



CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS
NOTICE OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of West Lake Hills, Texas, will hold a Regular Meeting on the 10th day of December 2025 at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers, Municipal Complex, 4010 Bee Cave Road, West Lake Hills, Texas, at which time the following items will be discussed, to-wit:

REMOTE ACCESS - Join Zoom Meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3499549035>
Or via telephone: Dial (346) 248-7799 - Meeting ID: 349 954 9035

If you wish to speak during the meeting or provide written comments, please email your name, phone number, comments, and the item number you wish to speak/comment on to citysec@westlakehills.gov by 1:00 P.M. on December 10, 2025.

1. Call to Order
2. Citizen Communications The City Council welcomes public comments at this point on any issue. If the issue is listed on the agenda, the speaker may choose to comment during the Public Comment period or when the specific agenda item is taken up by the Council later in the meeting. The Council cannot respond to or discuss matters not listed on the agenda. The Council may provide factual information, refer the item to a staff member, or request the item be added to a future meeting agenda. Speakers shall limit their comments to five (5) minutes each.
3. Consent Agenda All Consent Agenda items listed are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one (1) motion. No separate discussion or action on any of the items is necessary unless requested by a Council Member.
 - a. Approval of the November 12, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes.
 - b. Approval of the November 14, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes.
 - c. Approval of the December 3, 2025 Workshop Minutes.
 - d. Approval to appoint Judge Sherry Statman and Judge Alfred Jenkins, III as Associate Municipal Court Judges.
 - e. Approval to move the November 11, 2026 regular City Council and Board of Adjustment meetings to Tuesday, November 10, 2026.
 - f. Approval of the 2026 ZAPCO meeting schedule and adoption of submission calendars for Special Use, Zoning, Variances, and Subdivision applications for calendar year 2026.

4. Ordinance Discuss and consider action on an ordinance amending Chapter 4: Animals, Article 4.01, Section 4.01.001 Definitions; amending Section 4.01.005 Nuisance Animals; and amending Section 4.01.009 Conditions and Facilities.
5. Ordinance Discuss and consider action on an ordinance amending Chapter 8: Fire Prevention and Protection, Article 8.02 Fireworks, Section 8.02.001 Definitions; amending Section 8.02.002 Sale, Discharge Prohibited; amending Section 8.02.005 Locus of Offense; and amending Section 8.02.006 Exceptions.
6. Ordinance Discuss and consider action on an ordinance amending Chapter 8: Fire Prevention and Protection, Article 8.01 General Provisions, Section 8.01.001 Arson Reward.
7. Ordinance Discuss and consider action on an ordinance amending Chapter 1: General Provision, Article 1.07 Emergency Management, Section 1.07.001 Organization to allow the emergency management director to designate a person to serve as emergency management coordinator.
8. Administration Discuss and consider action on the 2026 Street Maintenance Projects.
9. Administration Discuss key takeaways and recommendations provided by the Firewise Committee to City Council.
10. Executive Session In accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 551.001, et seq, the City Council will recess into Executive Session (closed meeting) to discuss the following:
 - a. Section 551.071 - Consultation with the attorney regarding pending or contemplated litigation, or settlement offer; or on a matter in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the Texas Open Meetings Act, re: City of West Lake Hills v. Jaffe - 1405 Wildcat Hollow.
11. Executive Session Reconvene into Open Session and take action if and as deemed appropriate in the City Councils' discretion regarding consultation with attorney.
12. Adjournment

Approved by: James Vaughan, Mayor

Certificate

I certify that the above Notice of the December 10, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting was posted on the bulletin board at the Municipal Complex, 4010 Bee Cave Road, West Lake Hills, Texas on Thursday, December 4, 2025 by 5:00 pm. and will remain posted continuously until said meeting is convened.

Signed by: Terry Blanchard, City Secretary

The City of West Lake Hills is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable accommodation and equal access to communications will be provided upon request.

All items on the agenda are for discussion and/or action. City Council reserves the right to adjourn into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any of the matters listed above, as authorized by Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), 551.072 (Deliberations about Real Property), 551.073 (Deliberations about Gifts and Donations), 551.074 (Personnel Matters), 551.076 (Deliberations about Security Devices), and 551.086 (Economic Development).

CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS
MINUTES OF A CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 7:00 PM

1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Mayor Vaughan called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL PRESENT:

Mayor James Vaughan
Mayor Pro Tem Gordon Bowman
Dana Harmon
Brian Plunkett
Darin Walker

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

City Administrator Trey Fletcher
City Secretary Terry Blanchard
Finance Director Vonda Ragsdale
Director of BDS Jennifer Bills
Chief of Police Scott Gerdes
City Attorney Charles E. Zech

Meeting was suspended at 7:02 p.m.

Meeting was reconvened at 8:14 p.m.

2. Citizen Communications The City Council welcomes public comments at this point on any issue. If the issue is listed on the agenda, the speaker may choose to comment during the Public Comment period or when the specific agenda item is taken up by the Council later in the meeting. The Council cannot respond to or discuss matters not listed on the agenda. The Council may provide factual information, refer the item to a staff member, or request the item be added to a future meeting agenda. Speakers shall limit their comments to five (5) minutes each.

Mayor Vaughan opened the meeting for public comments. Hearing none, the public comment section was closed.

3. Consent Agenda All Consent Agenda items listed are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one (1) motion. No separate discussion or action on any of the items is necessary unless requested by a Council Member.
- a. Approval of the October 22, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes.
 - b. Approval of the November 5, 2025 Workshop Minutes.
 - c. **706 Laurel Valley Road** - Approval of a recommendation from ZAPCO on the release of a 10-foot wide public utility and drainage easement on a recorded plat (Section 36.01.017 of the West Lake Hills Code).
 - d. Approval to cancel the November 25, 2025 Regular City Council Meeting.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Councilmember Bowman and a second by Councilmember Plunkett, the Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed to

approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried.

4. Land Use **701 South Capital of Texas Highway, Building J** - Discuss and consider action on a recommendation from ZAPCO on the following variances from the Uniform Sign Agreement and Chapter 32 of the Code of Ordinance for Building J in the Village at Westlake shopping center:

1. For the installation of 2 signs not spaced within 2 inches of a masonry face (Village at Westlake Uniform Sign Criteria section I.E)
2. For the installation of 2 signs not matching the approved colors for the site (Village at Westlake Uniform Sign Agreement section I.K)
3. For the installation of a sign on the roof of a building (Code of Ordinances Section 32.01.016(15) - Prohibited Signs)
4. For the installation of a canopy sign that does not match any of the allowed sign types (Code of Ordinances Section 32.03 - Sign Categories)

Applicant: Vince Buxton - First and Main Signs.

Director Bills gave a summary. ZAPCO recommends approval. No hardship criteria in State law for signs. The City has guidelines for signs and the shopping center has rules.

Vince (First and Main Signs) stated the steel canopy is supported by columns. Yellow is the brand color for the company.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Councilmember Plunkett and a second by Councilmember Harmon, the Council voted three (3) for and one (1) opposed to approve the variances as requested. Councilmember Bowman voted against. Motion carried.

5. Finance Discuss and consider action on an ordinance amending the budget for fiscal year 2024-25.

Director Ragsdale provided a summary to the Council regarding the amendments.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Councilmember Plunkett and a second by Councilmember Bowman, the Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed to approve the ordinance as presented. Motion carried.

6. Administration Discuss and consider action on a resolution casting votes for the appointment(s) to the Travis Central Appraisal District Board of Directors

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Councilmember Walker and a second by Councilmember Bowman, the Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed to approve the resolution casting one vote for Bruce Elfant and one vote for Deborah Cartwright. Motion carried.

7. Administration Discuss and consider action on a resolution to deny the Texas Gas Service (TGS) Company's, a Division of One Gas, Inc., Statement of Intent to Increase Rates filed on or about June 30, 2025.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Councilmember Plunkett and a second by Councilmember Bowman, the Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed to approve the resolution denying Texas Gas Service Company's intent to increase rates. Motion carried.

8. Administration Discuss residential construction parking regulations.

Administrator Fletcher gave a summary and reviewed samples from Highland Park, Bellaire, Universal City, and Olmos Park. The Council indicated that the concept was worth investigating.

9. Administration Receive an update and consider possible action regarding City of West Lake Hills v. Jaffe - 1405 Wildcat Hollow.

Director Bills had no update. Staff continues to meet with owner and contractor. Still need the construction schedule and an easement. Contractor should provide the schedule within the next week.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Councilmember Walker and a second by Councilmember Bowman, the Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES VAUGHAN, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Terry Blanchard, TRMC
City Secretary

These minutes were approved on _____, 20____.

CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS
MINUTES OF A CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
Friday, November 14, 2025 at 2:00 PM

1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Mayor Vaughan called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL PRESENT:

Mayor James Vaughan
Mayor Pro Tem Gordon Bowman
Beth South
Darin Walker

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

City Administrator Trey Fletcher
City Secretary Terry Blanchard
Director of BDS Jennifer Bills

2. Ordinance Discuss and consider action on an ordinance canvassing returns and declaring results of the Special Election held on November 4, 2025 for the purpose of reauthorizing the local sales and use tax to provide revenue for the maintenance and repair of municipal streets within the City of West Lake Hills.

Mayor Vaughan read the canvassing returns into the record:

PROP A	Precinct 320 EV	Precinct 320 ED	Precinct 321 EV	Precinct 321 ED	Precinct 322 EV	Precinct 322 ED	TOTAL Number of Votes	%
For	2	0	77	42	351	206	678	78.2%
Against	0	1	18	11	85	74	189	21.8%

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Councilmember Walker and a second by Councilmember South, the Council voted three (3) for and none (0) opposed to approve the ordinance as presented. Motion carried.

3. Adjournment

Mayor Vaughan adjourned the meeting at 2:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES VAUGHAN, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Terry Blanchard, TRMC
City Secretary

These minutes were approved on December 10, 2025.

CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS
MINUTES OF A CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at 12:00 PM

1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Mayor Vaughan called the workshop to order at 12:03 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL PRESENT:

Mayor James Vaughan
Dana Harmon
Beth South
Darin Walker

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

City Administrator Trey Fletcher
City Secretary Terry Blanchard
Director of BDS Jennifer Bills
Chief of Police Scott Gerdes
City Attorney Charles E. Zech

2. Citizen Communications The City Council welcomes public comments at this point on any issue. If the issue is listed on the agenda, the speaker may choose to comment during the Public Comment period or when the specific agenda item is taken up by the Council later in the meeting. The Council cannot respond to or discuss matters not listed on the agenda. The Council may provide factual information, refer the item to a staff member, or request the item be added to a future meeting agenda. Speakers shall limit their comments to five (5) minutes each.

Councilmember Harmon provided opening comments and a brief history of the Firewise Committee. She recognized Alice London for her outstanding work with the committee.

3. Administration Receive an update/presentation from the Firewise Committee regarding top priorities, projects, and work ideas for the upcoming year.

Alice London introduced the Firewise Committee members in attendance. A presentation was given emphasizing four key areas of focus for the committee.

