



WINTER  
2014-2015

# SUGAR LAND TODAY

PUBLISHED BY THE CITY OF SUGAR LAND



## COMING IN JANUARY!

### SUGAR LAND LAUNCHES NEW CITY FIRE-EMS TRANSPORT PROGRAM

A new Emergency Medical Service program will begin providing ambulance transport service in January. The new system is expected to enhance emergency services and decrease response times for EMS calls. Read more on page 6.

## IN THIS ISSUE

### GET CONNECTED



**4** CONSTRUCTION  
UNDERWAY ON LIVE  
ENTERTAINMENT  
VENUE

**5** SUGAR MILL  
DRAINAGE  
IMPROVEMENTS

**7** CRITICAL  
INCIDENT STRESS  
MANAGEMENT  
TEAM



# DEAR RESIDENTS



**W**ith next month marking my 20th year working for the City of Sugar Land, I see the perfect opportunity to take a step back and appreciate just how far the City has come. I remember early on in my career here, Mayor Lee Duggan's vision for Sugar Land was to be the "bell-cow" community of Fort Bend County. For those unfamiliar with this analogy, the bell-cow is the recognized leader of the herd that has a bell placed around her neck to help the other cows learn to follow her. In other words, Mayor Duggan wanted Sugar Land to be a leading community in the county. I want to focus on a few

accomplishments from 2014 to highlight what a successful year it has been for us.

In development news, Texas Instruments opened with 375 employees and is expected to bring in \$35 million in new capital investment. Headquarter expansions were announced for Nalco Champion and Applied Optoelectronics, Inc., adding nearly 1,400 new jobs and \$84 million in capital investment over the next 10 years. The University of Houston also revealed plans to create a Tier One UH branch campus in Sugar Land that will bring 22 programs into the City as well as relocate a large segment of its College of Technology.

Crime prevention cameras are being added to give the Police Department another valuable tool to help identify, arrest, and convict criminals. Additionally, the completion of University Boulevard North extension from State Highway 6 to U.S. Highway 90A will

improve mobility and reduce congestion by relieving traffic on other north/south streets and providing a key crossing over the railroad tracks at 90A.

The performing arts center located in Telfair is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2016. Parks bond election projects will also begin implementation to further improve the quality of life for residents. Lastly, the New Year will see the kickoff of Emergency Medical Services. This will provide Sugar Land with its own ambulance transport system, which is expected to decrease response times for ambulances.

We can all be proud of 2014 and the number of accomplishments brought with it. I hope you'll take this time with me to realize how blessed our community has been this year and just how far we have come.



## 2015 SUGAR LAND CALENDAR

THROUGH *the EYES of* LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHERS

The much-anticipated 2015 City of Sugar Land calendar has arrived! The calendars are delivered to all residents within the city limits. If a calendar was not received, call the publications manager at **281-275-2296**. Additional calendars can be obtained at City Hall.

Every year many excellent photos from local photographers are submitted. Those who would like to see their photos in the calendar for 2016 can begin submitting photos to [pubinfo@sugarlandtx.gov](mailto:pubinfo@sugarlandtx.gov). Be sure to include the name of the photographer and where the photo was taken. Photos of people enjoying a park, festival, the farmers market, neighborhoods and so forth are good contenders.

## CITY GOALS

**Safest City in America**  
**Responsible City Government**  
**Strong Local Economy**  
**Great Place to Live**  
**Building Community**

## CITY COUNCIL

**James A. Thompson**  
Mayor

**Harish Jajoo**  
Mayor Pro Tem  
Single Member District Four

**Himesh Gandhi**  
At-Large Position One

**Joe R. Zimmerman**  
At-Large Position Two

**Steve R. Porter**  
Single Member District One

**Bridget R. Yeung**  
Single Member District Two

**Amy L. Mitchell**  
Single Member District Three

## CITY MANAGEMENT

**Allen Bogard**  
City Manager

**Steve Griffith**  
First Assistant City Manager

**Jim Callaway**  
Assistant City Manager

**Mike Goodrum**  
Assistant City Manager

## SUGARLAND TODAY STAFF

### Communications Director

Pat Pollicoff

### Editor

Alexi Holford

### Design

Austin M. Pennington

### Contributors

Briana Bachemin, Tanya Dannhaus, Ryan Flynn, Glenda Gundermann, Cathy Halka, L.R. Heffernan, Stacie Henderson, Robin Hicks, Shashi Kumar, Jennifer May, Herc Meier, Doug Schomburg, Colleen Spencer, Chris Thompson, Terri Wang and Alley Williams

### COMMENTS?

Email: [pubinfo@sugarlandtx.gov](mailto:pubinfo@sugarlandtx.gov)

Phone: 281-275-2216

*Sugar Land Today* is published quarterly by the City of Sugar Land.



# SUGAR LAND COUNCIL FOR SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICTS ELECTION



The official filing period for the May 9 City Council election begins Jan. 28 and continues through Feb. 27 at 5 p.m. Councilmember Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4 will be on the ballot; each position serves a two-year term.

