



**SALLIE ALCORN**  
COUNCIL MEMBER

**2024 YEAR  
IN REVIEW**

# A NOTE

December 20, 2024

Friends and neighbors,

Here I am wrapping up my fifth year on City Council! Wow. Time sure flies when you're having fun. I love this job every bit as much as when I started, and my team and I are honored to serve you and be your advocates at City Hall each and every day.

The year 2024 brought a lot of changes. New mayor, new administration, many new department heads, and some new council members. I think new blood is good for the city; it brings fresh ideas, new perspectives, and ensures things around here don't get stale and complacent. I always say I am glad my two terms are under two different administrations. While styles and governance may look different, the bottom line is we are all here to serve and to work hard to make our city the best it can be.

Sadly, 2024 brought two devastating natural disasters. The Derecho storm hit in April on the night of my first budget town hall. Luckily, we were safe inside the Southwest Multiservice Center, but little did we know the damage this storm was causing throughout Houston. Then Beryl hit in July causing much destruction, endless debris, and more power outages. As always, Houstonians rose to the occasion helping their neighbors and pitching in to ease the pain of others.

Thankfully, 2024 brought a lot of good news too! Chevron announced it's moving its headquarters to downtown Houston, the city was awarded major federal money for infrastructure projects, Spaceport company Intuitive Machines successfully landed its Nova-C lunar lander on the moon, the \$1.4 billion International Terminal at IAH is nearing completion (thank goodness!), the River Oaks Theatre reopened, design efforts are underway on a \$54 million revitalization project for Houston's historic MacGregor Park, the Commons at Hermann Park opened its 26-acre play space complete with rocket ship slide and carousel, and we successfully recruited 292 police and 374 fire cadets to help make our city safer.

2024 also brought lots of work from the at-large 5 team. Thanks for reading through this report to learn how we spent our time – projects and initiatives, casework, community involvement, budget and policy work – all of our work focused on you. I hope you have a terrific holiday, and let's keep working toward a better Houston in 2025.

THANK YOU! It is a joy and privilege to represent you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Seattle Allen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and "A".

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# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

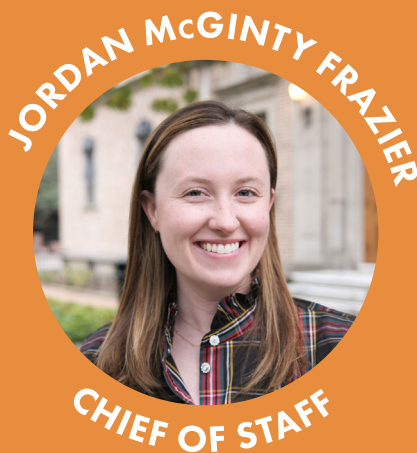


## CONSTITUENT CASES

We understand residents usually call their district council member with specific city issues to resolve, but my staff and I are also here to be your advocates at City Hall. This year we directly helped 521 constituents with a wide array of issues ranging from stray dogs to sewer clogs and everything in between. The bulk of our casework is handled by Houston Public Works. Please remember to call us if you need help from a city department.



# THE TEAM



## COMMUNITY MEETINGS

My team and I attended numerous community meetings this year. These include civic clubs, super neighborhoods, and homeowner association groups. These meetings offer a great way to hear directly from people about issues specific to their neighborhoods. No two neighborhoods are alike. Each has its own needs and it's important to keep the communication flowing.

# 133 COMMUNITY MEETINGS



# 76 SITE VISITS & CONSTITUENT MEETINGS



## PETSET

On October 15, my team and I partnered with Houston PetSet and Council Member Ed Pollard to host a spay/neuter event at Sharpstown Baptist Church. PetSet was able to provide surgeries, microchips, and various vaccines to 25 cats and dogs.

## FALLS PREVENTION

On September 24, I hosted my annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day at the Kingwood Community Center. About 50 seniors gathered to learn how to increase their mobility, strength, and balance through a series of simple, dynamic exercises. Participants also received information on how to “fall proof” their homes and how medicines might impact balance. Annually, one in four older adults experiences a fall, many resulting in serious injury. This event provides participants with practical strategies to reduce their risk of falls and maintain their independence.

I am grateful for the support of our partners including Case Physical Therapy, Houston Health Department, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Harris County Area Agency on Aging, Houston-Galveston Area Council Area Agency on Aging, Baker Ripley, Molina Healthcare, and the Houston Food Bank. This event would not have been possible without our generous sponsors: H-E-B (flu shots!), NRG, Comcast, Memorial Hermann, the Houston Galveston Area Council, and AARP. Hope to see you next year!





# COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

## BUDGET & FISCAL AFFAIRS

### *BUDGET PROCESS*

In March, Mayor Whitmire announced my appointment as chair of the Budget and Fiscal Affairs (BFA) Committee. This committee reviews monthly financial reports and addresses all matters related to the city's annual budget, debt model, and financial policies.

