

# UNIVERSITY PARK

## ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016



## MAYOR'S WELCOME



On behalf of the City Council and City staff, thank you for taking a few minutes to look through this annual publication. Inside you will find a quick summary of several projects that have been completed, and notes about some that will soon be underway. University Park is a wonderful place to live and work. I'm proud to report that the City continues to maintain its high level of service and that we remain debt-free. Because of our dedicated and professional staff, and the guidance of dozens of residents who serve on various boards and committees, University Park enjoys safe neighborhoods, high quality fire and emergency medical services, and beautiful parks and green spaces.

Mayor Olin Lane, Jr.

## BUDGET AND FINANCE

Adopted in September 2015, the Fiscal Year 2016 budget totals \$48,658,980, an increase of 3.0% from the previous budget.

Continuing a trend stretching back to 1994 (after a brief pause due to the 2008 recession), the City property tax rate once again decreased in FY2016, declining 4.0% from 26.979 cents per \$100 of taxable property value to 25.893 cents.



While the tax rate decreased, the market value of the average single-family home continued to increase, up 7.9% from \$1,251,337 in the 2014 tax year to \$1,350,219 in 2015. The increased market value combined with the decreased tax rate to result in a \$96 increase in city taxes for the typical single-family homeowner; significantly less than the prior year's \$168 increase.

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# PARKS & RECREATION

## Park Maintenance



Along with daily maintenance of park landscape totaling of over 60 acres, the Department is annually involved in an aggressive project and special-event schedule to enhance the community's overall appearance and provide families a wide selection of outdoor activities.

## Major park improvements completed in 2015

- Tree City USA City reaccreditation by the National Arbor Day Association (10 years)
- Burleson Park Renovations
- Smith Park Playground Replacement
- Park and Pool Furniture Replacement
- Tennis Court Resurfacing Project

## Major park projects for 2015 & 2016

- Park and Pool Furniture Replacement Program
- University Blvd. Portal Entrance East
- Hitzelberger Park Fountain Lighting Upgrades
- Preston Road Median Landscape between McFarlin and Windsor
- Elena's Children's Park Stonework Replacement
- Athletic Field Fencing Replacement
- Holmes Aquatic Center – Building Replacement Design

## 2016 Park & Recreation Special Events calendar



- 8th Annual “Eggstravaganza” egg hunt in Goar Park – March 2016.
- 8th year of Movies in Goar Park – May and October 2016.
- 10th Annual Children's Fishing Derby in Caruth Park – June 2016.
- 9th Annual Fourth of July Fun Run – July 2016.
- 9th year of Dive in Movies at Holmes Aquatic Center – summer 2016.
- 4th Annual Doggie Splash Day – September 2016.
- 11th Annual Arbor Day Observance – November 2016.
- 9th Annual Snider Plaza Holiday Tree Lighting – Nov. 2016.

# PUBLIC WORKS



Operational divisions of the Public Works Department consist of Engineering, Facility Maintenance, Infrastructure Maintenance, Sanitation, and Traffic.

**Engineering** – During 2015, Engineering Division staff managed the planning, design, and construction of more than \$4 million in capital projects. The City annually awards contracts for routine capital projects including in-place recycling of asphalt pavement, curb and gutter replacement, and the “mile-per-year” (MPY) water and sanitary sewer replacement program. Some of the key project during the past year:

- Replacement of the water line in Hillcrest from Daniel to Potomac;
- Pavement replacement was completed along Douglas from Glenwick to Druid;
- Design and relocation of the sanitary sewer main in McFarlin from Williams Parkway west to Shannon Lane and south to the Windsor/Shannon alley.

**Infrastructure Maintenance** – The Infrastructure Maintenance Division maintains and repairs the City's 74 miles of street pavement, 40 miles of alley pavement, 88 miles of water mains, 63 miles of sanitary sewer mains, 25 miles of storm sewer mains, and 463 fire hydrants. In 2015, the division finished 49 work orders totaling more than \$364,000 for the replacement of alley pavement, 181 work orders totaling \$732,000 for the installation of water and sewer taps, and replaced 823ft of sewer mains at a cost of \$74,500. The division also repaired 84 water main breaks at a cost of \$121,000.