To serve on City Council, individuals must be 21 years of age and a City resident for at least one year preceding the election. District councilmembers must maintain a

residence in the district they represent during their terms of office. Councilmembers may not hold other City offices and may not be employed by the City during their terms of office or two years thereafter.

Candidate information packets with forms for filing may be obtained from the Office of City Secretary at City Hall, 2700 Town Center Blvd. N., beginning Dec. 17.

The spring issue of *Sugar Land Today* will contain candidate profiles and voting location information. Early voting in person begins April 27 and continues through May 5.

For questions about the election process, call **281-275-2730**, email [ggundermann@sugarlandtx.gov](mailto:ggundermann@sugarlandtx.gov) or visit [www.sugarlandtx.gov](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov) and click on the "Election 2015" icon.

## CITY ADOPTS MASTER DRAINAGE PLAN

Sugar Land City Council recently updated the Master Drainage Plan, a document created in 2007. The plan describes the City's drainage-related characteristics, identifies drainage agencies with jurisdiction in Sugar Land, establishes roles and responsibilities of various agencies and identifies future efforts necessary for drainage planning and flood control.

Modifications to the Master Drainage Plan include:

- updates to drainage facility ownership;
- identification of drainage improvements needed for flood protection;
- confirmation of the City's criteria for evaluating drainage problems;
- documentation of the City's Integrated Storm Water Management Model;
- establishment of a policy for detention pond maintenance;
- identification of strategies to achieve the drainage-related goals in the City's Comprehensive Plan; and
- creation of a strategic work plan to achieve the City's drainage goals.

The process to update the Master Drainage Plan incorporated a variety of opportunities for public feedback, including an online mapping activity, outreach to drainage entities and a public meeting. A draft for review and comments was posted online, and public hearings were held at Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council meetings.

To view the adopted plan, go to [www.sugarlandtx.gov/drainage](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov/drainage) to download a copy or call **281-275-2780**.





# CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY *on* NEW LIVE ENTERTAINMENT VENUE

**T**he City recently broke ground on an indoor live entertainment venue that will be the first of its kind in the region. It is expected to create an iconic venue when it opens in the fall of 2016. The venue—located on a portion of 38.5 acres of City property southeast of U.S. Highway 59 and University Boulevard—is designed to host a wide range of performances, including national music and comedy artists, children’s and family entertainment, theatrical productions and cultural and performing arts attractions.

Sugar Land City Council approved a total construction budget of approximately \$84 million to build the performance center. With an approximate indoor seating capacity of 6,430, the facility was conceived and designed for flexibility, essentially creating several venues in one building. Through the use of innovative moveable walls, Sugar Land’s performance center will literally expand and contract to create intimate settings of approximately 3,300 to larger shows of more than 6,400.

The venue will feature comfortable, spacious seating with cup holders; luxury suites; corporate hospitality areas; quality finishes and convenient parking. It will create an iconic landmark visible to motorists on U.S. Highway 59 and anchor a mixed-used development envisioned to include retail, office, commercial and residential surrounding a vibrant public plaza.

It is a concept that does not exist in the Houston market. As one of the most flexible and advanced indoor live entertainment venues in the nation, it

is expected to set a new standard in the touring industry and change the entertainment landscape in the “Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land” metro region.

Sugar Land partnered with ACE SL, LLC to design and construct the state-of-the-art facility. ACE, whose parent company is ACE Theatrical Group, brings an experienced team of locally-based entertainment industry professionals to the project, led by Allen J. Becker, TONY Award-winning founding chairman of PACE Entertainment Corporation. The ACE executive team also includes Brian E. Becker, Gary D. Becker, David M. Anderson, Gary A. Markowitz and Kirk B. Feldmann. Together, they offer more than 175 years of experience and success in local, national and international entertainment ventures, including pioneering the development of new music and theatrical venues, as well as the entertainment to fill them.

“This new performance venue will allow residents of Sugar Land and the surrounding area to experience a level of live entertainment that, until now, has not been available,” said ACE Theatrical Group Chairman Allen Becker. “Bringing a first class cultural entertainment venue to the City of Sugar Land is an exciting opportunity, and ACE is grateful to be a part of the project from the start.”

The economic development strategy for Sugar Land’s indoor performance venue was structured to establish Sugar Land as a destination location for culture and entertainment as well as creating an amenity that is commercially self-sustainable.

A 2008 market analysis and feasibility study and an updated 2012 study performed by CSL International identified that the Houston market did not have a 6,500-seat live entertainment venue. The company concluded that market demand would support the first financially feasible and commercially sustainable venue of its size in the region.

Studies show this venue will promote capital investment, create new jobs, enhance educational opportunities, increase tourism and create unique destination activities attracting local and regional visitors. Additionally, the venue and surrounding



*Pictured (L-R) breaking ground on Dec. 9 are Councilmembers Himesh Gandhi, Bridget Yeung, Harish Jajoo and Amy Mitchell; Mayor James Thompson; and Councilmembers Steve Porter and Joe Zimmerman.*





## UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD NORTH EXTENSION OPENS



plaza will be a major focal point of what is planned to be a vibrant, commercial district—an environment that will be attractive to major corporations, residents and visitors.