- **Community Outreach and Education**

- Yard sign and flyer was launched
- Neighbor-to-Neighbor networks initiated
- Recommendations
 - Assess effectiveness of existing efforts
 - Devise more education/outreach campaigns and materials
 - Create yard signs for homeowners who have adopted Firewise practices
 - Provide highly visible recognition for groups that undertake exemplary Firewise fixes

- **Evacuation Logistics**

- Reviewed report provided by Gordon Novak
- Discussed evacuation problems
- Limited number of major evacuation streets
- Limited access adds to wildfire danger
- Recommendations

- Clear evacuation route right-of-ways with regularly scheduled maintenance
- Coordinate with Fire Department and other entities to proactively manage vegetation overgrowth along evacuation routes
- Prioritize enforcement of city ordinances that require removal of dead vegetation on streets in the evacuation corridor
- Create clear instructions for evacuation and educate residents
- **Ways to Mitigate and Slow Fire Damage**
 - Ember-resistant mesh at chimneys, vents, and other structure openings
 - Approximately five feet of defensible space between building and any ignitable landscape
 - Reviewed Tom Keller's report for mitigation incentives
 - Recommendations
 - Pilot project to induce contiguous homeowners in the high-risk areas to "harden" their homes to slow wildfire advance
 - Citywide rebate offer to induce homeowners to adopt ember-resistant mesh and improve their defensible space
 - Utilize the experience of other counties that have had success with these incentive plans
- **Aligning and Enforcing Ordinances**
 - Reviewed limitations on enforcement efforts
 - Building codes, ZAPCO policies, and tree ordinances don't always align with Firewise goals
 - Recommendations
 - Focus enforcement on evacuation corridors
 - Encourage compliance by helping with brush removal, followed by stricter enforcement
 - Fast Track the enforcement process for homeowners in high-risk areas
 - Modify ordinances to allow homeowners to remove trees and vegetation within five-foot buffer zone
 - Review current ordinances to better align with Firewise goals

Q&A session was held for attendees. Reviewed recommendations for each category. Comments were provided by attendees.

4. Adjournment

Mayor Vaughan adjourned the meeting at 2:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:

JAMES VAUGHAN, MAYOR

Terry Blanchard, TRMC
City Secretary

These minutes were approved on December 10, 2025.



City of West Lake Hills City Council

AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date:	December 10, 2025	Item Number:	3f
Department:	Building & Development Services		
Prepared By:	Jennifer C. Bills, Director of Building & Development	Cost / Budget:	None
Exhibits:	2026 Schedules	Source of Funds:	N/A

Subject

Approval of the 2026 ZAPCO meeting schedule and adoption of submission calendars for Special Use, Zoning, Variances, and Subdivision applications for calendar year 2026 .

Recommendation

Staff recommend approval of the 2026 schedules.

The Zoning and Planning Commission recommended approval of the schedules at the November 19, 2025 regular meeting.

Discussion

Background & Analysis:

The Code of Ordinances and the State of Texas have required review and notification timelines that must be met. The attached schedules provide the application dates for ZAPCO and BOA/City Council meetings to ensure that those timelines can be met.

The regular time (2nd Wednesday) for the November Board of Adjustment/City Council meeting falls on Veterans Day in 2026. While the current calendar proposes that date, when the official Council Calendar is updated to accommodate the holiday the submittal schedule will be updated accordingly. This currently has the largest impact on 2nd submissions for subdivision and special use permit applications, as their submittal dates are based on the dates of Board of Adjustment/Council meetings. Variance, zoning, and initial subdivision submittal deadlines are based on Zoning and Planning Commission meeting dates.

2026 Application Schedule Variance/Zoning Change

Submittal Date	Submittal Check Date	Notification Posted (mailed & sign)	ZAPCO Posting Date	Zoning & Planning Commission Meeting Date	BOA/CC Posting Date	BOA/City Council Meeting Date**
Must be received by 5:00 pm CDT (Monday unless City holiday)	All submissions must have all required items to enter review	15 days in advance of meeting	3 Business Days	Public Hearing (Wednesday)	3 Business Days	Public Hearing (Wednesday)
12/15/2025	12/16/2025	1/5/2026	1/14/2026*	1/21/2026	2/5/2026	2/11/2026
1/12/2026	1/13/2026	2/2/2026	2/12/2026	2/18/2026	3/5/2026	3/11/2026
2/9/2026	2/10/2026	3/2/2026	3/12/2026	3/18/2026	4/1/2026*	4/8/2026
3/9/2026	3/10/2026	3/30/2026	4/9/2026	4/15/2026	5/7/2026	5/13/2026
4/13/2026	4/14/2026	5/4/2026	5/14/2026	5/20/2026	6/4/2026	6/10/2026
5/11/2026	5/12/2026	6/1/2026	6/11/2026	6/17/2026	7/1/2026*	7/8/2026
6/8/2026	6/9/2026	6/29/2026	7/9/2026	7/15/2026	8/6/2026	8/12/2026
7/13/2026	7/14/2026	8/3/2026	8/13/2026	8/19/2026	9/2/2026*	9/9/2026
8/10/2026	8/11/2026	8/31/2026	9/10/2026	9/16/2026	10/8/2026	10/14/2026
9/14/2026	9/15/2026	10/5/2026	10/15/2026	10/21/2026	11/4/2025*	11/10/2026*
10/12/2026	10/13/2026	11/2/2026	11/12/2026	11/18/2026	12/3/2026	12/9/2026
No December ZAPCO						
12/14/2026	12/15/2026	1/4/2027	01/13/2027*	1/20/2027	2/4/2027	2/10/2027

*Change due to holiday

Refer to **Section 38.05.036: Notice of public hearing before zoning and planning commission for approval process.

2026 Application Schedule Special Use Permit

Submittal Date	Submittal Check Date	Notification Posted (mailed & sign)	Agenda Posted	BOA Meeting Date**
Must be received by 5:00 pm CDT (Monday unless City holiday)	All submissions must have all required items to enter review	15 days in advance of meeting	3 business days	Public Hearing (Wednesday)
12/8/2025	12/9/2025	12/29/2025	1/8/2026	1/14/2026
1/5/2026	1/6/2026	1/26/2026	2/5/2026	2/11/2026
2/2/2026	2/3/2026	2/23/2026	3/5/2026	3/11/2026
3/2/2026	3/3/2026	3/23/2026	4/1/2026*	4/8/2026
4/6/2026	4/7/2026	4/27/2026	5/7/2026	5/13/2026
5/4/2026	5/5/2026	5/22/2026*	6/4/2026	6/10/2026
6/1/2026	6/2/2026	6/22/2026	7/1/2026*	7/8/2026
7/6/2026	7/7/2026	7/27/2026	8/6/2026	8/12/2026
8/3/2026	8/4/2026	8/24/2026	9/2/2026*	9/9/2026
9/7/2026	9/8/2026	9/28/2026	10/8/2026	10/14/2026
10/5/2026	10/6/2026	10/23/2026*	11/4/2026*	11/10/2026*
11/2/2026	11/3/2026	11/23/2026	12/3/2026	12/9/2026
12/7/2026	12/8/2026	12/28/2026	1/7/2027	1/13/2027

*Change due to holiday

Refer to **Section 38.04.032 (e) (2): Notice of public hearing before board of adjustment for SUP approval process.

2026 Application Schedule Subdivision Initial Submittal

Submittal Date	Submittal Check Date	Zoning & Planning Commission	City Council Meeting Date
Must be received by 5:00 pm CDT (Monday unless City holiday, then next business day)	All submissions must have all required items to enter review	Public Hearing (Wednesday)	Public Hearing (Wednesday)
12/22/2025	12/23/2025	1/21/2026	1/28/2026
1/20/2026*	1/21/2026*	2/18/2026	2/25/2026
2/16/2026	2/17/2026	3/18/2026	3/25/2026
3/16/2026	3/17/2026	4/15/2026	4/22/2026
4/20/2026	4/21/2026	5/20/2026	5/27/2026
5/18/2026	5/19/2026	6/17/2026	6/24/2026
6/15/2026	6/16/2026	7/15/2026	7/22/2026
7/20/2026	7/21/2026	8/19/2026	8/26/2026
8/17/2026	8/18/2026	9/16/2026	9/23/2026
9/21/2026	9/22/2026	10/21/2026	10/28/2026
10/19/2026	10/20/2026	11/18/2026	12/9/2026*
No December ZAPCO Meeting			
12/21/2025	12/22/2025	1/20/2026	1/27/2026

*Change due to holiday

2026 Application Schedule Subdivision Resubmittal

Resubmittal Date	City Council Meeting Date
Must be received by 5:00 pm CDT (Monday unless City holiday, then next business day)	Public Hearing (Wednesday)
12/29/2025	1/14/2026
1/26/2026	2/11/2026
2/23/2026	3/11/2026
3/23/2026	4/8/2026
4/27/2026	5/13/2026
5/26/2026*	6/10/2026
6/22/2026	7/8/2026
7/27/2026	8/12/2026
8/24/2026	9/9/2026
9/28/2026	10/14/2026
10/26/2026	11/10/2026*
11/23/2026	12/9/2026
12/28/2026	1/13/2027

*Change due to holiday



City of West Lake Hills City Council

AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date:	December 10, 2025	Item Number:	4
Department:	Administration		
Prepared By:	Trey Fletcher	Cost / Budget:	n/a
Exhibits:	Proposed Ordinance	Source of Funds:	n/a

Subject

Discuss and consider action on an ordinance amending Chapter 4: Animals, Article 4.01, Section 4.01.001 Definitions; amending Section 4.01.005 Nuisance Animals; and amending Section 4.01.009 Conditions and Facilities.

Recommendation

Approval.

Discussion

City staff, in coordination with the City Attorney's office, conducted a review of Chapter 4 – Animals to address outdated definitions, clarify regulatory authority, and improve enforceability of nuisance and animal-keeping standards within the City. The review was undertaken following to clean up provisions related to domestic farm animals, animal waste management, and neighborhood compatibility in residential areas.

The proposed ordinance:

- Updates and expands definitions (e.g., agricultural operations, domestic farm animals, livestock, poultry, nuisance animals, pets).
- Clarifies when livestock, poultry, and farm animals may constitute a nuisance, particularly when not connected to an agricultural operation.
- Revises nuisance animal provisions to improve enforcement and align with contemporary animal control practices.
- Reorganizes and modernizes conditions and facilities standards for keeping animals within the City.
- Establishes a clear permitting process for domestic farm animals, including application requirements, review procedures, criteria for approval, and a formal appeal process.
- Aligns City code with relevant state statutes, including provisions in the Texas Local Government Code and Texas Agriculture Code.

These updates are intended to enhance public health and safety, reduce neighbor conflicts, and ensure consistent interpretation and enforcement across varying types of animals kept within city limits.

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-024

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS, AMENDING CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 4: ANIMALS, ARTICLE 4.01, SECTION 4.01.001 DEFINITIONS; AMENDING SECTION 4.01.005 NUISANCE ANIMALS; AMENDING SECTION 4.01.009 CONDITIONS AND FACILITIES; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES TO THE EXTENT THEY ARE IN CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the City of West Lake Hills (“City”) is a Type A General Law municipality operating under the laws of the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Texas Local Government Code Section 51.001, the City has general authority to adopt an ordinance that is for the good government, peace or order of the City and is necessary or proper for carrying out a power granted by law to the City; and

WHEREAS, the City of West Lake Hills desires to amend its Code of Ordinances, Chapter 4; Animals; and

WHEREAS, City staff have reviewed the current regulations and have recommended certain revisions and updates to those regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the amendment proposed is reasonable, necessary, and proper for the good government of the City of West Lake Hills; and

WHEREAS, on December 10, 2025, the City Council conducted a public hearing and, after consideration, determined that the ordinance amendment be approved as provided herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS:

Section 1. The foregoing recitals are found to be true and correct legislative and factual findings of the City Council and are hereby approved and incorporated into the body of this Ordinance.