**Traffic** – The Traffic Division is responsible for maintaining and repairing over 6,000 traffic signs, 33 signalized intersections, 113 decorative street lights, school zone flashers, pavement markings, public parking areas, and miscellaneous traffic control devices. In 2015, the division distributed barricades and signs for 77 block parties. The Division also began the design of traffic signal improvements at the intersections of Preston and Purdue, Preston and McFarlin, and Preston and St. Andrews.

**Sanitation** – The Sanitation Division collects residential waste twice a week and residential recycling, brush and yard waste once a week. Commercial waste and recycling dumpsters are emptied up to six times a week. In 2015, Sanitation crews collected over 18,000 tons of material. Twenty-eight percent of that material was landfill diverted and either recycled or composted.

**Plans for 2016** – Engineering staff will continue capital projects replacing City infrastructure. Among the projects:

- Planning/design of improvements along “Miracle Mile,” west from Douglas to Lomo Alto
- Utility replacement in various alleys on the southwest side of the City
- Construction of the new McFarlin Bridge and silt removal from Williams Pond

Infrastructure Maintenance will continue a 5-year project to replace all water meters. This automated technology will increase billing accuracy and provide residents with detailed data, making it easier for customers to manage and save water.

## POLICE

**Crime** – University Park remains a very safe place to live and work. In 2015 the top reported crime was burglary of motor vehicle. The majority of the 140 incidents involved items that were taken because they were left in plain sight. Common targets were wallets, purses, computer lap tops and jewelry. Index Crimes reported as Crimes Against Persons dropped from 13 cases in 2014 to 5 in 2015. Residential burglaries dropped 42% to 12 reported cases in 2015, compared with 29 cases in 2014. Two robberies were reported in the city in 2015.



**Traffic Safety** – Traffic collisions dropped 3% from the previous year. Targeted enforcement in select locations should help keep that number relatively small.

**Calls for Service** – The Department answered 21,457 calls for service in 2015, an 11% decrease from the previous year.

**Direct Alarm Monitoring** – New customers continue to enroll in the City’s Direct Alarm Monitoring service that

links alarm systems directly to the Police Dispatch Center. In December 2015 the City had 3,061 Direct Alarm customers.

## Community Services

- In 2015 the Department continued to provide an officer at McCulloch Intermediate School for the D.A.R.E. program and a School Resource Officer at Highland Park High School. Both programs are jointly funded by the City of University Park and the Town of Highland Park.
- The Department continues to contract with All City Management Services for crossing guard service at all 13 crossing guard locations. Because officers no longer perform this function when someone is absent, more officers are available for emergency calls.
- UPPD remains among a handful of police agencies in which all patrol officers are certified to conduct free security surveys for homes and businesses.

**Personnel** - UPPD maintains diversity and is fully staffed with sworn and non-sworn personnel. Staff turnover remains low, and employees remain highly satisfied with their workplace and the community they serve.

## FIRE

Here is a recap of some of the department’s activities and initiatives in 2015.

### Fire/EMS Operations



In June, the department co-facilitated a multi-agency/discipline training exercise involving an active-shooter scenario at Highland Park Middle School. UPFD, UPPD, HPISD and HPDPS personnel participated. The training will help the agencies develop comprehensive and collaborative multi-agency/discipline response procedures.

- Two chief officers attended the Fire Department Instructors Conference. One chief attended the Blue Card Incident Commander certification course. The course credentials Command Staff who operate as incident commanders on emergency incidents.

- Four members attended a statewide training conference that focused on responding to “active shooter” emergencies and other multi-agency incidents.
- EMS Committee members worked with Equipment Services personnel on final specifications for a new ambulance (MICU) with an expected delivery of March 2016.

### Personnel/Organization

- The department hired a new Firefighter/EMT.
- One department member graduated from the UTSW’s paramedic program.
- Max Raney was promoted to Fire Marshal. Other department promotions involved Driver/Engineer, Lieutenant, Captain of Prevention and Battalion Chief positions.
- Driver/Engineer Stewart David received a special service award for 35 years with the department.

