately 80% of the Buffalo Speedway Project. As of this writing, this project is going into the final stretch towards completion scheduled for April 2023. A major milestone was reached this summer with the completion of all underground storm sewer boxes. Approximately 13,000 linear feet of new storm sewer pipe was installed along with associated inlet leads, junction boxes, etc. 2,000 linear feet of water line was also installed as part of this project

New road pavement has been completed between University Blvd. and Bissonnet. The west side roadway pavement between W. Holcombe and University is substantially complete with the east side roadway pavement soon to follow. Also replaced were driveway aprons, sidewalks and curb ramps.

Residents should continue to exercise caution around the construction site and pack their patience ensuring to abide by all traffic speed and safety laws for the well-being of themselves, their passengers, and construction workers. Drivers should plan their travel routes accordingly and expect delays. City staff is working with the contractor to mitigate impacts whenever possible.

All residents living on or around Buffalo Speedway are highly encouraged to sign up for news and alerts about the project. Please visit [www.westutx.gov/buffalo](http://www.westutx.gov/buffalo) for more details.

If you have any questions regarding the Buffalo Speedway Project, please contact Capital Project Manager Eduardo Barreto at 713-662-5848 or via email at [ebarreto@westutx.gov](mailto:ebarreto@westutx.gov)

## Winterizing your Irrigation System

February 2021 showed us that we are vulnerable to extreme cold and freezing temperatures. Now is a good time to ensure that you know some basics of the irrigation system around your home. Please remember that the irrigation system is the responsibility of the property owner and the City cannot work on private systems.

A simple precaution for preventing costly repairs and wasting water is to turn off your irrigation system at the backflow preventer and to make sure that the pipes are properly insulated. Insulation alone may not prevent breaks, so be sure to drain your system and also turn off your sprinkler system at the control panel. Systems that remain charged or with water in the column may cause the water to expand when frozen and cause the pipes to burst.

Most systems can be turned off by rotating the irrigation valve handle clockwise to the closed position. The handle will be perpendicular to the pipe when closed. If your system has a separate isolation valve in the ground near the backflow preventer, it is a good idea to close this valve as well.

If you are unsure of how to drain your irrigation system, please consult your irrigation service provider for further information. You may also search for "how-to" videos online on how to winterize your irrigation system.

Remember to plan ahead this winter, and to wrap all exposed pipes and outdoor faucets. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

## East Side Paving & Drainage Project

As one project ends, another begins...with the completion of the Buffalo Speedway Project in sight, the City continues to make drainage improvements a priority. In 2021, the city completed a City Wide Drainage modeling study and a preliminary report. Both studies recommended improvements to the drainage system east of Buffalo Speedway. In July, City Council and staff identified this project as part of the Foundation for the Future campaign.

**Construction for this project is slated to begin in early 2023.**

The improvements will be separated into two packages:

**Package 1** includes paving and drainage upgrades along University Boulevard from Buffalo Speedway to Kirby Drive.

**Package 2** includes paving and drainage upgrades along Wakeforest Avenue from Plumb Street to Pemberton Street, Rice Blvd. from Wakeforest to Kirby Dr., and Duke Street from Buffalo Speedway to Wakeforest.



For more information about this project, and to sign up for important construction alerts, scan the QR code to visit the City's website.



# West U Recycling and Solid Waste Reduction Board

## Recycling Guidelines

### Curbside Household Recycling

Place all items in your BLUE BIN, cardboard box, or paper bag. NO PLASTIC BAGS. Need an additional blue bin? Stop by Public Works, 3826 Amherst Street, 7:30 am–5:30 pm.

For additional information regarding acceptable and unacceptable items, scan the provided QR code.



## ITEMS ACCEPTED



### CANS

Aluminum, Steel, and Tin Cans

Empty and rinse



### CARTONS

Food and Beverage Cartons

Empty and replace cap



### GLASS

Bottles and Jars

Empty and rinse  
No caps or tops



### PAPER

Mixed Paper, Newspaper, Magazines, Cereal Boxes, and Flattened Cardboard



### PLASTIC

Kitchen, Laundry, Bath: Bottles and Containers

Empty and replace cap



## Items Not Accepted



Do not bag recyclables in plastic bags

No garbage



No plastic bags

Recycle at retail store bins: Randall's, Kroger, HEB



No food or liquid

Empty all containers



No  plastic containers or Styrofoam



No clothing or linens

Use donation programs



No tangles

No hoses, wires, chains, or electronics

## YARD WASTE

What's included: leaves, grass clippings, and small tree and hedge trimmings bagged in kraft paper or compostable plastic bags.

Larger items may be stacked no greater than two 4' x 4' x 3' piles with limbs no greater than 3" in diameter.

### ONLY USE:



USE KRAFT PAPER BAGS

OR



COMPOSTABLE PLASTIC BAGS

# City Currents

Winter 2023



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

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
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## A Newsletter for the Residents of the City of West University Place

### City of West U Officials

#### CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Susan Sample  
Mayor Pro Tem John Montgomery  
John P. Barnes  
Melanie Bell  
Shannon Carroll

#### CITY MANAGER

Dave Beach  
[dbeach@westutx.gov](mailto:dbeach@westutx.gov)

*City Currents* is a quarterly publication and is printed on recycled paper.

For questions and comments about *City Currents*, contact Communications Coordinator Bianca Cuccerre at [bcuccerre@westutx.gov](mailto:bcuccerre@westutx.gov) or 713-662-5350.

Design by Minor Design

## Meeting Reminder for City Council, Boards and Commissions

### City Council \*currently available in person and via Zoom

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 6:00 p.m.

### Parks and Recreation Board

Meetings are typically held 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/agendacenter](http://www.westutx.gov/agendacenter) or call the City Secretary's Office at 713-662-5813.

## Save The Date!

### Mayor's State of the City Address

Thursday, January 12 at the Community Building.  
Starting at 6:00 p.m.



## Citizen Satisfaction Survey

Scan the QR Code to participate in the 2022 Citizen Satisfaction Survey! Your feedback will help city leaders better understand the community's needs, priorities, and concerns. The survey will close Friday, December 16. For more information visit, [www.westutx.gov/2022survey](http://www.westutx.gov/2022survey)