Section 2. This Ordinance is adopted under the authority of the Constitution and laws of the State of Texas, particularly Chapter 211 and Chapter 217.002 of the Local Government Code.

Section 3. Chapter 4 Animals, Article 4.01 General Provisions, Section 4.01.001 Definitions, 4.01.005, Nuisance animals, and Section 4.01.009 Conditions and facilities are hereby amended as set forth in **Exhibit A** attached hereto and incorporated into this Ordinance for all intents and purposes. Any underlined text is new or relocated and shall be inserted into the Code of Ordinances. Any ~~struck-through~~ text shall be deleted from the Code, as indicated on *Attachment*

“A.”

Section 4. If any provision of this Ordinance is illegal, invalid, or unenforceable under present or future laws, the remainder of this Ordinance will not be affected and, in lieu of each illegal, invalid, or unenforceable provision, a provision as similar in terms to the illegal, invalid, or unenforceable provision as is possible and is legal, valid, and enforceable will be added to this Ordinance.

Section 5. This Ordinance shall be cumulative of all provisions of ordinances of the City except where the provisions of the Ordinance are in direct conflict with the provisions of such ordinances, in which event the conflicting provisions of such ordinances are hereby repealed.

Section 6. This Ordinance shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas and the United States of America.

Section 7. It is officially found, determined, and declared that the meeting at which this Ordinance is adopted was open to the public as required and that public notice of the time, place, and purpose of said meeting was given as required by the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Local Government Code, as amended.

Section 8. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its final passage and approval by the City Council, as duly attested by the Mayor and City Secretary, and any publications required by law.

PASSED and APPROVED this 10th day of December, 2025.

CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS

By: _____
James Vaughan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Terry Blanchard, City Secretary

Exhibit A

All text which is underlined denotes the addition of new text. All text which is stricken through denotes the removal of existing text. All other text is existing, unchanged text. Any existing text which has been omitted shall be considered unchanged.

ARTICLE 4.01 GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 4.01.001. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Agricultural operation. An activity conducted on agricultural land for the commercial use or production of food, fiber, or other agricultural products. The term includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) Cultivation of the soil for the planting, growing, and harvesting of crops or vegetation;
- (2) Raising, feeding, breeding, or managing livestock or poultry;
- (3) Production, processing, or storage of agricultural products directly related to those activities; and
- (4) Routine agricultural practices and improvements necessary to carry out the above activities.

The term does not include the keeping, maintaining, or housing of pets or domesticated farm animals solely for personal, recreational, or ornamental purposes, or the non-commercial keeping of animals, for hobby farming or for personal enjoyment rather than agricultural operations.

~~Domestic farm/ranch animal. Burros, cattle, donkeys, emus, goats, hogs, horses, jackasses, jennets, jennies, mules, ostriches, pigs, ponies, sheep, or other similar domesticated animals.~~

Domestic Farm Animal. Any animal, not typically kept as a pet, kept solely for the use or enjoyment of the owner or lessee of the land and not for any Agricultural Operations, including but not limited to: alpacas, cattle, donkeys, goats, horses, hogs, llamas, mules, ratites, sheep swine, and poultry such as: chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, and other domesticated fowl.

Livestock. Livestock means alpacas, asses, cattle, goats, horses, llamas, mules, sheep, exotic livestock including elk and elk hybrids, ratites, swine, and any other species defined as livestock in Texas Agriculture Code § 1.003 and Texas Penal Code § 42.09(5).

Nuisance animal. Any animal especially and particularly a cat or a dog, that:

- (1) Damages or destroys the property of others while at-large.
- (2) Overturns or removes contents from a covered garbage or trash container.

- (3) Commits any other acts that may reasonably be considered to constitute a nuisance, including but not limited to the acts described in section 4.01.010; or
- (4) In the case of livestock or poultry not engaged in an agricultural operation as defined in Texas Agriculture Code § 251.002, creates a condition that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of property by others, including but not limited to:
 - (A) Accumulation of animal waste or manure causing foul odors, unsanitary conditions, or fly infestations;
 - (B) Excessive noise;
 - (C) Animal at-large incidents; or
 - (D) Conditions that otherwise pose a substantial threat to public health or safety.

~~Pet or house pet.~~ Birds, cats, dogs, ferrets, gerbils, hamsters, or other similarly domesticated animals excluding exotic animals as defined by State Law.

Poultry. Poultry means domesticated birds kept for the production of food or fiber, including chickens, ducks, geese, guinea fowl, turkeys, and similar species.

§ 4.01.005. Nuisance animals.

- (a) A person commits an offense if the person is the owner of an nuisance animal, ~~and the animal:~~
 - ~~(1) Habitually chases motor vehicles;~~
 - ~~(2) Damages or destroys the property of others while at large;~~
 - ~~(3) Overturns or removes contents from a covered garbage or trash container; or~~
 - ~~(4) Commits any other acts that may reasonably be considered to constitute a nuisance, including but not limited to the acts described in section 4.01.010.~~
- (b) An offense under this section is a class C misdemeanor. Any person violating any provision of this section shall, upon conviction, be fined a sum of not less than \$1.00 and not exceeding \$2,000.00. Upon a second conviction, the violator shall be fined a sum of not less than \$500.00 and not exceeding \$2,000.00. Upon three or more convictions, the violator shall be fined a sum of not less than \$1,000.00 and not exceeding \$2,000.00.
- (c) Each occurrence in violation of this section constitutes a separate offense. A conviction under this section is considered a finding that the animal that is the subject of the case is aggressive for purposes of this chapter. An order of deferred disposition for an offense alleged under this section is considered a conviction of an offense under this section.

§ 4.01.009. Conditions and facilities.

It shall be unlawful for any person to harbor any animals without conforming to foregoing

conditions and criteria:

- (1) Generally. The appearance, characteristics, condition and size of facilities for animals/pets must be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, not have an adverse effect on the value of surrounding properties, nor impede their proper development, nor create a nuisance or otherwise interfere with neighbors' enjoyment of their property. The keeping of animals/pets must not create conditions which constitute safety or health hazards, nor disturb the peace and quiet of the neighborhood.
- (2) Pets/house pets. ~~Animals kept as pets/house pets shall be for the use and enjoyment of the owner or lessee of the land and not for any commercial purpose. Persons keeping animals as pets/house pets must conform to foregoing general criteria and provide/maintain the following:~~
 - (A) Adequate shelter for their pets from the elements;
 - (B) Adequate space for proper exercise for their pets;
 - (C) Proper drainage and sanitation of animal enclosures;
 - (D) Effective means to prevent their pets from menacing or disturbing neighbors; and
 - (E) Effective means/program for waste disposal to keep odors from being detectable from off the premises.
- (3) Domestic farm/ranch animals. ~~Farm Animals. Keeping such animals requires City Administrator approval for the issuance of a Farm/ranch Animal permit. Applicants whose request for a farm/ ranch animal permit is denied may appeal such decision to the city council or apply for a variance, as appropriate. Applicants must conform to foregoing general criteria and comply with the following specific criteria and conditions:~~
 - (A) ~~Domestic farm/ranch animals shall be kept solely for the use or enjoyment of the owner or lessee of the land and not for any commercial purpose;~~
 - (B) ~~Parcels on which these animals are to be kept shall be at least one acre in area;~~
 - (C) ~~The number of farm/ranch animals permitted to be kept on a parcel shall be limited by the city administrator after considering the size of the lot and the size, nature, and habits of the animal and applying the general criteria in this section;~~
 - (D) ~~Keepers of farm/ranch animals shall provide/maintain the following:~~
 - (i) ~~Effective means to prevent their animals from disturbing neighbors;~~
 - (ii) ~~Adequate enclosures to keep animals from running at large;~~
 - (iii) ~~Adequate space within each enclosure for proper exercise;~~
 - (iv) ~~Adequate shelter from the elements;~~
 - (v) ~~Proper drainage and sanitation of animal enclosures; and~~

- ~~(vi) Effective means/program for waste disposal to keep odors from being detectable from off the premises;~~
- ~~(E) All domestic farm/ranch animals brought into or maintained in the city shall be free of all infectious and contagious diseases that the state animal health commission has determined to be dangerous; and~~
- ~~(F) Owners shall keep farm/ranch animals effectively inoculated against dangerous diseases to which such animals are susceptible.~~
- (A) Application process. Any person seeking a permit under this Article shall submit a completed application form to the City. The application shall include the applicant's name, address, contact information, description of the activity for which the permit is sought, location of the proposed activity, and any additional information required by the City Administrator to determine compliance with applicable laws and regulations. A non-refundable application fee, as set by City Council resolution or fee schedule, shall accompany the application. Upon receipt of a completed application and fee, City staff shall review the materials for completeness and compliance and may request additional information or documentation as necessary.
- (B) Review and determination. The City Administrator, or their designee, shall review each application and determine whether to issue or deny the permit based on the information provided and the applicant's compliance with this Article and other applicable ordinances and laws. The City may impose reasonable conditions upon the issuance of any permit to protect public health, safety, and welfare.
- (C) No right to permit. Submission of an application and payment of the required fee shall not create any entitlement or obligation on the part of the City to issue a permit. The issuance of a permit is a discretionary act of the City, and the City Administrator reserves the right to deny any application determined not to be in the best interest of the City or inconsistent with applicable law.
- (D) Appeal. Applicants whose request for a Domestic Farm Animal permit is denied may appeal such decision to the City Council, in writing, within ten(10) days of any such permit denial.
- (E) Permittees must conform to foregoing general criteria and comply with the following specific criteria and conditions:
 - (i) Animals shall be kept solely for the use or enjoyment of the owner or lessee of the land and not for any commercial purpose;
 - (ii) Parcels on which these animals are to be kept shall be at least one acre in area;
 - (iii) The number of animals permitted to be kept on a parcel shall be limited by the City Administrator after considering the size of the lot and the size, nature, and habits of the animal and applying industry guidance from Texas A&M AgriLife.
 - (iv) Permittees of Farm Animals shall provide/maintain the following:
 - (a) Prevent animals from disturbing neighbors by maintaining adequate

control, restraint, or confinement;

- (b) Adequate enclosures to keep animals from running at-large;
 - (c) Adequate space within each enclosure for proper exercise;
 - (d) Adequate shelter from the elements;
 - (e) Proper drainage and sanitation of animal enclosures; and
 - (f) Effective means/program for waste disposal to keep odors from being detectable off the premises.
- (F) All animals brought into or maintained in the city shall be free of all infectious and contagious diseases that the state animal health commission has determined to be dangerous; and
- (G) Owners shall keep animals effectively inoculated against dangerous diseases to which such animals are susceptible.



City of West Lake Hills City Council

AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date:	<u>December 10, 2025</u>	Item Number:	<u></u>
Department:	<u>Administration</u>		
Prepared By:	<u>Trey Fletcher</u>	Cost / Budget:	<u>n/a</u>
Exhibits:	<u>Proposed Ordinance</u>	Source of Funds:	<u>n/a</u>

Subject

Discuss and consider action on an ordinance amending Chapter 8: Fire Prevention and Protection, Article 8.02 Fireworks, Section 8.02.001 Definitions; amending Section 8.02.002 Sale, Discharge Prohibited; amending Section 8.02.005 Locus of Offense; and amending Section 8.02.006 Exceptions.

Recommendation

Approval.

Discussion

The City's existing fireworks ordinance contains outdated definitions, references to obsolete federal citations, and poor alignment with current fire safety standards or enforcement practices.