Based on voters' approval of the financing tools in 2008 and the City's goal to create a financially feasible, operationally self-sustaining facility, the indoor performance venue will be funded through a unique package of special funding sources.

"A feasibility study conducted in 2012 shows the project will provide an annual benefit to the community of \$26.1 million," said Mayor James Thompson. "The venue has the potential of attracting more than 260,000 paid attendees in year one, growing to more than 300,000 by year five."

The City's partner, ACE, made a \$10-million equity contribution to the project. A portion of sales tax revenues that may only be used for economic development purposes and a portion of hotel occupancy tax funds that are restricted to tourism initiatives will be dedicated to the project. In addition, substantial rent revenues generated by the facility and paid by ACE will also fund the performance venue.

No general fund tax dollars will be spent on the project.

*Pictured (L-R) is Senior Inspector Greg Willey, Construction Service Manager Jimmy Vandever, Assistant City Manager Steve Griffith, Councilmember Steve Porter, Senior Engineer and Project Manager Shashi Kumar, Councilmember Bridget Yeung, Assistant City Manager James Callaway, Mayor James Thompson, Councilmember Joe Zimmerman, Councilmember Harish Jajoo, Councilmember Amy Mitchell, City Engineer Christopher Steubing, Councilmember Himesh Gandhi, Commissioner James Patterson and City Manager Allen Bogard.*

Construction of the University Boulevard North extension from State Highway 6 near Sam's Club to U.S. Highway 90A was recently completed. The \$5 million project is intended to improve mobility and reduce congestion by providing a north-south corridor connecting State Highway 6 at the Riverstone subdivision to U.S. Highway 90A.

University Boulevard North is one of several projects included in the Fort Bend County Mobility Program and the Transportation Improvement Program. It is also identified in the City's Master Thoroughfare Plan. The project was jointly funded by the Texas Department of Transportation, Fort Bend County and the City of Sugar Land.

Efforts are currently underway to extend University Boulevard across the railroad tracks to the north, through the Imperial development and connect to Burney Road. This project is in the design phase in coordination with Union Pacific Railroad, Nalco Champion and the Imperial Development.

## SUGAR MILL DRAINAGE PROJECT

The City of Sugar Land recently completed a \$1.1 million drainage improvement project in Sugar Mill. These improvements will reduce the risk of street ponding and flooding previously reported in sections one, two and three of Sugar Mill. The project scope included additional storm sewers and inlets along Hillary Circle, Lakeview Drive and Rolling Mill to divert excess stormwater to Cleveland Lake.

The City is also moving forward in implementing drainage improvement projects for Sugar Creek that are identified in the City's Capital Improvement Program. One of the major projects proposed to alleviate street ponding along Longview Drive is the construction of a system to divert the drainage from the east Sugar Creek area through the Sugar Creek Golf Course (SCGC) to the receiving channel. This project is being coordinated with the SCGC staff. Design of this project is expected to begin in December 2014, and construction is scheduled for 2016.



# NEW SUGAR LAND FIRE-EMS TRANSPORT PROGRAM

DELIVERS ENHANCED SERVICES



The City's new ambulances are fully equipped and ready to begin service on Jan. 1.



Pictured are ten firefighters who recently became certified paramedics: (L-R) Mario Muniz, David Rodriguez, Tommie Holliday, Gene De Los Santos, Austin Dickson, Adam Palmer, Randy Bayes, Kelby Grohmann, Quan Phan and Herc Meier.



During the ceremony for the newly certified paramedics, the firefighters and guest check out a new ambulance.

ONE MISSION

Residents will see a big change of new ambulances as the Sugar Land Fire Department (SLFD) will begin providing fire-based ambulance transport service in January. The addition of five SLFD ambulances, increased paramedic certifications and expanded dispatch operations is expected to decrease the response time for the arrival of ambulances.

Fort Bend EMS has been providing ambulance service for Sugar Land since the late 1970s. However, Sugar Land residents expressed a desire for improved response times to emergency calls. The City decided to develop its own EMS plan with an improved dispatch system. "We felt that we could improve how citizens are receiving EMS service," said Assistant Fire Chief Mario Partida, who is overseeing the project.

Currently, when someone calls 911 with a medical emergency, they first talk to the City of Sugar Land's dispatcher. While the caller is still on the phone, the City dispatches firefighters; these are the first responders. Then the caller is transferred to Fort Bend County's dispatcher for an ambulance. This means that the person calling, while in a crisis situation, has to repeat all the information they just told the Sugar Land dispatcher. With Sugar Land's own EMS system, a fire truck and/or ambulance will be dispatched immediately and the caller is not required to repeat the information. Part of the system includes implementing a new Emergency Medical Dispatching system that will help public safety dispatchers prioritize the calls and send the appropriate personnel and units.