### Fire Prevention/Community Education

- The department processed 204 plan reviews.
- Operations personnel completed 100% of its commercial tactical surveys.
- The department continued its smoke detector awareness program with the distribution of 3,500 door hangers, focusing on multi-family zoned neighborhoods.
- Fire personnel inspected 26 households, adding new smoke detectors when needed, and replacing batteries in detectors when residents asked for assistance.
- 10 CERT members spent over 200 hours assisting with community events including July 4, Christmas Tree Lighting, Santa around Town, Halloween, National Night Out, Fight the Bite, and severe weather events.
- The "Santa Around Town" program continues to grow in popularity. In mid-December Santa rides on an engine throughout the community. In 2015 the department added “Santa tracker” to the fun. Now parents and children can be at curbside a few houses before Santa rides by. Over the most recent five-night effort more than 700 residents logged on to the City’s website to track Santa’s location.



### UPFD Call Data - Response Area UP/HP/Dallas

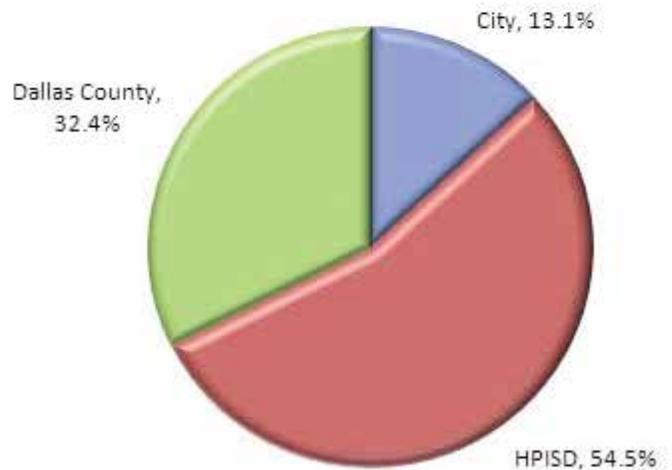
	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Fire Responses</b>	1253	1437	1508	1461
<b>All Fires</b>	46	42	41	31
<b>EMS Responses</b>	1019	1100	1073	1057
<b>MICU Transports</b>	496	504	491	514

### Activity Within University Park

	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Code Inspections</b>	813	819	761	799
<b>Tactical Surveys/ Pre-Fire Plans</b>	298	286	294	278

### COMPONENTS OF COMBINED PROPERTY TAX BILL

Relative Share of Tax Dollar



# FINANCE

## Continued from front

Revenues other than property taxes account for over 40% of General Fund income, and are expected to continue to increase in FY2016. The largest of these, Sales Tax and Building Permit Fees, are budgeted to increase 11% and 7% from the prior year, respectively.

On the expenditure side, the FY2016 budget boosted funding to the City’s vehicle replacement fund by 5%, increased the “pay-as-you-go” funding for capital projects by 3%, and included a 3% market-based increase for all employees. The FY2016 budget did not include any new positions, keeping total City personnel at 247.

Water and wastewater charges increased slightly in FY2016, to keep pace with the increase in the cost of treated water, encourage conservation, and return fund balance levels to the recommended minimum of 3 months of operating costs. The recommended fund balance dipped slightly after City Council authorized the transfer of a significant amount of working capital from the Utility Fund to the newly created Storm Water Fund. Sanitation rates increased 5% in FY2016 also, enabling the fund to continue to operate in an environment of rising costs, without incurring a loss of fund balance.



**Capital Improvement Program (CIP)** – The CIP is the method by which the City identifies, plans, and funds capital projects, which are defined as non-recurring, multi-year efforts whose costs exceed \$50,000. Unlike many cities, University Park is debt-free and borrows no money for its capital projects. Funding for the CIP comes from multiple sources, including operating and special budget transfers, fund balance drawdowns, and interest earnings. For FY2016, operating budget transfers were increased by 3% from both the General and Utility funds.