As a heavily wooded, hillside community located within the Wildland–Urban Interface and subject to ongoing drought conditions, West Lake Hills faces significant wildfire risk. The sale, possession, and use of fireworks pose a heightened threat to public safety and property.

City staff and the City Attorney's office reviewed Chapter 8, Article 8.02 (Fireworks) to modernize the ordinance, improve clarity, and strengthen enforcement mechanisms. The proposed revisions:

- Update the definition of fireworks to reflect modern terminology and include a comprehensive list of prohibited devices.
- Strengthen the prohibition on sale, possession with intent to sell, discharge, manufacture, or display of fireworks within City limits.
- Clarify that violations constitute a public nuisance and authorize City personnel to seize and destroy illegal fireworks.
- Clarify jurisdiction and application of offenses occurring outside City boundaries but producing impacts within the City.
- Repeal outdated Section 8.02.006 (Exceptions) to ensure a uniform prohibition consistent with modern fire safety practice.
- Reorganize and renumber provisions accordingly (e.g., burden of proof).

These amendments improve enforcement clarity for police and fire personnel and reflect the City's priority to reduce wildfire hazards, protect property, and safeguard public health and safety.

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-026

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS, AMENDING CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 8: FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION, ARTICLE 8.02 FIREWORKS, SECTION 8.02.001 DEFINITIONS; AMENDING SECTION 8.02.002 SALE, DISCHARGE PROHIBITED; AMENDING SECTION 8.02.005 LOCUS OF OFFENSE; REPEALING SECTION 8.02.006 EXCEPTIONS; DECLARING A PUBLIC NUISANCE; REPEALING CERTAIN PROVISIONS INCONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW DECLARING A PUBLIC NUISANCE; REPEALING CERTAIN PROVISIONS INCONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW; PROVIDING FOR REPEALER, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of West Lake Hills (“City”) is a general law municipality operating under the laws of the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, the City is authorized by the Texas Local Government Code, Sections 342.003 and 217.002; and

WHEREAS, the City of West Lake Hills desires to amend its Code of Ordinances, Chapter 8: Fire Prevention and Protection; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that it is in the best interest of the City to amend the current fireworks prohibition as described herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS:

Section 1. Amendments. The West Lake Hills Municipal Code of Ordinances Chapter 8 Fire Prevention and Protection, Article 8.02 Fireworks, Section 8.02.001 Definitions, Section 8.02.002 Sale, Discharge Prohibited, and Section 8.02.005 Locus of Offense, is hereby amended as shown in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated for all purposes. Deletions are noted as ~~striketroughs~~ and additions as underlined.

Section 2. Repeal. Section 8.02.006 “Exceptions” of the West Lake Hills Municipal Code of Ordinances is hereby repealed in its entirety, and shall be removed from the Code.

Section 3. Findings. The recitals contained in the preamble hereof are hereby found to be true, and such recitals are hereby made a part of this Ordinance for all purposes and are adopted as part of the judgment and finding of the City Council.

Section 4. Cumulative Clause. This Ordinance shall be cumulative of all provisions of ordinances of the City of West Lake Hills, Texas, except where the provisions of the Ordinance are in direct conflict with the provisions such ordinances, in which event the conflicting provisions of such ordinances are hereby repealed.

Section 5. Severability. If any provision of this Ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance shall be held to be invalid, the remainder of this Ordinance and the

application of such provision to other persons and circumstances shall nevertheless be valid, and the City Council hereby declares that this Ordinance would have been enacted without such invalid provision.

Section 6. Applicable Law. This Ordinance shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas and the United States of America.

Section 7. Public Meeting. It is officially found, determined, and declared that the meeting at which this Ordinance is adopted was open to the public and public notice of the time, place, and subject matter of the public business to be considered at such meeting, including this Ordinance, was given, all as required by Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, as amended.

Section 8. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its final passage and approval by the City Council, as duly attested by the Mayor and City Secretary, and any publications required by law.

PASSED and APPROVED this 10th day of December, 2025.

CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS

By: _____
James Vaughan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Terry Blanchard, City Secretary

Exhibit A

All text which is underlined denotes the addition of new text. All text which is ~~stricken through~~ denotes the removal of existing text. All other text is existing, unchanged text. Any existing text which has been omitted shall be considered unchanged.

ARTICLE 8.02 FIREWORKS

§ 8.02.001. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Fireworks. ~~Any composition or device designed to produce a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, and that is defined as “special fireworks” by 49 CFR 173.88(d) (1983), or as “common fireworks” by 49 CFR 173.100(r) (1983).~~ Any composition or device designed to produce a visible or audible effect, or both, by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, such as firecrackers, cannon crackers, skyrockets, torpedoes, Roman candles, sparklers, squibs, fire balloons, star shells, gerbs, or any other substance in whatever combination by any designated name intended for use in obtaining visible or audible pyrotechnic display, and such term shall include all articles or substances within the commonly accepted meaning of fireworks, whether specifically designated and defined in this subsection or not.

Manufacture. The making of fireworks.

Manufacturer. Persons that are engaged in the making of fireworks.

Person. The term means and includes any natural person, association of persons, partnerships, corporations, agent, or officer of a corporation, and shall also include all warehousemen, common and private carriers, bailees, trustees, receivers, executors and administrators.

Retailer. Those who purchase fireworks for resale to consumers only.

§ 8.02.002. Sale, discharge prohibited.

~~The sale and discharge of fireworks within the city is declared to be a public nuisance. It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, sell, offer to sell or have in his possession with intent to sell, keep, use, or display any fireworks of any description within the City limits.~~

§ 8.02.005. ~~Locus of offense~~ Illegal fireworks declared nuisance; seizure and destruction.

~~For the purposes of this article, an act is deemed to have occurred within the city if it produces its proscribed consequences within the city. The presence or use of fireworks within the jurisdiction of the City in violation of this Article is hereby declared to be a public nuisance and a violation of the City Code. Each such violation constitutes a separate offense and is subject to enforcement by citation in the City’s Municipal Court, in addition to any other remedies provided by law. City police officers or authorized personnel, and any other duly authorized peace officers, are authorized to issue citations for violations of this Article and to seize and cause to be safely destroyed any fireworks found within the City in violation of this Article.~~

§ 8.02.006. Exceptions.

~~This article shall not apply to signal flares and torpedoes of the type and kind commonly used by railroads, common carriers, law enforcement authorities, public works authorities or military authorities as signal or warning devices.~~

§ 8.02.0067. Burden of proof.

In any prosecution for any violation of this article, it shall not be necessary for the prosecution to negate any provision or exception, but the same may be raised by the defendant by way of defense.



City of West Lake Hills City Council

AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date:	<u>December 10, 2025</u>	Item Number:	<u>6</u>
Department:	<u>Administration</u>		
Prepared By:	<u>Trey Fletcher</u>	Cost / Budget:	<u>n/a</u>
Exhibits:	<u>Proposed Ordinance</u>	Source of Funds:	<u>n/a</u>

Subject

Discuss and consider action on an ordinance amending Chapter 8: Fire Prevention and Protection, Article 8.01 General Provisions, Section 8.01.001 Arson Reward.

Recommendation

Approval.

Discussion

The City's current Code of Ordinances includes Section 8.01.001, which establishes a standing \$100 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of a person guilty of arson within the City. This provision dates back several decades and has never been utilized.

After review, staff and the City Attorney's Office determined that:

- The arson reward provision no longer serves a practical or operational purpose in modern fire prevention or criminal investigations.
- Fire incident investigations are now primarily handled through Travis County Fire Marshal, local law enforcement, and State Fire Marshal resources, with no reliance on municipal reward programs.
- Maintaining unused or outdated provisions within the Code creates unnecessary administrative burden and potential confusion.

The proposed ordinance removes the outdated reward language while leaving all other fire-prevention provisions intact.

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-025

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS, AMENDING THE CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 8 FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION, ARTICLE 8.01 GENERAL PROVISIONS, BY REPEALING SECTION 8.01.001 ARSON REWARD IN ITS ENTIRETY; BURNING CONTROLS IN ALL ZONING DISTRICTS; PROVIDING FOR REPEALER; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the City of West Lake Hills (“City”) is a Type A general-law municipality operating under the laws of the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, the City is authorized by Texas Local Government Code, Section 342.003, to adopt other rules for the prevention and extinguishment of fires as the governing body considers necessary; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to amend its Code of Ordinances, Chapter 8 Fire Prevention and Protection; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that it is in the best interest of the City to eliminate the current arson reward as described herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS:

Section 1. Amendments. The West Lake Hills Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 8 Fire Prevention and Protection, Article 8.01 General Provisions, Section 8.01.001 Arson Reward, is hereby repealed as shown in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated for all purposes. Deletions are noted as ~~striketroughs~~ and additions as underlined.

Section 2. Findings. The recitals contained in the preamble are hereby found to be true, and such recitals are hereby made a part of this Ordinance for all purposes and are adopted as part of the judgment and finding of the City Council.

Section 3. Cumulative Clause. This Ordinance shall be cumulative of all provisions of ordinances of the City of West Lake Hills, Texas, except where the provisions of the Ordinance are in direct conflict with the provisions such ordinances, in which event the conflicting provisions of such ordinances are hereby repealed.

Section 4. Severability. If any provision of this Ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance shall be held to be invalid, the remainder of this Ordinance and the application of such provision to other persons and circumstances shall nevertheless be valid, and the City Council hereby declares that this Ordinance would have been enacted without such invalid provision.

Section 5. Applicable Law. This Ordinance shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas and the United States of America.

Section 6. Public Meeting. It is officially found, determined, and declared that the meeting at which this Ordinance is adopted was open to the public and public notice of the time, place, and subject matter of the public business to be considered at such meeting, including this Ordinance, was given, all as required by Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, as amended.

Section 7. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its final passage and approval by the City Council, as duly attested by the Mayor and City Secretary, and any publications required by law.

PASSED and APPROVED this 10th day of December, 2025.

CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS

By: _____
James Vaughan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Terry Blanchard, City Secretary

Exhibit A

All text which is underlined denotes the addition of new text. All text which is stricken through denotes the removal of existing text. All other text is existing, unchanged text. Any existing text which has been omitted shall be considered unchanged.

ARTICLE 8.01 GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 8.01.001. Burning controls in all zoning districts.

The burning of any quantity of trash, rubbish, garbage, brush, trees, paper products, construction materials, etc., is prohibited in all zoning districts.



City of West Lake Hills City Council

AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date:	<u>December 10, 2025</u>	Item Number:	<u></u>
Department:	<u>Administration</u>		
Prepared By:	<u>Trey Fletcher</u>	Cost / Budget:	<u>n/a</u>
Exhibits:	<u>Proposed Ordinance</u>	Source of Funds:	<u>n/a</u>

Subject

Discuss and consider approving an ordinance amending the City of West Lake Hills Code of ordinances Chapter 1: General Provisions, Article 1.07 Emergency Management, Section 1.07.001 Organization; and providing for repealer, severability, effective date, and proper notice & meeting.

Recommendation

Approval.

Discussion

In State Law, emergency management provisions are within Chapter 418 of the Government Code. The West Lake Hills City Code includes provisions also within Article 1.07.

This ordinance updates the City of West Lake Hills Code of Ordinances, Chapter 1, Article 1.07 (Emergency Management), specifically Section 1.07.001 regarding the City's emergency management organization.

The amendment reaffirms the Mayor as the City's Emergency Management Director, consistent with state law, and strikes the Chief of Police as the Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) provision. Alternatively, the amendment allows the Mayor in the capacity of the emergency management director to designate a person to serve as the EMC.