The new Sugar Land Fire-EMS ambulance transport system was approved in 2013. EMS Battalion Chief Cindy King was hired in February to assist Partida in implementing the program. In the following nine months, 10 of Sugar Land's firefighters received advanced training and became certified paramedics through a rigorous program offered by Texas A&M's Engineering Extension Service. Each firefighter completed 880 instruction hours that included classroom, ambulance and hospital rotations in addition to working full time. An additional 13 paramedic/firefighters were hired, bringing the total of number of paramedics to support the rollout of EMS to 34.





## THE CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT TEAM

In the spring issue of *Sugar Land Today*, readers were informed about the major reorganization of the City's Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team. Since that time, the City has had numerous opportunities to assist not only its own public safety personnel who have experienced traumatic events in the line of duty, but also neighboring communities in need of support.

Emergency responders can have difficulty in recovering from critical incidents, which may include line-of-duty deaths, officer involved shootings, homicide scenes and child-related traumatic events. In these situations, the event can overwhelm a responder's normal mechanisms for coping with stress. The main purpose of a CISM intervention is to ensure the affected persons are safe and regain a sense of well being as quickly as possible.

The Sugar Land CISM team is composed of 18 employees from the police department, fire department and public safety dispatch. In addition, a mental health professional trained in the CISM method is employed for these incidents. The team not only focuses on the employees, but also provides support to their families. Those who have experienced the care of CISM team have had a positive response. The employees have returned to work with no signs of continuing stress from the events.

CISM is not psychotherapy; rather, it is sometimes called "psychological first aid." The person being treated talks about their experience, learns how to recognize when they are stressed and develops tools to better cope. For most people affected by a traumatic incident, CISM helps them to quickly return to their normal lives. In extreme cases, the impact of the experience can develop into a serious disorder, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. If someone is suffering from more acute symptoms, the CISM responders facilitate a referral to a higher level of care. Through such interventions, traumatized individuals can receive the treatment they need.

The City's first state-of-the-art ambulance was purchased in May 2014, and an additional four arrived in early December. Each ambulance is equipped with the most recent technology and safety features to enhance patient care and communication between personnel in the field and local emergency rooms.

SLFD paramedics will be using a pre-hospital patient care reporting system to make patient information available to local emergency rooms, which enables them to provide updates on patient's cardiac information. "We want to give our local emergency rooms more advanced information. We hope that will improve patient outcomes if the ERs can prepare for the patients who are coming," said Partida. Additional benefits to this reporting system include the improved quality assurance, improved legibility and billing, fewer lost charts and compliance with state mandates.

The ambulances, which cost \$219,000 each, are equipped with special safety and performance features. A five-point harness system functions as a specialized seatbelt and secures the paramedics while in transit. The harness provides the flexibility of allowing the paramedic to face different directions and be in different positions while treating the patient. Additional equipment includes an enhanced safety attendant seat, liquid spring suspension, reflective chevron striping, a traffic pre-emption system, a hydraulic lift for the primary oxygen bottle, a cardiac monitor securing device, a station exhaust system adapter and LED lighting. All of the ambulances are also outfitted with video laryngoscopes, four of which were donated by Nalco Champion, a local company.

Three of the Sugar Land ambulances will be housed at Fire Station 1, 555 Matlage Way; Fire Station 2, 1040 Industrial; and Fire Station 4, 2100 Austin Parkway. A fourth ambulance will be available to respond throughout the City during peak demand hours. The final ambulance will be a back-up reserve unit. Under the Fort Bend EMS system, only two ambulances were designated for Sugar Land, and they could also be dispatched to surrounding cities if needed. With Sugar Land's own ambulances, the City will be able to manage the ambulances within the city limits.

The City of Sugar Land will be contracting with a third-party company to handle the billing for the EMS transport. The cost of the service will be determined by the level of care and the supplies used. A portion of the costs may be covered by health insurance, Medicare or Medicaid.

The Sugar Land Fire-EMS motto is "One Mission, One Team." Many City departments collaborated to create and implement the new EMS transport system. The motto exemplifies the unified effort behind this strategic project and this significant step toward increased life support delivery standards for Sugar Land residents.



# WINTER FIRE SAFETY TIPS



Half of all home fires caused by heaters in the United States occur in the months of December, January and February. The Sugar Land Fire Department offers the following tips for heaters and other winter-related hazards.

- Do not leave candles or incense burning unattended.
- Keep space heaters 3 feet away from anything that can burn. Turn off or unplug space heaters when leaving the room for any period of time or when going to bed, even if in the same room. Space heaters are not a permanent fix to heating issues.
- It is important to invest in carbon monoxide and smoke detectors. Ensure the detectors are working by pressing the test buttons to find out if the sound is activated.
- Do not leave Christmas tree lights plugged in overnight or when not home.

- When disposing of coals or ash from a fireplace or fire pit, place them in a tightly covered metal container and keep them 10 feet away from any structure that can burn (i.e., porch, garage, breezeway, deck). Do not put hot coals or ashes in a plastic trashcan. Even ashes that are several days old could combust in a plastic garbage can. Coals from an extinguished fire can be hot for days.
- Make an appointment with a service professional for an annual furnace inspection. Fireplaces and chimneys should also be cleaned.
- Water fresh-cut Christmas trees daily. Dispose of the tree when it starts to lose needles. Dried Christmas trees are an extreme fire danger.
- When expecting guests, ask them to park only on one side of street and fold in their side mirrors. If both sides of the street are occupied, emergency vehicles can be blocked and delayed in their response to an emergency. If possible, have guests carpool and ask that they park as close as they can to the curb.