In my first term, I worked with the administration and finance department to advocate for outcome-based budgeting, a form of budgeting which ties spending to public priorities and departmental performance measures. I also pushed for efficiencies and measures to address the city's structural deficit including retiree health benefit reforms and funding for deferred maintenance of city facilities. I am grateful to continue this work and to collaborate with the administration and Controller on ways to address Houston's fiscal challenges.

On June 12, in a 15-2 vote, city council approved the city's \$7.3 billion Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) operating budget. When the budget was released on May 14, my team and I got straight to work reading and analyzing the data, [asking departments close to 200 questions about proposed spending](#), and [overseeing 23 departmental budget workshops](#).

Key highlights of the FY25 budget include:

- \$187 million drawn down from the city's ending fund balance to cover existing budget gap in the \$3.3 billion General Fund (tax-supported budget)
- Pay increases for police (3.5%) and fire (10%) – a new municipal employee contract was approved later in October 2024.
- \$30.6 million for debt service related to the firefighter settlement and an additional \$10 million increase in firefighter incentive pay

- \$36 million to cover the first year of raises in the firefighter collective bargaining agreement
- \$11.7 million in General Fund budget cuts (primarily the removal of vacant staff positions)
- Funding for six police and five fire cadet classes
- \$25 million set aside in the budget stabilization (rainy day) fund to address natural disasters and emergencies
- \$135 million transferred from property tax revenue to street and drainage projects, plus \$8 million more for drainage via amendment
- \$475 million in police, fire, and municipal employee pension costs
- Ending General Fund balance of \$280 million which is 11% of expenditures less debt, \$91 million above the required 7.5% established in the city’s financial policies

The operating budgets of key departments are as follows:



To read more about the budget amendments approved during the budget vote discussion, click [here](#).

As chair of the BFA committee and budget process, I plan to continue increasing public engagement by scheduling budget-related town hall meetings in the next fiscal year, and of course, my annual YOUR TWO CENTS budget survey.

We launched this year’s YOUR TWO CENTS budget survey on April 16 and closed on June 11. The survey link was sent out in our newsletter, posted on my social media accounts, and shared with super neighborhoods and civic clubs. The survey was available in five languages. This year, we received over 650 responses from Houstonians ranking their highest priorities:

1. Infrastructure
2. Public safety
3. Solid waste

***DERECHO & HURRICANE BERYL***

On September 9, Finance Director Melissa Dubowski presented on the [financial impacts of the Derecho and Hurricane Beryl](#) as well as provided an update on the [city’s revenue cap and proposed tax rate scenarios](#).

At the time, the director estimated the impact of the two disasters to be \$210,628,730. FEMA reimburses the city for 75% of these costs –\$157,971,547. The local share is 25% or \$52,657,182 -- \$39,906,661 General Fund and \$12,750,521 non-General Fund.

The director presented five scenarios for the city’s potential tax rate – all within allowable limits of state and local laws:

	Change from current rate	Tax rate	\$ vs. Budget	Expenditure Cut Needed	Notes
A	-	0.519190	(\$46M)	\$86M	Cut needed to cover shortfall & 25% of disasters
B	1.7¢	0.536480	-	\$40M	Cut needed to cover 25% of disasters
C	3.2¢	0.551600	\$40M	-	No cuts needed in FY25, sufficient revenues to cover 25% of disasters
D	4.5¢	0.564026	\$73M	(\$33M)	Sufficient revenues to cover 25% of disasters and act as additional cash flow for disaster recovery
E	6.2¢	0.581393	\$119M	(\$79M)	Sufficient revenues to cover 25% of disasters and act as additional cash flow for disaster recovery

Based on this information, and in anticipation of a potential \$230 million budget shortfall in FY2026, Council Members Castillo, Martinez, Plummer and I submitted a “Prop A” item to adopt Scenario C and set a tax rate of 0.551600. Prior to the vote, we spoke at several community meetings regarding the submittal and held a [virtual town hall meeting on Sunday, October 6](#).

With the anticipated \$230 million budget shortfall facing the city in July 2025, I was concerned that if we did not raise revenue to cover disaster costs, we would dig ourselves deeper into a hole. Thankfully, the state came through revenue to pay most of the city’s share of the disasters, so the tax rate remained the same as last year. I remain committed to working with Mayor Whitmire to cut spending in the city budget. To read or watch my full statement, [click here](#).

## OTHER CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEES

### ARTS & CULTURE COMMITTEE

The Arts and Culture Committee reviews interests including the Mayor’s Office of Cultural Activities, Houston Arts Alliance, and use of civic art funds.

On October 1, a joint meeting was held with BFA to review a [presentation on the economic and social impact of arts culture industry in Houston](#). In 2022 alone, arts and culture generated \$1.3 billion in spending in Houston. This supported 19,552 jobs and provided \$31.8 million in local government revenue.

### SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE

The Service Delivery Committee reviews performance of services provided to the public and constituents by any city department as well as code of ordinance changes proposed to improve services or enable efficiencies.