No other changes are proposed. Tristin Castillo is recommended to serve as the EMC, and Chief Gerdes and the City Administrator will continue to assist.

Approval of this ordinance ensures alignment with state law, strengthens clarity in roles and responsibilities during emergency operations, and supports the City's ongoing efforts in preparedness, hazard mitigation, and public safety.

CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-023

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS
AMENDING THE CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS CODE OF
ORDINANCES CHAPTER 1: GENERAL PROVISION, ARTICLE
1.07 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, SECTION 1.07.001
ORGANIZATION; AND PROVIDING FOR REPEALER,
SEVERABILITY, EFFECTIVE DATE, AND PROPER NOTICE &
MEETING.**

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the identification of potential hazards and the prevention or mitigation of their effects must be an on-going concern of the City if the lives and property of the populace are to be protected; and

WHEREAS, the City Council further finds that in times of disasters which may imperil the safety of the inhabitants of the City, or their property, it becomes necessary to effectuate and place into operation the preconceived plans and preparations with a minimum of delay; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds, therefore, that the preparation and implementation of such plans are imperative to public safety.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. That the findings contained in the preamble of this ordinance are incorporated herein as if fully set forth within the body of this ordinance.

SECTION 2. Chapter 1 General Provisions, Article 1.07 Emergency Management, § 1.07.001 Organization is hereby amended to read as follows with ~~striketroughs~~ being deletions from the code and underlines being additions to the code:

There exists the office of emergency management director of the city, which shall be held by the mayor in accordance with state law.

- (1) ~~The chief of police shall serve as the emergency management coordinator for the city.~~
The director may designate a person to serve as emergency management coordinator.
- (2) The director shall be responsible for a program of comprehensive emergency management within the city and for carrying out the duties and responsibilities set forth in this article. The director may delegate authority for execution of these duties to the coordinator, but ultimate responsibility for such execution shall remain with the director.
- (3) The operational emergency management organization of the city shall consist of the officers and employees of the city so designated by the director in the emergency management plan, as well as organized volunteer groups. The functions and duties of this organization shall be distributed among such officers and employees in accordance with the terms of the emergency management plan.

SECTION 3. That this Ordinance is cumulative of all provisions of ordinances and of the City Code of West Lake Hills, Texas, as amended.

SECTION 4. Should any of the clauses, sentences, paragraphs, sections or parts of this Ordinance be deemed invalid, unconstitutional, or unenforceable by a court of law or administrative agency with jurisdiction over the matter, such action shall not be construed to affect any other valid portion of this Ordinance.

SECTION 5. It is hereby officially found and determined that the meeting at which this Ordinance was passed was open to the public, and that public notice of the time, place, and purpose of said meeting was given as required by the Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 551.

SECTION 6. This Ordinance shall be effective immediately upon passage and publication.

PASSED & APPROVED this, the 10th day of December 2025, by the City Council of West Lake Hills, Texas.

CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS:

by: _____
James Vaughan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Terry Blanchard, TRMC
City Secretary



City of West Lake Hills City Council

AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date:	December 10, 2025	Item Number:	8
	Building & Development		
Department:	Services		
Prepared By:	Jennifer C. Bills	Cost / Budget:	None
Exhibits:	See Attached	Source of Funds:	N/A

Subject

Discuss and consider action on the 2026 Street Maintenance Projects.

Recommendation

Receive presentation and provide feedback.

The Zoning and Planning Commission reviewed the project list at their regular November 19, 2026 meeting and provided the following feedback:

- Chair Meisel requests that Reveille receive center and edge striping, as well as signs related to parking along Reveille.
- Commissioner Pledger expressed that the seal coat process on Madrone Road took too long to dry and had damage from residents driving on it before it was dry.
- Commissioner Maccini was concerned about the mill and overlay process adding height to the street. The mill and overlay would keep the pavement at the same height.
- Commissioner Bartoletti asked about projects for Terrace Mountain. Sections from the bond projects that were not completed, as well as projects from the 2017 Drainage Master Plan will be reviewed and incorporated in the 2027-2033 projects as appropriate. Some work that was not addressed in the bond projects was due to lack of easements to complete the work.

Discussion

In 2021, the West Lake Hills voters approved the street maintenance sales tax collection. This sales tax was reauthorized on September 25 for an additional eight years. The city completed projects in 2025, which were a mix of crack seal, seal coat, mill and overlay (with some full depth repairs).

For the next round of projects to be completed in 2026, Chris Otto, with Colliers (city engineer) and city staff have identified the next streets and drainage projects. In 2023, Roadway Asset Services (RAS) provided a pavement evaluation report which updated the street maintenance inventory created by the previous engineers. The condition of the streets listed have been visually reviewed, and the planned road segments, description of treatment type and estimated expense are attached. Moving forward, staff and the city engineer will begin reviewing and presenting the next round of projects in the spring to ZAPCO and City Council to be included in the following fiscal year budget.

Project Name Street Maintenance Projects 2025
City, State West Lake Hills, Travis County, TX
Project # 1212-02-01

UNIT PRICE FORM (Crack Seal / Seal Coat)								
Item #	Street Name	Extents	Length (LF)	Width (LF)	Unit	Total Quantities	Unit Price	Amount
Line No.								
1	LEDGEWAY E	END-END	2620	14	SY	4,076	\$ 4.00	\$ 16,302.22
2	YAUPON VALLEY RD	DOUBLE BEND BACK RD - END	3650	23	SY	9,328	\$ 4.00	\$ 37,311.11
3	SUNDOWN PKWY	BEE CAVE RD - CITY LIMIT	460	24	SY	1,227	\$ 4.00	\$ 4,906.67
4	WOOD TRL	BEE CAVE RD - END	690	25	SY	1,917	\$ 4.00	\$ 7,666.67
5	WESTHAVEN DR	BEE CAVE RD - END	1710	24	SY	4,560	\$ 4.00	\$ 18,240.00
6	LAS BRISAS DR	END-END	1450	30	SY	4,833	\$ 4.00	\$ 19,333.33
7	WESTBANK DR	BEE CAVE RD - CITY LIMITS	1500	30	SY	5,000	\$ 4.00	\$ 20,000.00
8	WILDCAT HOLLOW	RED BUD TRL - END	2750	20	SY	6,111	\$ 4.00	\$ 24,444.44
9	CARRARA	CORTONA DR - WESTLAKE DR	275	32	SY	978	\$ 4.00	\$ 3,911.11
10	ROCKY RIVER CV	ROCKY RIVER RD - END	765	18	SY	1,530	\$ 4.00	\$ 6,120.00
11	FOREST VIEW DR	OAK RIDGE DR - CITY LIMIT	880	30	SY	2,933	\$ 4.00	\$ 11,733.33
12	OAK RIDGE DR	ROCKY RIVER RD - WESTBROOK DR	930	38	SY	3,927	\$ 4.00	\$ 15,706.67
13	BULIAN LN	CITY LIMITS-END	810	27	SY	2,430	\$ 4.00	\$ 9,720.00
14	MANOR RIDGE CT	LAS LOMAS DR - END	60	28	SY	187	\$ 4.00	\$ 746.67
15	HILLCREST CT	LAS LOMAS DR - END	560	28	SY	1,742	\$ 4.00	\$ 6,968.89
16	WOODVIEW CT	LAS LOMAS DR - END	100	28	SY	311	\$ 4.00	\$ 1,244.44
17	REVEILLE RD	105 REVEILLE RD - END	1878	22	SY	4,591	\$ 4.00	\$ 18,362.67
18A	LAS LOMAS DR	WOODVIEW CT - END	2250	28	SY	7,000	\$ 4.00	\$ 28,000.00
18B	CRESTWOOD CT	LAS LOMAS DR - END	410	28	SY	1,276	\$ 4.00	\$ 5,102.22
18C	RIDGEMONT CT	LAS LOMAS DR - END	170	28	SY	529	\$ 4.00	\$ 2,115.56
19A	WESTBROOK DR	BEE CAVE DR - CITY LIMITS	600	28	SY	1,867	\$ 4.00	\$ 7,466.67
19B	WESTBROOK DR	CITY LIMITS - OAK RIDGE DR	1250	28	SY	3,889	\$ 4.00	\$ 15,555.56
20	CALITHEA RD	TERRACE MOUNTAIN DR - END	470	14	SY	731	\$ 4.00	\$ 2,924.44
							Subtotal	\$ 283,882.67

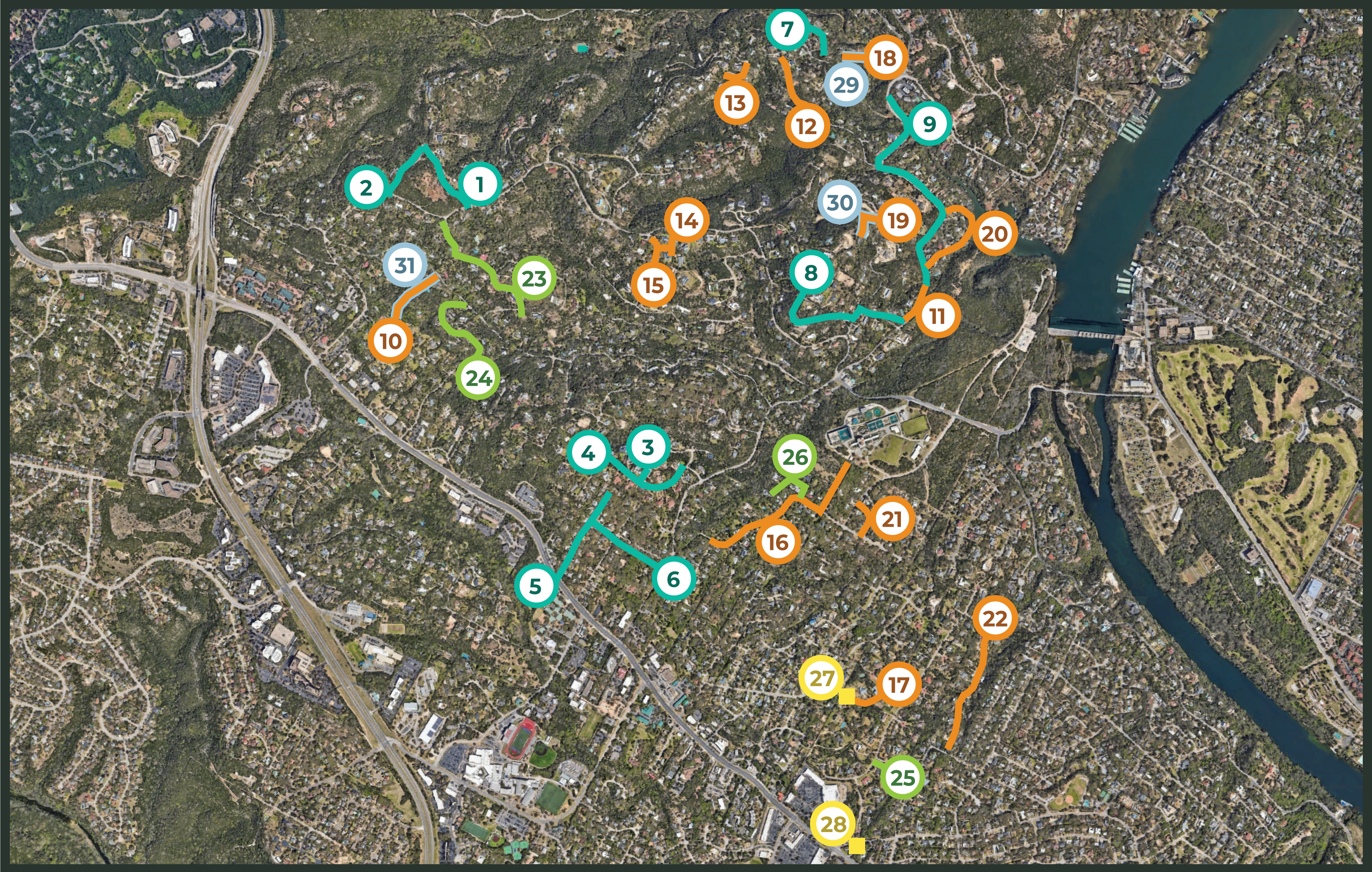
UNIT PRICE FORM (2" Type D Mill & Overlay)								
Item #	Street Name	Extents	Length (LF)	Width (LF)	Unit	Total Quantities	Unit Price	Amount
Line No.								
21	DOUBLE FORK RD	265 FT AT SOUTHWEST END	265	14	SY	412	\$ 24.25	\$ 9,996.39
22	WASHINGTON CUTOFF	REDBUD TRL - YAUPON VALLEY RD	60	12	SY	80	\$ 24.25	\$ 1,940.00
23	DOUBLE BEND BACK RD	YAUPON VALLEY RD - END	830	13	SY	1,199	\$ 24.25	\$ 29,073.06
24	SWIFTCURRENT TRL	OLD BEE CAVE RD - END	1910	19	SY	4,032	\$ 24.25	\$ 97,781.39
25	CAMP CRAFT RD	BEE CAVE RD - KONSTANTY CIR	1950	20	SY	4,333	\$ 24.25	\$ 105,083.33
26	KONSTANTY CIR	CAMP CRAFT RD - END	1000	24	SY	2,667	\$ 24.25	\$ 64,666.67
27	BEAVER TRL	BEE CAVE RD - CITY LIMITS	250	28	SY	778	\$ 24.25	\$ 18,861.11
28	LAS LOMAS CT	LAS LOMAS DR - END	500	26	SY	1,444	\$ 24.25	\$ 35,027.78
29	NORTH PEAK RD	ROLLINGWOOD DR - GENTRY	1445	22	SY	3,532	\$ 24.25	\$ 85,656.39
30	ROCKY LEDGE RD	ROCKY RIVER RD - END	1170	18	SY	2,340	\$ 24.25	\$ 56,745.00
31	BUENA VISTA CIR	ROCKY LEDGE RD - END	230	30	SY	767	\$ 24.25	\$ 18,591.67
32	REVEILLE RD	BEE CAVE RD - 105 REVEILLE RD	310	22	SY	758	\$ 24.25	\$ 18,376.11
33	LAS LOMAS DR	ROLLINGWOOD - WOODVIEW CT	1975	30	SY	6,583	\$ 24.25	\$ 159,645.83
34	WESTBROOK DR	OAK RIDGE DR - END	665	38	SY	2,808	\$ 24.25	\$ 68,088.61
							Subtotal	\$ 769,533.33