For questions relating to holiday safety, contact Captain Eric Volkmann at **281-275-2859**.

## MORE CRIME PREVENTION CAMERAS APPROVED

Sugar Land City Council approved contracts totaling \$1.8 million to install crime prevention cameras at 43 designated locations north of U.S. Highway 90A in Sugar Land. The project will create a network of license plate recognition (LPR) cameras at major thoroughfares throughout the City to help identify, arrest and convict criminals. Performance reports that will be presented to City Council by the Police Department on a quarterly basis will be used to consider expanding the system to other parts of the city.

The first of the new LPR cameras to be installed will be used to test the system. After initial testing, installation of LPR cameras at the remaining locations will begin. All of the cameras are scheduled to be installed by summer 2015.

The City is working with a contractor on the LPR camera systems to develop guidelines, policies and procedures

for those individuals, businesses or homeowner associations that want to purchase their own LPR system to connect to the City's system. The contractor will be providing the City with the required specifications for a private LPR camera system to be able to connect to the City's system.

The Sugar Land Police Department currently has three fixed systems in Sugar Land Town Square and the First Colony Mall area. The City's expanded use of crime prevention cameras at static locations throughout the City will help solve crimes after they occur by providing police officers a searchable database of license plates.

The cameras are only used for capturing license plates. With the exception of emergency situations or special circumstances, there will be no live monitoring of the system. License plate records will be retained for no more than 30 days, except when used as evidence as part of a criminal investigation. Information will not be shared with the general public, unless required by law or for law enforcement matters. The use of the LPR system will be consistent with privacy laws and the constitutional rights of individuals.

The system may also act as a deterrent to those wanting to commit crimes in Sugar Land. If criminals know that cameras are in place, they may be less likely to commit crimes in Sugar Land.



# CITY EMPLOYEE STATEWIDE AWARDS

## DEPUTY COURT ADMINISTRATOR BRITTANY RYCHLIK

In October Sugar Land Deputy Court Administrator Brittany Rychlik received the Distinguished Services Award from the Texas Court Clerks Association (TCCA). The award honors clerks who perform a service, program, task or endeavor that benefits the entire organization.

Rychlik offers training to her colleagues, keeps up-to-date and easily accessible chapter information and is a valuable asset to the TCCA and the City. Rychlik is in her ninth year at the City where she started as a Parks and Recreation Department intern. She held positions ranging from court clerk to code enforcement coordinator prior to her promotion to deputy court administrator. She is completing her master's degree in criminal justice administration with a certification in court management.



## RISK MANAGER NORMA MARTINEZ

The City of Sugar Land's Risk Manager Norma Martinez received the 2014 Risk Professional of the Year award from the Texas chapter of the Public Risk Management Association in November. The Texas chapter annually recognizes its members who exemplify continual innovation and the highest standards of commitment in the risk and insurance management field.

Martinez manages the City's safety and loss prevention program. She oversees the property and casualty insurance for all City services, worker's compensation, safety and loss prevention, claims management and insurance and indemnity requirements for contracts. Martinez goes beyond the basic duty of purchasing insurance and paying claims; she proactively identifies risks, controls costs and creates a safety culture throughout the workplace.

Martinez began working for the City of Sugar Land 14 years ago as a secretary in the Finance-Purchasing Office. In 2003, she was promoted to a Buyer and Contract Administrator; three years later, she was promoted to Risk Coordinator. As her responsibilities increased, she was promoted to her current position as the City's Risk Manager.



*Pictured (L-R) during a presentation at a City Council meeting are Mayor James Thompson, Norma Martinez and Director of Human Resources Paula Kutchka.*

## IMPORTANT LAND USE PLAN UPDATE



On Dec. 3, the City held a public meeting to receive feedback on a draft of the vision and the goals for the Land Use Plan, which documents the policies that guide development within the City. The Land Use Plan is one of the City's eight master plans and was last updated in November 2004.

Feedback from a Land Use Forum series that the City hosted in the spring offered residents the opportunity to provide input on the draft vision and goals. Approximately 300 community members attended and participated in six sessions held from January to April. Open to the public, the speaker and community discussion series focused on important topics for the near- and long-term future of Sugar Land. Speakers spoke on topics such as demographic trends, economic development, policymaking, housing choices and redevelopment.

More opportunities for public participation will be announced in early 2015. To view videos of the Land Use Forum series, participate in Online Town Hall, and sign up for email updates about the project, visit [www.sugarlandtx.gov/landuseplan](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov/landuseplan).



# COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE JAN. 2

The Sugar Land 4B Corporation is seeking applications for its joint Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Grant Program, which is available to community-based organizations. Eligible projects include improvements to public parks, park facilities and public open space and must meet the requirements found here: [sugarlandecodev.com/CIP](http://sugarlandecodev.com/CIP).