Earlier this year, the city re-engaged consulting firm Alvarez and Marsal to assess performance and analyze processes at the Houston Permitting Center (HPC). Recommendations for process improvements should be released by the end of 2024.

In June, I launched an online survey for HPC users. There were three simple questions on the survey: in your opinion, what’s working at HPC, what’s not, and what are your suggestions for improvement? It was open for 30 days and received 85 responses. The [results were summarized submitted to Mayor Whitmire and HPC leadership](#) to assist with the Alvarez and Marsal engagement.

At the October Service Delivery Committee meeting, HPC executive director Rudy Moreno presented a proposed after-hours review program expansion. HPC’s current [after-hours review program](#) exists for building code enforcement only and is staffed by third-party consultants. HPC is proposing to expand its current program to in-



clude the Office of the City Engineer and be staffed entirely by HPC employees. Current third-party consultants on contract with the city will be directed to focus on other projects. Program details may be found in the [linked presentation](#). By expanding the after-hours review program, HPC aims to reduce review times and improve customer satisfaction. The city intends to have this program implemented and available for customers by the end of 2024.

## REGIONAL COMMITTEES

### *HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL (H-GAC), CHAIR*

I enjoyed serving as chair of the H-GAC board this year, helping to lead the 13-county region in carrying out initiatives and programs in workforce development, transportation, aging, criminal justice, and community and environmental matters. While efforts to implement Proposition B, the voter-approved measure for greater representational voting share for Houston, were unsuccessful, I did my best to represent Houston and advocate for the urban core of the region. In addition to H-GAC's traditional focus areas, board members expressed interest in working on housing, broadband, and water supply issues. H-GAC for the first time is setting aside funds (from earned interest) to establish work plans and initiatives in these important areas.

### *TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL (TPC), BOARD MEMBER*

TPC experienced the same fate on Prop B. Efforts to increase Houston's vote share failed despite our advocacy, but since Houston is required to be a part of the TPC by federal law, the city attorney advised our membership on the board should continue.

Some notable TPC items in 2024: The Metropolitan Planning Organization director resigned and there is currently a search for a new one. The Woodlands Township was approved as a full member of the TPC in April. In October, Houston-area projects were awarded \$151 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant Funding (from carryover balance), most notably \$78.8 million for NHHIP enhancements - caps from South Main to Austin Street and Cleburn to Almeda, and for arch bridges at Elgin, Tuam, and McGowen. This funding also includes \$12 million for the Main Street Promenade and \$10 million to the Houston Parks Board for bridge and trail extensions and rehabilitation.

### *TEXAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE (TML), DIRECTOR AT-LARGE*

I serve as the Houston's representative on the Texas Municipal League (TML) board. TML provides valuable research on relevant topics to municipalities and works during the state legislature to protect cities' interests. Through TML's promotion of cooperative relationships between municipalities and other levels of government, TML provides their member cities with information on shared interests and concerns. The annual conference and exhibition was held in Houston on October 8 through 11.



## OTHER BUDGET & FISCAL AFFAIRS HIGHLIGHTS

### APRIL 2 & 30 · FIREFIGHTER AGREEMENT · BFA & LABOR

Joint meeting with the Labor Committee to discuss the [Houston Professional Firefighter Association settlement agreement](#) and [financial implications](#). The \$650 million settlement and five-year collective bargaining agreement were approved June 18.

### MAY 15 & MAY 30 · BUDGET FORECAST · BFA

Special-called meetings were held as part of the budget process to review the [Finance Department's Five-Year Forecast and Budget Overview](#) as well as the [Controller's Trends Report](#).

### JUNE 17 · CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN · BFA

The [Proposed FY25-29 Capital Improvement Plan](#) was presented.