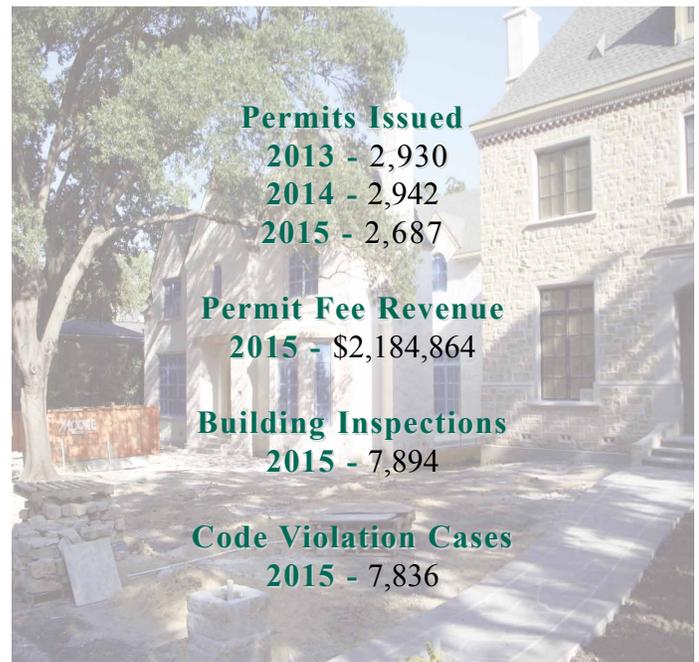
Adopted in September 2015, the FY2016 capital projects budget of \$12,319,175 is the first year of the City’s five-year CIP. New projects for FY2016 are broken down as follows: Information Technology (\$325,000), Parks (\$530,000), Public Safety (\$500,000) and Public Works (\$2,225,000). The remainder of the FY2016 budget consists of unspent funds related to ongoing projects. A downloadable PDF of the FY2016-2020 CIP book is available on the City’s web-site.

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Residential construction** – Permit activity for new home sites remains strong, mirroring an increase in building permits across the country. The department issued 97 permits for new residential construction in 2015, amounting to a 12% drop from the 110 permits for new residential construction in 2014. Despite the decrease in permits, total construction values for new residential construction in University Park decreased only slightly from \$92 million in 2014 to \$91 million in 2015.

**Commercial construction** – Activity remained steady in 2015. Construction on the SMU campus included the completion of a new education building and the construction or refurbishment of numerous residential structures. Off campus, the reconstruction of the Park Cities YMCA continued. With more improvements at SMU and campus renovations set for schools throughout the Highland Park Independent School District, the pace of commercial construction will continue at a healthy pace.

**Code compliance** – Thanks to our code compliance officers and residents working together, 96% of all violations are being corrected before citations are issued. The department continues to focus on improving the appearance of properties throughout University Park. As part of that effort, the department is looking for volunteers who are willing to partner with the City to restore properties owned by senior citizens that have code violations.



# LIBRARY



UP Public Library is a facility totaling 15,000 square feet. The library has many user-friendly features, and a collection of books and other resources that is growing steadily to meet the needs of users of all ages.

Along with special children's and teen areas, the library has many other features. Among them:

- A local history/conference room which houses a collection of books about Texas and Park Cities history. The room can be used for staff training and webinars. It features a ceiling-mounted projector and drop-down screen.
- A magazine/quiet study room containing over 60 magazine and newspaper titles, as well as comfortable seating.
- Two rooms that can be used for groups wishing to study together or work on a project.

**Story times and family events** – Story times are offered three times a week, and there are also monthly Saturday programs for families.

**UP with Reading** – This summer reading program attracts more than 500 children. It features incentives for reading and weekly guests and entertainment. Briggs Freeman/Sotheby's International sponsors the programs.

**UP @ the Library Family Time** – Monthly family programs on Saturdays, including visits with animals, musical performances, puppet shows, and storytellers. These programs are sponsored by Christine McKenny and Dave Perry-Miller and Associates.

**Downloadable media services** – Overdrive electronic and audio books, One Click audiobooks, Tumblebooks for children, magazines through Zinio, and online comics from ComicsPlus.

**History at your fingertips** – Coming in 2016, the library and the Park Cities Historic and Preservation Society have entered into an agreement for the library to house the Society's historical records and various documents pertaining to the history of the Park Cities.

**Library hours** – Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## INFORMATION SERVICES

**2015 Highlights** – Information Services replaced an aging phone system with a Mitel Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) enterprise phone system.

- Staff also worked on an ongoing project with Public Works and Utility Billing Departments installing an automated water meter reading system that uses a fixed wireless data network.
- Time clocks used for collecting time and attendance information were replaced.

**Among projects slated for 2016** – Information Services will replace the software program used by Code Enforcement Officers, switching from Cartegraph to EnerGov. When the project is completed the Community Development Department will gain reporting and tracking efficiencies through interoperability.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

### Employment

- The Human Resources Department hired 63 full-time, part-time and seasonal employees during the fiscal year.
- Eighteen full-time employees left the City in fiscal 2015. The City has 246 authorized full-time positions.