UNIT PRICE FORM (Ribbon Curb)								
Item #	Street Name	Extents	Length (LF)	Width (LF)	Unit	Total Quantities	Unit Price	Amount
Line No.								
35	SPILLER LN	BUCKEYE TRL -R406	1010	14	LF	2,020	\$ 23.00	\$ 46,460.00
							Subtotal	\$ 46,460.00

Construction Total \$ 1,099,876.00
Contingency (30%): \$ 329,962.80
Total: \$ 1,429,838.80



STREET MAINTENANCE PROJECTS 2024



CRACK SEAL

- 1 CIRCLE RIDGE DR:
LITTLE BEND RD - REDBUD TRL
- 2 LITTLE BEND RD:
RED BUD TRL - CIRCLE RIDGE DR
- 3 CORTONA CV:
CORTONA DR - END
- 4 CORTONA DR:
CARRARA - END
- 5 MCCONNELL DR:
BEE CAVE RD - END
- 6 W SPRING DR:
MCCONNELL DR - WESTLAKE DR
- 7 CANYON CREEK:
BASIN LEDGE - END
- 8 SKYLINE DR:
REDBUD TRAIL - NOB HILL CIR
- 9 WESTLAKE DR:
HARBOR VIEW DR - CITY LIMIT (BRIDGE)

MILL AND OVERLAY

- 10 ALLEGRO LN:
YAUPON VALLEY-END
- 11 WESTLAKE DR:
HARBOR VIEW DR - CITY LIMIT (BRIDGE)

- 12 LOMA LINDA:
TERRACE MTN - END
- 13 CANYON VIEW:
TERRACE MTN - END
- 14 BUTLER CV:
OLD STONEHEDGE - END
- 15 OLD STONEHEDGE:
REDBUD TR - LIMERICK LN
- 16 ROCKY RIVER RD:
REVEILLE RD - END
- 17 BENT TREE:
HILLCREST CT - END
- 18 BASIN LEDGE E:
BASIN LEDGE - END
- 19 HARBOR VIEW DR:
WILDCAT HOLLOW - END
- 20 HULL CIRCLE:
WESTLAKE DR - END
- 21 CEDAR PARK DR:
FOREST VIEW DR -
OAK RIDGE DR
- 22 SUGAR CREEK DR:
GENTRY DR - END

SURFACE PRESERVATION

- 23 LIVE OAK RIDGE RD:
RED BUD TRL - LIVE OAK CIRCLE
- 24 MADRONE RD:
YAUPON VALLEY RD - END
- 25 PARKWOOD CT:
LAS LOHMAS DR - END
- 26 ROCKY RIVER CV:
ROCKY RIVER - END

DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT

- 27 BENT TREE:
HILLCREST CT - END
- 28 ROLLINGWOOD DR & LAS LOMAS
DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT

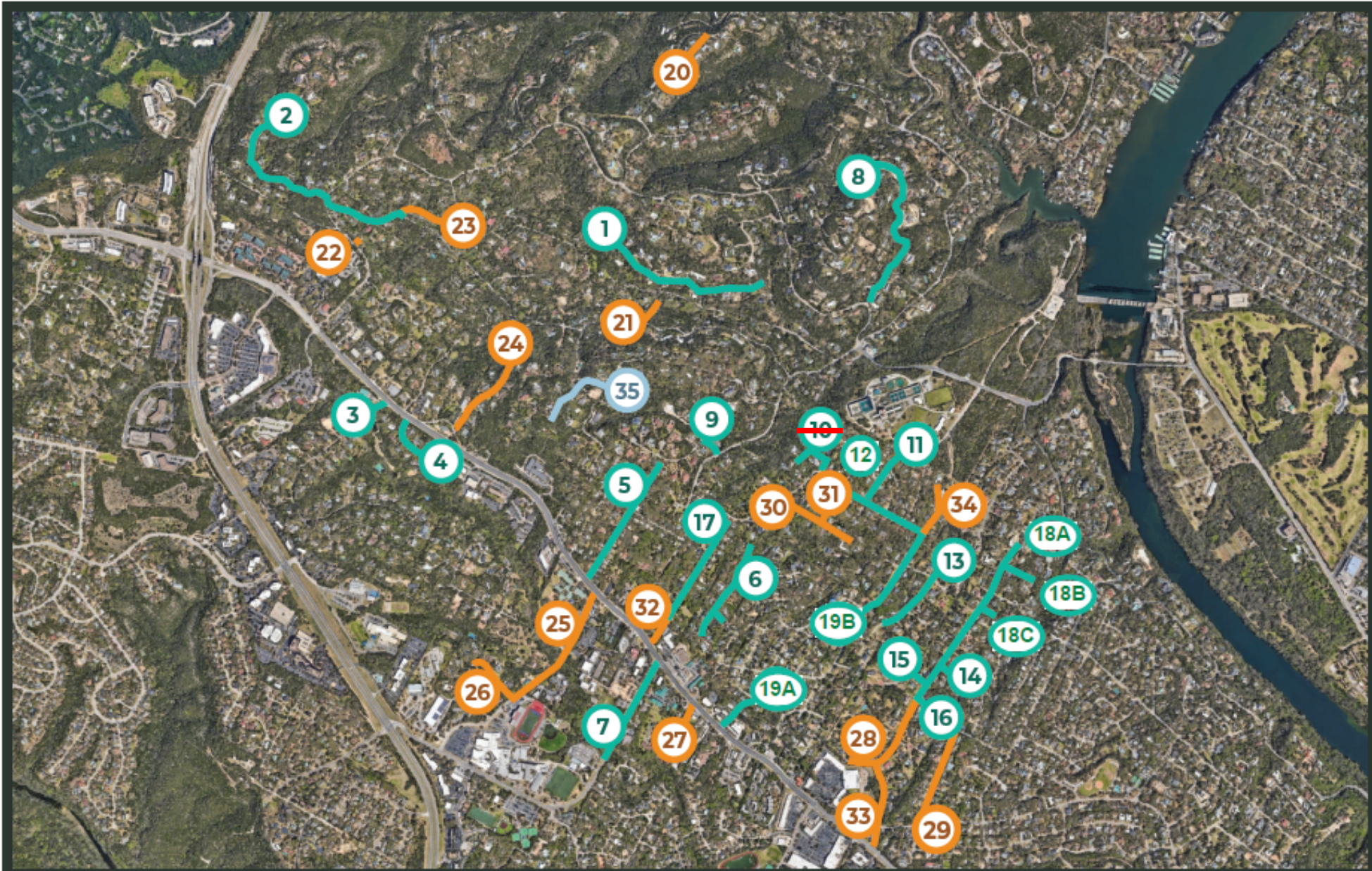
RIBBON CURB

- 29 BASIN LEDGE E:
BASIN LEDGE - END
- 30 HARBOR VIEW DR:
WILDCAT HOLLOW - END
- 31 ALLEGRO LN:
YAUPON VALLEY-END

Street Maintenance Projects

8. Discuss and consider action on the 2026 Street Maintenance Projects.

Street Maintenance Projects





City of West Lake Hills City Council

AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date:	<u>December 10, 2025</u>	Item Number:	<u></u>
Department:	<u>Administration</u>		
Prepared By:	<u>Trey Fletcher</u>	Cost / Budget:	<u>n/a</u>
	<u>Presentation to City Council</u>		
	<u>Firewise 3-year Action Plan</u>		
	<u>Firewise 5-year Risk</u>		
Exhibits:	<u>Assessment</u>	Source of Funds:	<u>n/a</u>

Subject

Discuss key takeaways and recommendations provided by the Firewise Committee to City Council.

Recommendation

Discuss only. No action is being taken at this time.

Discussion

The Firewise Committee and City Council conducted a joint workshop on December 3. This agenda item is to review the key takeaways and recommendations resulting from the presentation led by the Chair, Alice London.

Firewise Committee 2025

Achievements to date and recommendations going forward.

The 2025 Firewise Committee

- Approximately 20 WLH volunteers formed this committee in early 2025.
- Four of the five zones in WLH are represented.