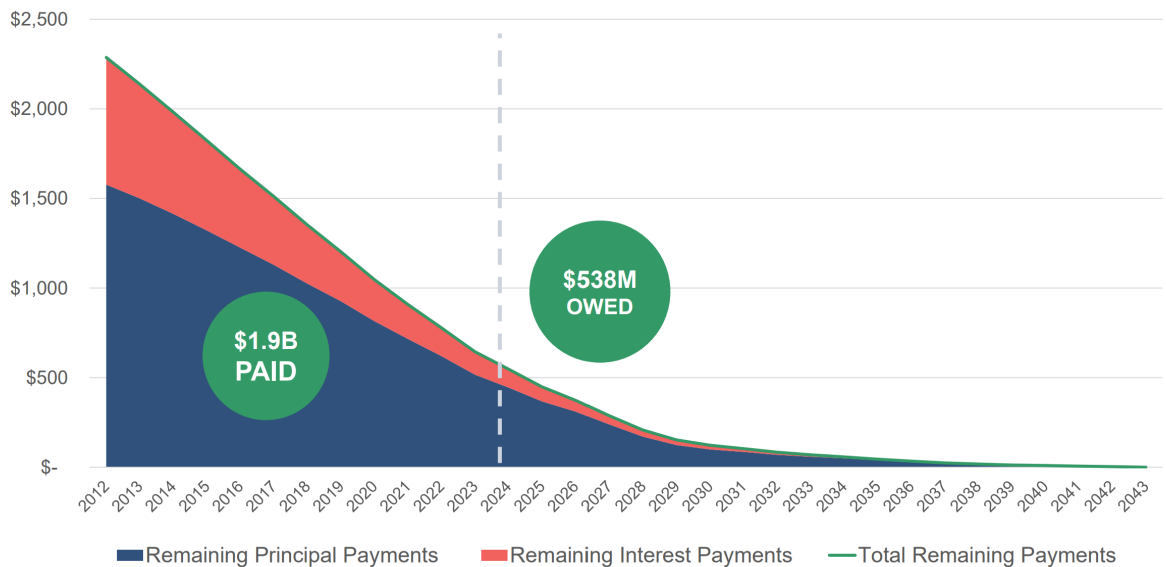
### JULY 30 · TAX COLLECTION · BFA

City Legal presented information on the city's [delinquent tax collection contracts and process](#). At the meeting a motion was made to reassign collection of certain areas based on performance measures outlined in the two tax collection contracts.

### OCTOBER 1 · BUILD HOUSTON FORWARD · BFA

October 1: Houston Public Works presented an update on the [Build Houston Forward](#) program. Since 2012, the city has paid down \$1.9 billion in debt, allowing more funding for street and drainage important projects. The below chart illustrates the Build Houston Forward program's debt reduction:

## PROGRESS TOWARD ZERO DEBT



JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

**OCTOBER 29 · MWBE CERTIFICATIONS · BFA**

October 29: joint meeting with the Economic Development Committee to discuss [revenue options for the city's Office of Business Opportunity \(OBO\) certification](#).

During the June budget discussion, CM Martinez and I offered budget amendments to establish a fee to be charged to governmental and other local entities using City of Houston-issued Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) certifications. This fee would assist in covering staff costs associated with the MWBE certification process. There are several governmental and other local entities using city MWBE certification free-of-charge including Harris County, METRO, Port Houston, and others.

The October 29 OBO presentation highlighted departmental challenges such as comparatively low salaries, high staff turnover, and increased caseload. To address these issues and improve service, the department is considering charging an application fee for certifications as well as charging other agencies which use the city's certifications.

The OBO advisory board committee is expected to review the proposed changes and provide feedback before the end of 2024.

**DECEMBER 3 · HOUSTON FIRST · BFA**

Houston First Corporation presented its [2025 budget](#). Also, John Diamond presented an overview of the Baker Institute's report: [Houston Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones \(TIRZ\) Regressively Redistribute Property Tax Burden](#).

**LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025**

City council approved contracts for two important consulting engagements in 2024. I look forward to reviewing recommendations from each.

- Ernst & Young: efficiency, organizational, and performance reviews of all city departments and spend analysis of each of the city's 28 Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZs).
- Burns & McDonnell: assessment of the solid waste department's current state recommendations for improved service delivery, including exploration of a garbage fee.

Council Member Flickinger and I submitted similar budget amendments related to termination pay and other Human Resources (HR) sick/vacation leave policies. The budget amendment sought to convene a working group of staff from HR, Finance, and Administration and Regulatory Affairs (payroll) to review and update current policies, including maximum number of hours paid out upon termination. The working group met in November and December and will continue its work next year.

# INFRASTRUCTURE & SUSTAINABILITY

## **WATER BILLING REFORM**

In response to inaccurate water bills due to failing meter readers, Houston implemented the below changes in April 2024:

- Single-family homes received temporary “set usage” bills based on past consumption
- Accelerated replacement of meter readers
- Customers with working new readers transitioned to actual usage billing in August
- Improved customer service and billing clarity

Customers may track their remote read device replacement via [this dashboard](#). As of December 11, 125,000 remote readers have replaced, more than 75,000 customers remain on set usage billing, and roughly 15,000 have transitioned to regular billing. Another 30,000 customers will transition to regular billing within the next 60 days.

## **METRO BOOST 82 WESTHEIMER PROJECT**

In May, Metro and the City of Houston broke ground on the [Boost 82 Westheimer Improvement Project](#). The scope of work includes improvements along 19 miles of roadway:

- Roadway repair and street reconstruction, including upgraded driveways
- New or improved sidewalks along and/or near the route
- Improved accessibility along the route with safer crossings and new ramps for wheelchair and stroller access
- Bus shelters with lighting for improved safety and new trash cans
- Digital, real-time bus arrival information

Construction is currently in progress on Segment A (Congress to Shepherd) and Segment B (Shepherd to 610). Segment C (610 to Highway 6) is currently in design. Crews are doing all they can to avoid work in the Galleria/Highland Village area during this holiday season. To track the progress of the project, [click here](#).