The \$200,000 community grants budget for fiscal year 2015 is double the 2014 budget. The maximum amount awarded per project is 50 percent of the cost, up to \$75,000. To be eligible for a grant, a project must be located within the City's corporate limits, on public property (or an easement) and enhance or protect public property. No component of the project for which the organization is seeking funding should have started.

The Sugar Land 4B Corporation was approved by City Council and established as a non-profit corporation in February 1995 to promote, assist and enhance economic development activities and quality-of-life opportunities within the City of Sugar Land. Projects are funded by a portion of sales tax approved by voters for economic development purposes.

## BE WATER WISE THIS WINTER

As winter approaches, conserving water may be the last thing that comes to mind. After all, the summer is the season to be concerned about using too much water, right? While that is true, conservation should be a year-round priority.



*Pictured are examples of ways to winterize your pipes and spigots.*

### Adjust Sprinkler System



As temperatures drop, grass and plants require less water. Operating irrigation systems manually prevents plant damage from too much water. Turn off or reprogram automatic irrigation controllers to avoid overwatering.

### Wrap Exposed Pipes



Thoroughly wrap exposed pipes to protect them during freezing weather. Make sure that all outdoor spigots are winterized to prevent pipes from freezing and bursting. Insulating pipes in the attic, kitchen and cabinets also minimizes the need to run the tap a while before water gets hot. For those with an irrigation system, the backflow prevention device will also need to be wrapped.

### Locate the Main Valve



Locate and mark the location of the main water valve to prepare for an emergency. The main valve is located where the water line from the water meter enters the house. For most homes, it is located just below an outside faucet in front or on the side of the house. Sometimes, the valve may be in the utility room, garage, kitchen or bathroom behind a small opening in the wall. It usually has a round or oval handle.

### Check for Leaks



Even a tiny leak can translate into thousands of gallons of water being wasted over a short period of time. Immediately repair any leaks.





# HOLIDAY AND BULKY WASTE COLLECTION

Residents will have several opportunities to dispose of solid waste after Christmas and New Year's Day – holidays that typically result in oversized garbage. Solid waste collection will not occur on these two days. The holidays will result in Thursday and Friday service days being moved forward to Friday and Saturday, respectively.

For residents with Thursday service, the collection day will be Friday. Residents with normal Friday service will be collected Saturday. Bulky waste service is normally provided once per month for items too large to fit in garbage carts. Bulky waste does not include construction, demolition or hazardous wastes.

In addition to regular holiday collection days, additional bulky waste days designated for after Christmas are from Dec. 26-30 and again after New Year's Day from Jan. 2-3 and Jan. 5-6. The date of the extra bulk waste collection day will depend on each neighborhood's regular bulk waste day.

Regular Bulky Waste Schedule	Christmas Bulky Waste Service Day	New Year's Bulky Waste Service Day
1st Tuesday	Friday, Dec. 26	Friday, Jan. 2
2nd Tuesday	Saturday, Dec. 27	Saturday, Jan. 3
3rd Tuesday	Monday, Dec. 29	Monday, Jan. 5
4th Tuesday	Tuesday, Dec. 30	Tuesday, Jan. 6

Guidelines for bulky waste collection follow:

- Set bulky items out by 7 a.m. on the collection day, but no earlier than 6 p.m. the prior evening.
- Bulky items should be placed at the curb at least 4 feet from other objects.
- Do not place bulky waste items in garbage carts. They should be placed directly on the curb.

Live Christmas trees can be placed curbside on assigned green waste days. All green waste, including Christmas trees, is recycled and made into mulch. Trees should be free of ornaments and flocking. Christmas trees should not be disposed of in City parks.



## NEW RECYCLING ITEM ACCEPTED

The City of Sugar Land is always looking for new and innovative ways to increase the amount of solid waste that is diverted from landfills. Soon, residents will be able to recycle aseptic plastic-coated cartons. Juice boxes, soups and milk alternatives are often found in this type of package.

There are a few items that the City does not recycle. Plastic grocery bags are not accepted by the City, but most grocery stores accept them. Like most curbside programs, the City's recycling program does not accept styrofoam containers.

For more information on the City's recycling program, visit [www.sugarlandtx.gov/solidwaste](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov/solidwaste).



# PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE MASTER PLAN RECEIVES APA AWARD



The City of Sugar Land is a recipient of the 2014 Project Planning Award from the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association (APATX) for the 2013 Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan. The award is granted to three outstanding plans about a specific project, area, system or issue within a town, city, county or region. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan recommends improvements to enhance and encourage walking and biking for both recreational and non-recreational trips in Sugar Land. The plan includes widespread public input, a comprehensive approach to crossing barriers and extensive project recommendations.

Public feedback was acquired through an online survey, an online mapping activity, stakeholder meetings, public meetings, the City's Online Town Hall and neighborhood meetings. A Citizen Task Force, comprising 11 members nominated by City Council, provided guidance throughout the planning process.