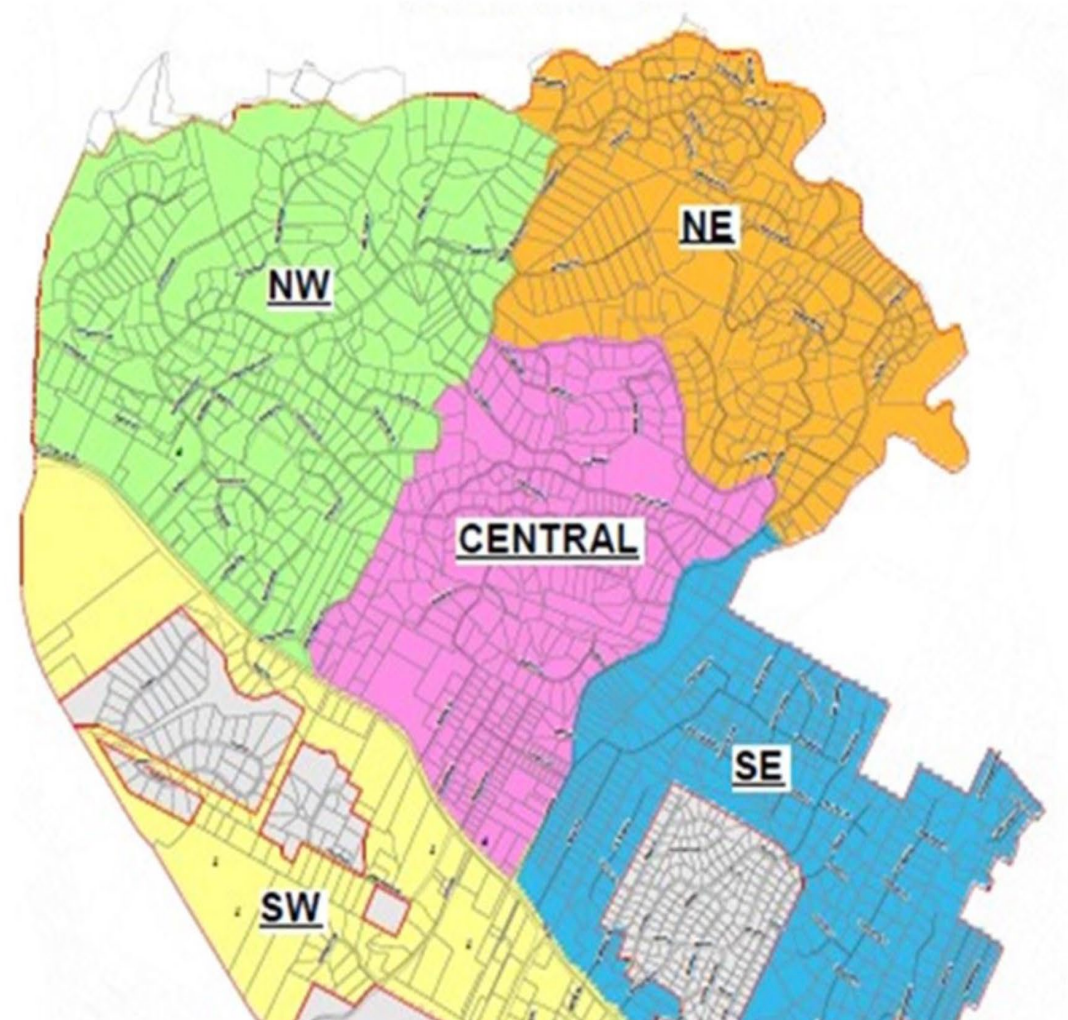
NW zone:

Chic Bain
Juli Hennings
Tom Keller
Julie Minnis
Joe Swider

CENTRAL zone:

Barry Aidman
Suzanne Broussard
Suzanne Meade
Riley Ingebritson
Don Sembera

SW zone:



NE zone:

Gordon Novak
Janet Balser
Dan Smith

SE zone:

Tina Shaheen
Sarah Swanson
Alice London

The 2025 Committee Addressed:

Community outreach and education.

Evacuation logistics

Ways to mitigate and slow fire damage.

Aligning and enforcing ordinances.

Community Outreach and Education

A yard sign/flyer campaign was launched to:

- Get more residents signed up for fire danger alerts.
- Encourage evacuation preparation with “Go Bags.”
- Recommending homeowners schedule free Fire Department risk assessments.

Neighbor-to-Neighbor networks have been initiated.

Community Outreach: Recommendations

- Assess the effectiveness of existing efforts by authorizing the Committee to review Warn Central Texas data to see if awareness increased sign-ups.
- Devise more education/outreach campaigns and materials. Support neighbor to neighbor initiatives.
- Create new yard signs for homeowners who have adopted Firewise practices.
- City Council provides highly visible recognition for groups that undertake exemplary Firewise fixes, like those at St. John Neumann's.



Is an Evacuation Plan Really Urgent?
Not until you need it....

Committee Report by Gordon Novak:

“The Oakland Hills fire of 1991 went from zero to one square mile in 45 minutes. Wildfire can advance faster than a person can run. The distance from Loop 360 to Lake Austin across West Lake Hills is 2.5 miles. At an advance rate of 15mph, fire would over-run West Lake in 10 minutes. At an advance rate of 3 mph, walking speed, the city would be over-run in 50 minutes.”

The Evacuation Problem:

- Evacuation of the whole City would involve some 1500 cars. If it takes 6 seconds for a car to go through a choke point, that is 10 cars per minute.
- At 10 cars per minute, and it would take **2.5 hours** for 1500 cars to evacuate.
- At 4 seconds per car, it would take **1 hour and 40 minutes**.

Limited Number of Major Evacuation Streets

- Westlake Drive
- Redbud Trail
- Terrace Mountain Drive
- Yaupon Valley Drive



These are narrow, two-lane roads with limited ingress for firefighters and egress for residents with substantial vegetation.

Headline Story



KVUE special Report



Estates in Northwest Austin is among the many area communities with limited evacuation routes. Jay Janner/Austin American-States

Limited access adds to wildfire danger

Thousands of area homes have few ways in and out for escaping

by Plohetski
Kumar

significantly."

Nestled at the base of rolling hills, Shapiro loves the beauty of his 5-acre property. But as a national fire safety consultant, he also understands the

as residents try to escape and first responders try to get in.

The community is one of hundreds now at the center of a citywide push to prepare for the inevitable next

Evacuation Logistic Recommendations:

- Clear the evacuation route right of way with regularly scheduled maintenance.
- Coordinate with Fire Department and other entities such as Austin Energy to proactively manage vegetation overgrowth along evacuation routes.
- Prioritize enforcement of city ordinances that require removal of dead vegetation on the streets in the evacuation corridor.
- Create clear instructions for evacuation and educate residents.

Ways to Mitigate and Slow Fire Damage

After catastrophic fires, post tragedy research revealed two measures slowed and mitigated fire damage:

- 1/8th-inch ember-resistant mesh at chimneys, vents and other structure openings.
- Approximately 5 feet of defensible space between a building and any ignitable landscape.

Mitigation Recommendations

- A Pilot project to induce contiguous homeowners in the high-risk areas to “harden” their homes to slow a wildfire’s advance.
- A citywide rebate offer to induce homeowners to adopt ember resistant mesh and improve their defensible space.
- Utilize the experience of other counties that have had success with these incentive plans.

Tom Keller's Report: Criteria to Create Mitigation Incentives

- Homes in for the pilot project would be in high-risk zones.
- Use the Wildfire Risk Assessment Map to Qualify Homes
- Each property will be required to have a Fire Department safety inspection to guide the improvements.
- Initial candidates could be drawn from the following streets that have been identified by the Westlake Fire Department 2022 Wildfire Action Plan as representing “streets on a ridge with very steep slopes on the north side. These streets are examples of some that would be defenseless if fire approached”:

Kennan Rd.

Old Wagon Rd.

Wren Valley Cove

Upper Yaupon Valley Rd.

Circle Ridge Dr.

Redbud Cove

- Rebates would be offered to incentivize high-risk area homes to minimize their fire risk which would slow wildfire spread to the community.

Aligning and Enforcing of Ordinances

Observed limitations on enforcement efforts:

- Recalcitrant Landowners
- Time lapses in the current complaint-based enforcement mechanisms
- Wrongful perception about the difficulty of the permitting process
- Limited ability to access resident's property

Building codes, ZAPCO policies, & Tree ordinances don't always align with fire wise goals.

Aligning & Enforcing Recommendations

- Focus enforcement on evacuation corridors.
- Encourage compliance by helping with brush removal, followed by stricter enforcement.
- Fast Track the enforcement process for homeowners in high-risk areas.
- Modify ordinances to allow homeowners to remove trees and vegetation within the five feet surrounding a structure.
- Review current ordinances to better align with firewise goals.

The future is in our hands.

- Community Outreach
- Evacuation Safety
- Mitigation and Incentive Programs
- Align & Enhance Enforcement
- Continued Committee Work

If you agree with these priorities, the Firewise Committee along with City Staff can propose policies and ascertain costs.





FIREWISE USA®
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

2024



Firewise 3-Year Action Plan

CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS

The **City of West Lake Hills, Texas (approximately 1100 households)** is located within the wildland urban interface (WUI) in Travis County. The city is served by Travis County Emergency Services District No. 9 (Westlake Fire Department). This proposed Firewise USA™ Site Community Wildfire Action Plan is consistent with the goals and recommendations of the Firewise Risk Assessment performed in 2023 by the Texas A&M Forest Service. The goal of the Plan is to continue to outreach, educate, and implement efforts to make West Lake Hills more fire resilient.

Timeline	Program	Description/Mitigation
Year 1 (2025)	Education & Outreach	1. Continue to expand and update our contact list of neighbors and increase participation in mass notification system platform 2. Implement city's participation in the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) program 3. Leverage community newsletter for appropriate Firewise messaging 4. Identify or develop on-line training, videos, and other resources to educate our residents about home hardening and fire smart landscaping 5. Establish resident leadership for each evacuation area (Chair and Vice Chair) 6. Conduct an annual neighborhood walk to assess wildfire safety progress in one-two evacuation zones. 7. Encourage residents to attend annual public safety day with emphasis on Firewise education and resources
	Home Hardening	1. Taking a home outward approach, reinforce with residents to reduce wildfire hazards found in Zone 0, the first 5 ft. around the house – establish appropriate graphics and literature to communicate these efforts. Firewise Landscaping. Firewise Plant List. Firewise Landscaping in Texas. 2. Continue to provide site assessment utilizing fire department fire prevention resources 3. Update life safety codes to 2021 and review applicable zoning and site development codes
	Fuel Reduction	1. Align vegetative debris management communications to property owners to better consider seasonal issues and oak wilt season. 2. Promote the annual supplemental green waste curbside pickup by TDS to reduce flammable vegetation 3. Continue to maintain tree canopy of public streets and city owned properties
	Evacuation Planning & Wildfire Preparedness	1. Hold an evacuation drill or simulation led by the Westlake Fire Department. 2. Review and evaluate unopened streets for supplemental emergency evacuation routes, staging equipment, and fuel reduction.

Timeline	Program	Description/Mitigation
Year 2 (2026)	Education & Outreach	1. Continue to expand and update our contact list of neighbors and increase participation in mass notification system platform 2. Maintain city's participation in the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) program 3. Convene identified community leadership in each evacuation area at least 1 meeting per year 4. Continue to leverage community newsletter for appropriate Firewise messaging 5. Update on-line training, videos, and other resources to educate our residents about home hardening and fire smart landscaping as needed 6. Conduct an annual neighborhood walk to assess wildfire safety progress in one-two evacuation zones. 7. Encourage residents to attend annual public safety day with emphasis on Firewise education and resources
	Home Hardening	1. Taking a home outward approach, reinforce with residents to reduce wildfire hazards found in Zone 0, the first 5 ft. around the house. 2. Continue to provide site assessment utilizing fire department fire prevention resources
	Fuel Reduction	1. Continue to hold and promote the annual supplemental green waste curbside pickup in our neighborhood to reduce flammable vegetation 2. Continue to maintain tree canopy of public streets and city owned properties
	Evacuation Planning & Wildfire Preparedness	1. Hold an evacuation drill or simulation led by the Westlake Fire Department. 2. Implement recommendations regarding unopened streets.