## **WATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

In August, I toured the heart of Houston’s water supply, the East Water Purification Plant. This facility provides water to 65% of our city. This tour opened my eyes to just how old this infrastructure is - some sections of the plant date back to the 1950s. It was a stark reminder of the risks associated with our aging infrastructure. Key takeaways: We need upgrades and redundancy! This plant is crucial, but relying so heavily on one aging facility is way too risky. We need a new plant for sure, but that will take about ten years. In the meantime, it’s going to take



significant investment to maintain and improve what we have. HPW is working with state and federal partners to secure the funding needed to make critical improvements.

On August 28, Houston Public Works provided an update on the [Consent Decree](#) – an agreement with the federal government to spend approximately \$9 billion over a 15-year period to improve Houston’s wastewater system.

### **COMPOSTING**

Together with the city’s Solid Waste Department and Zero Waste, another six-week food waste drop-off pilot program was held between January 22 and February 29. Houstonians were able to drop off food scraps at four locations. Through this initiative, 262 residents participated and over 9,800 pounds of food waste was diverted from the landfill.

On September 3, I submitted a [letter of support to the US Department of Agriculture for their Composting and Food Waste Reduction Grant](#) to help bolster Houston’s goals of improving the diversion rate of food waste generated in Houston. The grant dollars will help fund our proposed programming with goals to educate the public, provide convenient drop-off locations, improve efforts at community gardens, and partner with Houston-area organizations.



In October, we announced the return of our annual (4th year!) pumpkin drop-off program with expanded locations and extended hours. This program offered a convenient way for Houstonians to compost their holiday pumpkins, reducing waste that would otherwise end up in landfills. Between November 1 and December 6, residents dropped off retired jack-o-lanterns, whole pumpkins, seeds, and pulp at two locations, the Westpark Recycling Center and the Reuse Warehouse. An astounding 25,260 pounds of pumpkins were dropped off; they will be transformed into nutrient-rich compost to spread on our city parks and green spaces!

### **NHHIP GROUNDBREAKING AND CAP PARKS PROJECT**

TxDOT broke ground on the North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP) on October 16. A key element of the project is rerouting I-45 to run parallel with I-69 and I-10 through downtown Houston. Enhancements are planned in the form of cap parks (parks on top of the depressed freeway) - these parks aim to connect neighborhoods formerly divided by freeways.

The East Downtown (EaDo) Cap Park steering committee is working to finalize the structural engineering of the cap to meet TxDOT’s March 2025 deadline. The committee is focused on minimizing costs and maximizing the cap’s potential as part of a larger convention and entertainment district downtown.

Project 3B-1 is the first NHHIP project to begin, supporting development of drainage infrastructure to support the nearby section of the freeway which includes the construction of a 12’ x 12’ drainage culvert below St. Emanuel Street. Succeeded by project 3B-2, this segment will reconstruct I-69 northbound and southbound main lanes from State Highway 288 to I-45, anticipating construction to begin January 2025. Project 3A, which includes depressed main lanes, cap structures, and pedestrian realm, is not scheduled to begin construction until late 2026.

## **SIDEWALKS**

In March, federal officials awarded \$43.4 million for improvements of sidewalks, drainage, and tree cover to create climate-resilient streets in the [Gulfton and Kashmere Gardens neighborhoods](#). These projects will follow recommendations outlined in the [2023 Resilient Sidewalks plan](#).

This fall the planning department announced proposed changes to expand the sidewalk construction exemption criteria, simplify the ordinance, streamline the application process, and address unconnected sidewalk segments in neighborhoods. The Planning Department hosted a series of eight in-person and virtual meetings between October 22 and November 2 to outline and clarify the changes in the proposed amendments. The changes were again heard at Planning Commission on November 14. At this meeting, I provided public comment advocating for further protection and investment in the city's sidewalk network. To watch my comments, [please click here](#). Following the meeting, the planning department delayed action on the proposal to allow for additional research and consideration. I look forward to staying involved in these discussions in the new year.

## **EARTH DAY 2024**

My team and I celebrated Earth Day with a clean up at Westchase District's trail system during their annual Trails Without Trash event. We also joined the Houston Botanic Garden for the unveiling of "Wild Texas," a large-scale, colorful depiction of the landscapes at Sims Bayou Greenway. Staff also participated at a tree planting at Watonga Park in partnership with Apache Corporation to plant 2,500 trees.

## **DERECHO & HURRICANE BERYL**

Just as the city was picking itself back up following the May Derecho, Hurricane Beryl ripped through Houston. During the first few days following Beryl's landfall, 48,000 911 calls were received, 250 medical beds were set up at NRG, and public safety agencies responded to nearly 800 live wire calls. Since the storm, the solid waste department and its contractors have collected over three million cubic yards of storm debris.