The plan includes specific recommendations for more than 30 intersections throughout the City, including solutions for crossing significant barriers such as major highways, the Brazos River and the railroad. It also includes a proposed 40-mile network of new on-street bicycle facilities, including 8 miles of buffered bike lanes and more than 100 miles of an off-street pedestrian and bicycle network.

City Council unanimously adopted the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan in September 2013. Implementation of the plan is underway with future projects identified through the City's five-year Capital Improvement Program. To view the plan, visit [www.sugarlandtx.gov/pedbikeplan](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov/pedbikeplan).

## THE IMPORTANCE OF VISIBLE ADDRESSES

In an emergency situation, it is imperative that first responders are able to reach their destination as fast as possible. Homeowners are required by city code to properly display the house number. The number can be on the house or on the curb, but must be visible from the street.

Visible address markings are essential to emergency personnel being able to respond rapidly. Valuable time may be lost if fire, police or EMS personnel cannot find the house. Markings also facilitate responses to non-emergency calls (utilities, cable, etc.) and ensure accurate delivery of mail service.

The address numbers should be a minimum of 4 inches in height, and they should be a color that contrasts with the background. The markings also should be plainly visible from the street or road in front of the house. Should you have any questions, please contact the Community Development Department at **281-275-2170** or [codeenforcement@sugarlandtx.gov](mailto:codeenforcement@sugarlandtx.gov).





# PUBLIC ART ENHANCES PARKS

Six bronze sculptures created and generously donated by Samuel Levin, a Sugar Land resident, were recently accepted by the City of Sugar Land and the Sugar Land Legacy Foundation.

Four of the bronze sculptures are in Oyster Creek Park, including a realistic-looking alligator. There's also a grandmother with her grandchild sitting on a bench, two roller-blading children and two kids playing in the grass. Sugar Land Memorial Park is now home to two bronze alligators as well.

The City plans to install four additional bronze art pieces that are being donated by Levin. Statues of a young woman taking a photo and a guitar player will be displayed in Sugar Land Town Square, a life-size astronaut will touch down in Highlands Park and a 14-foot tree will take root in Eldridge Park.



## NEW PARCS BOARD ESTABLISHED

In an effort to put more emphasis on the cultural arts in Sugar Land, City Council revamped the Parks & Recreation advisory board and renamed it the Parks, Art, Recreation, Culture and Streetscapes (PARCS) board. The new board members are Barbara Brescian, Stewart Jacobson, Sonal Bhuchar, Betty Caveny, Heather Guillen, HoJin Lim, Shaleen Miller, Tracy Pipes and Joan Maresh-Hansen.

The PARCS board will provide guidance on long-term planning for parks, recreation, public art, cultural activities, streetscapes and urban forestry programs. The board will assist the Parks and Recreation Department in preserving, conserving and promoting natural resources in addition to delivering leisure and cultural services.

For more information on the PARCS board, go to [www.sugarlandtx.gov/parcsboard](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov/parcsboard).



# SPECIAL EVENTS



## New Year's Eve on the Square

Wednesday, Dec. 31, 7 p.m.-1 a.m.  
 Children's Celebration: 7-9 p.m.  
 Adult Celebration: 10 p.m.-1 a.m.



Ring in the New Year in style! Come out and enjoy music, a light show, street performances and entertainers. Families will enjoy a pre-midnight countdown with a fireworks finale during the children's celebration. For those partying until midnight, enjoy a spectacular 3D show while toasting the New Year. Alcoholic beverages will be available for purchase. For additional parking, go to Mercer Stadium, 16403 Lexington Blvd., where there will be complimentary shuttle service to Town Square.

For more information, visit [www.visitsugarlandtx.com/nye](http://www.visitsugarlandtx.com/nye) or call **281-275-2700**.



## Cultural Kite Festival

Saturday, March 7, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.  
 Sugar Land Memorial Park  
 15300 University Blvd.



Kites of all shapes and sizes will fill the air at the sixth annual Cultural Kite Festival. Activities and entertainment will include kite competitions for all ages, kite flying lessons and cultural performances. Children will also be able to create their own kites at a kite-making workshop throughout the event!

There is no cost to enter the kite competitions. Registration will take place onsite at the times listed below. First, second and third place trophies will be awarded for each category.

Category	Registration Time	Contest Time	Winners Announced
Largest Kite	10 a.m.	10:30 a.m.	11 a.m.
Smallest Kite	11 a.m.	11:30 a.m.	Noon
Most Unusual/Unique Kite	Noon	12:30 p.m.	1 p.m.
Highest Flying Kite	1 p.m.	1:30 p.m.	2 p.m.
Most Colorful Kite	2 p.m.	2:30 p.m.	3 p.m.

Food and refreshments will be for sale by local restaurants. Limited parking will be available at Sugar Land Memorial Park. Free shuttle services will be provided at the University of Houston Sugar Land campus.