As Houstonians were left without power for days and weeks, CenterPoint was called on to answer some tough questions and describe improvements the company will make to prepare for future disasters. CenterPoint launched the Greater Houston Resiliency Initiative, consisting of 42 specific commitments. These include actions such as:

- Launching a new cloud-based outage tracker
- Installing new or replacing 25,000 poles to meet latest extreme wind standards
- Trimming/removing higher-risk vegetation across 4,000 miles of power lines
- Installing 4,500 automation devices, known as trip savers, and 350 intelligent grid switching devices
- Burying more than 400 miles of power lines
- Donating and installing 21 generators for community facilities
- Conducting nearly 20 community open houses across 12 counties in the service region



The estimated financial impact of the two disasters is an amount of \$192 million. FEMA is expected to reimburse the city for 75% of these costs. The city's local 25% share will be partially covered by the state of Texas -- the state will contribute \$26 million, specifically costs associated with debris removal.

# PUBLIC SAFETY

HPD’s use of the SL (Suspended, Lack of Personnel) Code, a practice of suspending incident reports due to lack of manpower, received scrutiny following discovery of longtime misuse. An internal investigation conducted this year by Mayor Whitmire’s independent review committee revealed 268,920 suspended cases from 2016, many in the special victims, major assault, and family violence divisions. HPD has been going back through all of the miscoded cases to contact victims and witnesses, work leads, make arrests, and close out cases with no workable leads. The review committee has recommended impacted HPD divisions have a dedicated crime analyst, standardized crime analysis practices, and increased collaborative training with outside agencies. To read the full report, click [here](#).

In August 2024, Houston Mayor John Whitmire appointed Thomas Muñoz as Fire Department Chief, Noe Diaz as Houston Police Department Chief, Larry Satterwhite as Director of the Mayor’s Office of Public Safety and Homeland Security, and Brian Mason as Director of Houston’s Office of Emergency Management.



HPD Chief Diaz provided a presentation at the September 10 Public Safety Committee in response to HPD-related budget amendments approved during the FY25 budget cycle, including funding for a sixth cadet class. The additional cadet class will yield a projected staffing count of 5,641 by fiscal year 2028. An additional cadet class annually would boost staffing projections to 5,836 by FY28. Ideal staffing levels for HPD are between 6,500 and 7,000 officers.

Mayor Whitmire also announced a \$10,000 salary increase for police cadets to recruit and retain new officers. Upon completion of the probationary period, the officer’s salary will increase to \$62,574.

Crime stats as of October 2024:

	2023	2024	Diff	% Chg
Murder	292	270	-22	-7.5%
Sexual Assault	1,114	1,348	234	21.0%
Robbery	5,597	5,359	-238	-4.3%
Aggravated Assault	13,983	13,658	-325	-2.3%
Kidnapping	331	300	-31	-9.4%
Human Trafficking	57	79	22	38.6%
<b>Violent Crime</b>	<b>21,374</b>	<b>21,014</b>	<b>-360</b>	<b>-1.7%</b>

	2023		Diff	% Chg
Auto Theft	17,221	14,202	-3,019	-17.5%
BMV/TMV	32,391	28,713	-3,678	-11.4%
Burglary	11,249	11,130	-119	-1.1%
Theft	27,499	28,449	950	3.5%
<b>Non-Violent Crime</b>	<b>88,360</b>	<b>82,494</b>	<b>-5,866</b>	<b>-6.6%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>109,734</b>	<b>103,508</b>	<b>-6,266</b>	<b>-5.7%</b>

# QUALITY OF LIFE

## SHORT-TERM RENTALS

At the December 9 Quality of Life committee meeting, a proposal to regulate/register short-term rentals was presented. The city's proposal requires property owners to register and obtain a permit if they plan to rent their property for less than 30 days. The registration application must include owner's name and contact info, name and 24-hour phone number of emergency contact person, name and website for all booking platforms on which the property is advertised, floor plan of property identifying bedrooms, smoke detectors, and fire extinguishers, site plan identifying available off-street parking, proof of insurance, and proof of payment of Hotel Occupancy Tax. Many stakeholders have offered both written and verbal comments on this proposal, and the administration is evaluating feedback and plans to bring an ordinance forward in early 2025.

## AIRPORTS

On March 20, City Council approved a [\\$150 million agreement with United Airlines for the \\$2.5 billion Terminal B](#) project at George Bush International Airport (IAH). Opened in 1969, Terminal B is one of the original terminals at IAH. Its infrastructure is undersized and outdated. The new terminal provides 40 new gates for domestic and international travel, a new processor for ticketing, security, and baggage claim, and two new concourses, creating over 3,000 new jobs in Houston.

At the [October 16 Economic Development Committee](#) meeting, Houston Airport System Director Jim Szczesniak provided an update on ongoing construction and improvements at IAH.

Addressing traffic congestion at IAH: For the December holidays, there will be a partial opening of the international arrivals curb. It was currently operating as a single lane with thousands of pickups every day. The new location will open six of the eight lanes in December.

By January, the international terminal will open partially, and United Airlines will begin moving in. Terminal C congestion will ease as Terminal E flights can access the new central processor. Eleven upstairs lanes and eight downstairs lanes will be open. A new 17-lane TSA checkpoint will be operational.

In late summer 2025, we expect final completion of the International Terminal Redevelopment Program.

The Houston Spaceport, currently supporting 1800 jobs, is blasting off with rapid development!

- The taxiway project connecting Ellington Field to the Houston Spaceport is underway.
- NASA awarded Intuitive Machines a \$4.8 billion contract for a "Near Space Network" satellite system around the moon.
- Collaboration with Venus Aerospace on a hypersonic plane project -- this could take you from Houston to London in just an hour!
- San Jacinto College is expanding its EDGE Training Center.
- Texas A&M is breaking ground on an aerospace institute.
- BVI Machining, specializing in space, aerospace, and oil industry machining, is coming.





### ***HOMELESSNESS PLAN***

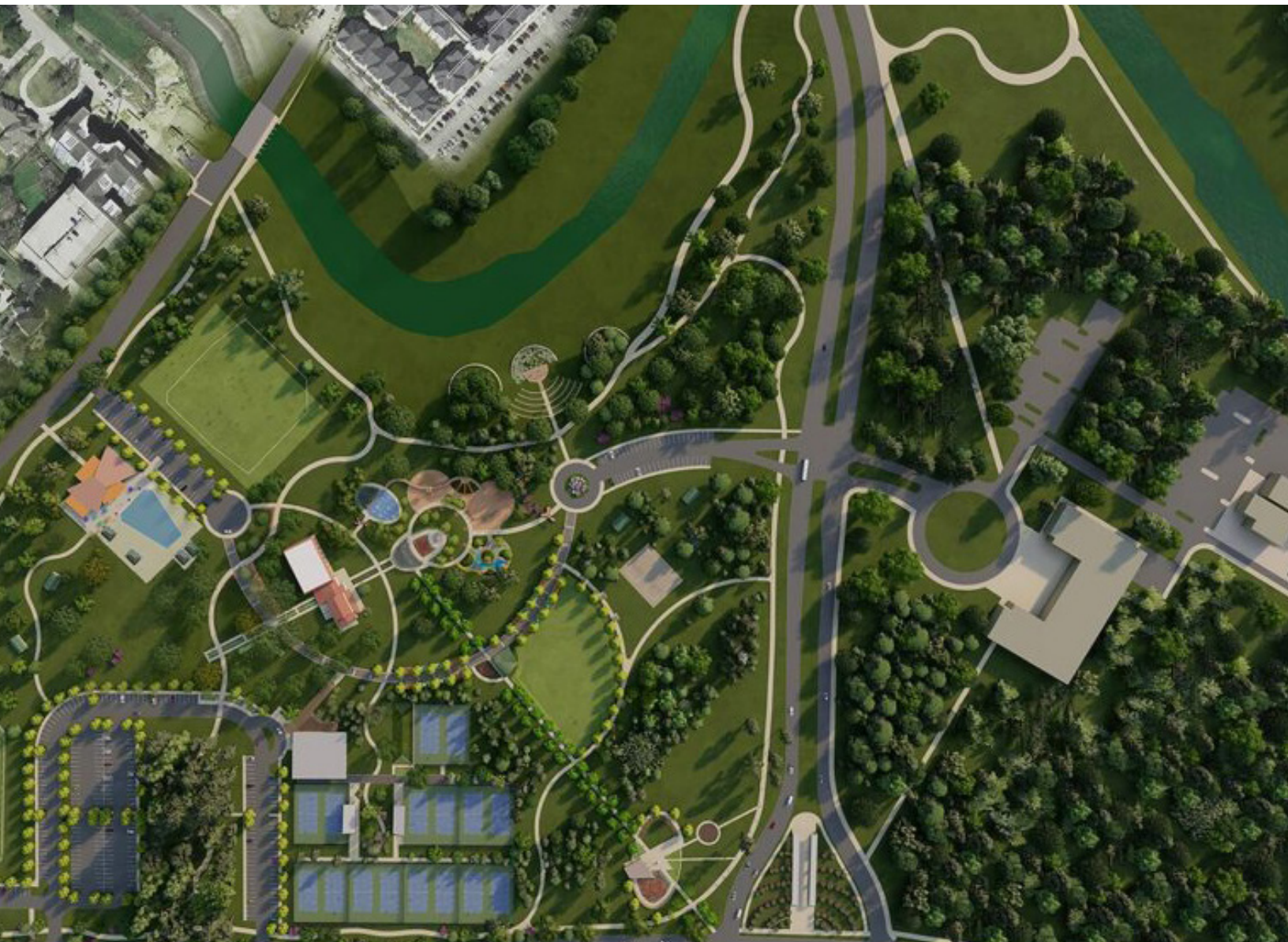
On November 21, Mayor Whitmire, joined by city officials, law enforcement leaders, and nonprofits, announced a [\\$70 million plan](#) to reduce homelessness and provide Houstonians with safe public spaces. This plan will be funded by \$25 million from the city, \$20 million from Harris County, \$10 million from other government sources, \$1 million from the Downtown District, and other contributions from TIRZs, management districts, and philanthropic partners. The first-year funding will be spent on outreach, rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, navigation center activities, and shelter support.