## EGGStravaganza

Saturday, March 28, noon-3 p.m.  
 Eldridge Park  
 2511 Eldridge Road



The Easter bunny is coming to town! Join us for the City of Sugar Land's 31st annual EGGStravaganza! For more information, call the Parks and Recreation Department at **281-275-2885** or visit us online at [www.sugarlandtx.gov/eggstravaganza](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov/eggstravaganza).



# IMPERIAL PARK RECREATION CENTER

— HOUSTON ROCKETS BASKETBALL —



## MINI-DRIBBLERS

Sundays, Jan. 25–March 1, 1:30–3 p.m. | Cost: \$105

The National Basketball Academy and the Houston Rockets are bringing the Mini-Dribblers back to Sugar Land! Mini-Dribblers is designed for 5- to 10-year-old boys and girls to work on improving their shooting, dribbling, passing and more.

## SPRING BREAK CLINIC

Monday-Wednesday, March 9–11, 9 a.m.–noon | Cost: \$105

For more information, call **832-392-0749** or go to [www.tnbabasketball.com](http://www.tnbabasketball.com).

Spring Break Clinic is designed for boys and girls, ages 5 to 16, who are looking to improve their basketball skills. Throughout the clinic, the participants will receive personal instruction in all areas of the game including dribbling, shooting, passing, blocking and defense while learning lessons such as good sportsmanship and the team concept.

## SPRING ADULT BASKETBALL LEAGUE

Dates: Feb. 24–April 30 (Tuesday or Thursday league)

Time: 6–10 p.m.

Cost: \$300 (Jan. 5–23); \$325 (Jan. 24–30)

Teams in the spring basketball league will play a round-robin schedule along with a playoff game to end the season.

Call **281-275-2885** to register or for more information.

## IMPERIAL PARK RECREATION CENTER

234 Matlage Way  
Sugar Land, TX 77478

## PARKS AND RECREATION PLAYBOOK

Activities offered by the Parks and Recreation Department can be found in the playbook. It is a resource for City events, pool hours and classes at the Imperial Park Recreation Center and the T.E. Harman Center for seniors. The most recent playbook is available online at

[www.imperialparkrecreationcenter.org](http://www.imperialparkrecreationcenter.org).

Download a copy today!

## T.E. HARMAN CENTER

226 Matlage Way  
Sugar Land, TX 77478  
281-275-2893



For more information on senior activities and registration, call **281-275-2893** or email [seniors@sugarlandtx.gov](mailto:seniors@sugarlandtx.gov). Monthly calendars are available at [www.sugarlandtx.gov/teharman](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov/teharman).

## Sweetheart Dance

Thursday, Feb. 12

5–8 p.m.

Cost: \$5

Resident Registration – Jan. 5

Non-Resident Registration – Jan. 12

Seniors are invited to a special Valentine's dance. Appetizers and cocktails will be served.



POSTAL CUSTOMER

# CALENDAR



Date | Event | Time | Location

DEC.

25	Christmas Day - City offices closed   No solid waste collection		
26	Thursday's solid waste collection		
27	Friday's solid waste collection		
31	New Years Eve on the Square	7 p.m.-1 a.m.	SL Town Square

JANUARY

1	New Year's Day - City offices closed   No solid waste collection		
2	Thursday's solid waste collection		
3	Friday's solid waste collection		
6	City Council	5:30 p.m.	City Hall
13	Planning & Zoning	6:30 p.m.	City Hall
19	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - City offices closed regular solid waste collection		
20	City Council	5:30 p.m.	City Hall
22	Planning & Zoning	6:30 p.m.	City Hall
23	State of the City Event	7:30-9:15 a.m.	SL Marriott
27	City Council	5:30 p.m.	City Hall

FEBRUARY

3	City Council	5:30 p.m.	City Hall
10	Planning & Zoning	6:30 p.m.	City Hall
12	Sweetheart Dance	5-8 p.m.	T.E. Harman Center
17	City Council	5:30 p.m.	City Hall
24	City Council	5:30 p.m.	City Hall
26	Planning & Zoning	6:30 p.m.	City Hall

## KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR: LANTERN FESTIVAL



The Chinese Lantern Festival marks the last day of the lunar New Year and takes place on the 15th day of the first lunar month. The festival dates back more than 2,000 years. In 2015, the festival falls on Thursday, March 5. Because the festival offers a good chance for young boys and girls to interact with each other, the Lantern Festival is also regarded as "Chinese Valentine's Day."

The Lantern Festival's traditional customs and activities engage people of all ages with displays of lanterns, fireworks, lion dances and folk dances. During the festival, various shapes and sizes of red lanterns can be seen in the streets, parks, houses and stores. The lanterns are almost always red, a color symbolizing good fortune.

During the festival, people write riddles on pieces of paper and post them on lanterns in front of their homes for visitors. If they guess the right answer, a little gift is presented by the owner.

Eating special rice dumplings called *tangyuan* has become an essential part of the festival. *Tangyuan* are round balls with various fillings that symbolize reunion, harmony and happiness. During the night of the festival, family members gather to eat *tangyuan* and appreciate the full moon.

## SAVE THE DATE

CULTURAL KITE FESTIVAL | March 7  
EGGSTRAVAGANZA | March 28