### ***NOISE COMPLAINTS***

Loud noise from bars and nightclubs continue to impact Houston neighborhoods. Using surplus Fiscal Year 2024 At-Large 5 office budget funds, I purchased 19 noise meters and calibrators for HPD North, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest Divisions. Please continue to report any loud noise to HPD's non-emergency line at 713-844-3131.

### ***PARKS***

The Houston Parks Board once again put on a fantastic program at its annual fundraiser on October 15. We heard about exciting plans for MacGregor Park and initiatives to improve and expand Houston's parks and connections. Mayor John Whitmire introduced his "Let's Play Houston" initiative to improve 25 neighborhood parks. The Brown Foundation is also donating \$30 million to help the Parks Board continue its mission to expand, improve, and protect parks in Houston.



# LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

## *JANUARY*

- Appointed chair of H-GAC
- Purchased 100 HPD vehicles
- Appointed Jay Zeidman as chair of Houston First Corporation

## *FEBRUARY*

- Spent \$5.2 million for engineering services for wastewater operating projects
- Purchased 9-1-1 dispatch consoles
- Purchased new pavement marking truck to stripe the streets

## *MARCH*

- Designated Riverside Terrace as a civility ordinance area – meaning people cannot sit or lie down on a sidewalk or place bedding or personal possessions on a sidewalk between 7am and 11pm.
- Purchased five animal enforcement trucks and one mobile adoption unit for BARC
- Purchased 7000 bulletproof vests for HPD
- Adopted tax exemption for child-care facilities
- Authorized audit of waterline repair emergency purchase orders – after reports of fraud

## *APRIL*

- Amended Chapter 39 to allow ANY biodegradable/compostable bags or personal reusable containers to be used for yard waste collection – city-approved bags are no longer required
- Purchased 44 medium and heavy trucks for Houston Public Works
- Appropriated \$53 million for Southeast Wastewater Treatment Plan expansion
- Approved several items to improve efficiencies at Houston Forensic Science Center
- Purchased augmented reality (AR) and VR (virtual reality) laptops for the public libraries

## *MAY*

- Funded an additional \$977K for mental health crisis call diversion program
- Spent \$580K on Ernst and Young operations audit of city departments
- Awarded four prepositioned debris removal contracts for solid waste department

## *JUNE*

- Passed \$7.3 billion city operating budget
- Authorized refunding bonds to cover \$650M backpay as part of the firefighter union settlement
- Unanimously approved settlement and collective bargaining agreement between the City of Houston and the Houston Professional Firefighters Association

## *JULY*

- Adopted rules and processes for City Council initiated Prop A agenda items
- Acquired land for the George R. Brown Convention Center transformation project to be used for future parking, exhibition halls, ballrooms and/or meeting spaces

## *AUGUST*

- Amended tax abatement guidelines and criteria

- Reassigned collections of delinquent property tax accounts
- Authorized \$1.7 million for 13 security cameral trailers to catch illegal dumpers
- Submitted USDA grant application for composting and food waste reduction grant program

#### **SEPTEMBER**

- Appropriated \$1.5 million in parks consolidated construction funds toward the \$54 million MacGregor Park project
- Designated Museum Park as a civility ordinance area
- Increased debris collection monitoring contract by \$16 million
- Approved emergency purchase orders for trailer-mounted generators

#### **OCTOBER**

- Approved tax rate of \$0.51, unchanged from last year
- Purchased six mobile generators for water and wastewater plants
- Appropriated \$2.6 million for sidewalk projects
- Added \$770K to Ernst and Young contract for spend analysis/forensic accounting of TIRZs
- Approved contract between City of Houston and HOPE 123 municipal employee union. This new three-year contract will provide pay raises and increase base wages for around 11,000 of our dedicated city employees, including 311 operators, library workers, solid waste drivers, and public works crews.

#### **NOVEMBER**

- Issued bonds for IAH Terminal B project
- Designated Magnolia Park as a civility ordinance area
- Established the Pat Walsh Memorial Bikeway
- Appropriated final \$200 million for Southwest Airlines expansion at Hobby Airport
- \$885K consulting contract to Alvarez and Maral for Permitting Center process improvements
- \$1.3 million for five years of maintenance for city's fleet of 62 boats

#### **DECEMBER**

- The city's first Green Stormwater Infrastructure tax abatement granted
- Approved Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network FY 2025 \$64 million budget
- Approved operations and maintenance budgets for Lake Conroe Dam and Reservoir, Lake Livingston, Trinity River Water Conveyance, Luce Bayou System, and Lake Houston Facilities Projects
- Purchased vehicles for OEM, HAS, and HPW
- Passed budgets for Old Spanish Trail, Upper Kirby, and Fifth Ward TIRZs
- Purchased warehouse property for HPW emergency management consolidation and collaboration
- Initiated process to name IAH Terminal E after the late Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee
- Approved agreements with Verizon and AT&T for wireless communication services