Timeline	Program	Description/Mitigation
Year 3 (2027)	Education & Outreach	1. Expand and update our contact list of neighbors and increase participation at least 2. Establish resident leadership for each evacuation area (Chair and Vice Chair) 3. Identify or develop on-line training, videos, and other resources to educate our residents about home hardening and fire smart landscaping 4. Conduct an annual neighborhood walk to assess wildfire safety progress in one-two evacuation zones. 5. Encourage residents to attend annual public safety day with emphasis on Firewise education and resources
	Home Hardening	1. Taking a home outward approach, work with residents to reduce wildfire hazards found in Zone 0, the first 5 ft. around the house – establish appropriate graphics and literature to communicate these efforts. 2. Continue to provide site assessment utilizing fire department fire prevention resources
	Fuel Reduction	1. Continue to hold and promote the annual supplemental green waste curbside pickup in our neighborhood to reduce flammable vegetation 2. Continue to maintain tree canopy of public streets and city owned properties
	Evacuation Planning & Wildfire Preparedness	1. Hold an evacuation drill or simulation led by the Westlake Fire Department. 2. Continue implementation of recommendations regarding unopened streets as needed.

West Lake Hills

Firewise Risk Assessment

Travis County



April 2023



Introduction

The Firewise USA[®] program is designed to provide an effective management approach for preserving wildland living aesthetics while preparing communities for wildland fire. The program can be tailored for adoption by any community or neighborhood association that is committed to ensuring its citizens maximum protection from wildland fire. The following community assessment is intended as a resource to be used by West Lake Hills leadership for creating a wildfire safety action plan. The plan developed from the information in this assessment should be implemented in a collaborative manner, and updated and modified as needed, no less than every three years.

The Firewise USA[®] program acknowledges that there are many reasons and values that lead a person to live in the wildland urban interface (WUI) and that there may be a desire for certain flammable components to exist on their property. It is important for homeowners to understand the implications of the choices they are making as they directly relate to the ignitability of their home ignition zones during a wildfire.

One of the main goals of the Firewise USA[®] program is for residents to focus on those items that they know they can control. Becoming aware of the threat wildland fire presents is the first and most important step any landowner can take. After that, making an effort to work on the items that the residents do have control over, whether big or small, will reduce the chance of home and structure loss in a wildland fire.

Assessment Process

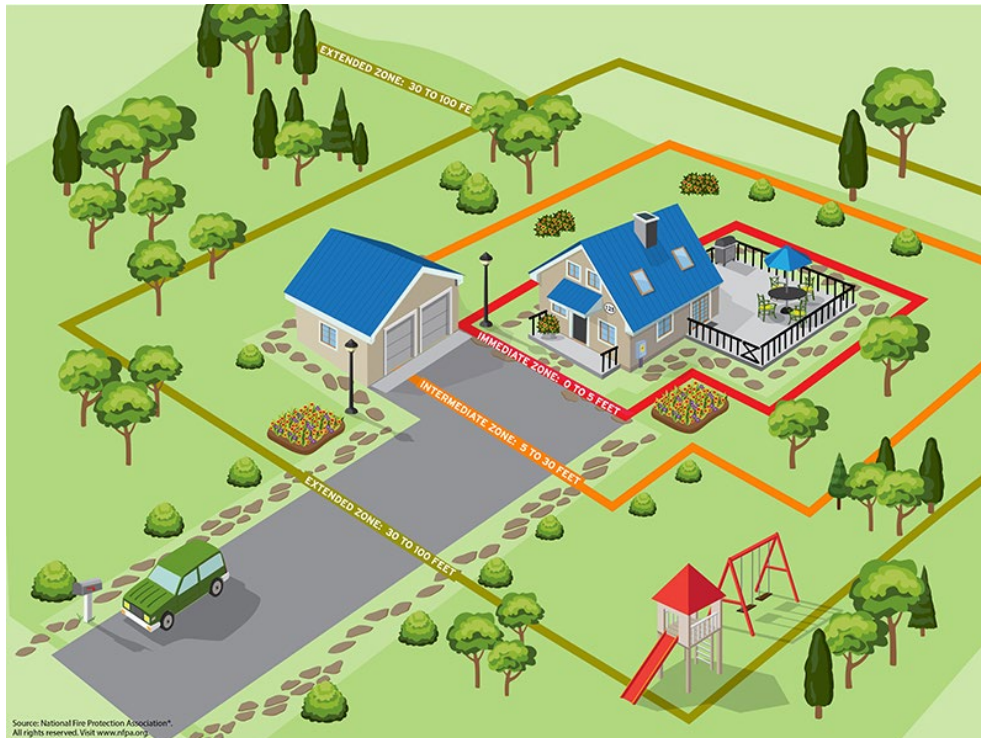
The site assessment was completed by Walter Flocke, Wildland Urban Interface Coordinator with the Texas A&M Forest Service on April 14th, 2023. Chief Michael Lacey of Westlake Fire Department and City of West Lake Hills City Administrator Trey Fletcher accompanied Walter. The site assessment included discussing local conditions, ongoing and future mitigation projects, and a drive through the city to assess structure vulnerability and broader ecological conditions.

Included in this written assessment are observations made while visiting West Lake Hills. The assessment examines the ease with which structure ignitions could occur under severe wildfire conditions and how these ignitions might be avoided within the home ignition zones of affected residences. The assessment does not focus on specific homes but examines the residential community in West Lake Hills as a whole.

West Lake Hills is in the wildland urban interface, defined as urbanized areas that abut directly with canyonlands of natural vegetation where ignitions could occur and threaten structures on those perimeters. Wildfires will happen--exclusion is not a choice. The variables in a wildfire scenario are when and where the fire will occur. The good news is that by addressing community vulnerabilities, residents will be able to substantially reduce their exposure to loss. Relatively small investments of time and effort can reap great rewards in wildfire safety.

Definition of the Home Ignition Zone

A structure burns because of its interrelationship with its immediate surroundings. To avoid a home ignition, a homeowner must prepare their structure to withstand ember attacks and minimize the likelihood of flames or surface fire touching the home or any attachments. The landscaping and construction choices made in the home ignition zone (HIZ) determines the potential for home ignition during a wildland fire. The HIZ includes a house and its immediate surroundings up to 100 to 200 feet from the foundation. The HIZ often includes other structures, highlighting the need for action to take place on a community scale, instead of through piecemeal actions.



Diverting fire's path through modification of material in the HIZ is an ongoing task that can result in avoiding home loss or damage. To accomplish this, flammable or vulnerable structural items must be modified or removed to prevent flames or embers from contacting or entering a structure. Reducing the volume of combustible material such as live and dead vegetation, and ladder fuels will affect the intensity of the wildfire as it enters the home ignition zone. The goal is to reduce the intensity of wildfire as it approaches our built environment.

Residents of West Lake Hills can reduce the risk of destruction during a wildfire by taking proactive actions within their home ignition zones. The Firewise USA® program offers risk reduction efforts of all complexity for homeowners to choose from when looking to reduce their chance of loss.

Description of Severe Case Wildland Fire Characteristics that Threaten the Area

Fire intensity and spread rate depend on the fuel type and condition (live or dead, moisture content, etc.), the weather conditions prior to and during ignition, and the topography. Generally, the following relationships hold between wildfire behavior and the fuel, weather and topography.

- Fine fuels, defined as fuel with a diameter less than 1/4in (ex. grasses, needles, twigs), ignite more easily and spread faster with higher intensities than coarser fuels, generally fuels greater than 1/4in in diameter (ex. large branches, logs, shrubs). For a given fuel, the more there is and the more continuous it is, the faster the fire spreads and the higher the intensities. Fine fuels take a shorter time to burn out than coarser fuels.
- The weather conditions affect the moisture content of the dead and live vegetative fuels. Dead fine fuel moisture content is highly dependent on the relative humidity and the degree of sun exposure. The lower the relative humidity and the greater the sun exposure, the lower will be the fuel moisture content. Lower fuel moisture produces higher spread rates and fire intensities.
- Wind speed significantly influences the rate of fire spread and fire intensity. The higher the wind speed, the greater the spread rate and intensity.
- Topography influences fire behavior principally by the steepness of the slope. However, the configuration of the terrain such as narrow draws, saddles and so forth can influence fire spread and intensity. In general, the steeper the slope, the higher the uphill fire spread and intensity.

Anticipated wildfires in the Hill Country region of Texas are expected to be driven by the combination of high wind speeds, low relative humidity, and long periods of time with elevated temperatures. The combination of these weather characteristics with dry fuels such as grasses, shrubs, and trees, especially those in close proximity to a house, can often lead to structure loss. Due to the rugged terrain common in this area, access for structural and wildland firefighters is often an issue. Fire in the hill country can be expected to move quickly uphill in vegetated canyons and will often have unpredictable movement due to shifting wind patterns manipulated by changing topography.

Embers are another characteristic of a wildfire that are not often considered by homeowners. Embers are small burning pieces of vegetation or wood that are carried by the wind ahead of a wildfire. An ember shower can be carried over a mile away from a wildfire and creates spot fires, which ignite vegetation on the roof, gutters, garden beds, and enter vents. Ember showers lead to structure loss even if the wildfire is not within the boundaries of the neighborhood. Wildfire researchers know that embers are the leading cause of home loss in a wildfire based on postfire assessments.

Site Description

The City of West Lake Hills, Texas is an incorporated community to the west of Downtown Austin in Central Travis County. The enclave city is surrounded by the jurisdictional limits of the city of Austin as well as the city of Rollingwood.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the population of West Lake Hills is 3,444 residents in 1,193 households. Development is primarily single-family residential and vary from modern architecture to mid-century ranch style homes. Most homes sit on lots between a half-acre, to up

[illegible]

Roadways are all paved surfaced, clearly marked and accessible. Many driveways are too steep or too narrow for large fire truck access or turn around, and in the case of an

Initial Observations and Recommendations

Most of the structures observed are built with fire-resistant roofing materials, including metal, composite shingle, and clay tile. Most roofs do have mature tree canopy partially covering them. In Texas, leaves drop twice a year depending on the species. Live oaks drop leaves in the spring while deciduous trees drop leaves in the fall. This means for most areas that cleaning gutters and eaves should be done at least twice a year depending on the species around a home. Leaf cast accumulation in gutters, roofline valleys, and on porches are common ignition points for a embers, where enough fuel is available to potentially ignite a structure.

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There are also many characteristics of the site that residents are unable to change:

- Topographical features such as slopes, canyons, and chimneys that can increase rate of spread and flame length.
- Predominate vegetation characteristics across the city as a whole.
- Infrastructure such as roadways and utility line rights-of-way.

The Immediate Zone of the HIZ includes the structure itself and the area within 5 feet surrounding it. This is the most important area in which to take immediate action as it is the most vulnerable to embers and where even small flames can come into direct contact with the structure. Both research and firefighters' first-hand accounts tell us that a well-prepared Immediate Zone makes the biggest difference in home survivability and first responder safety.

Home ignition zones in West Lake Hills vary from native shade tolerant plants to turf grass lawns, or xeriscape landscaping. In the photo below, maintenance of overgrowth of vegetation has not been done for at least a few growing seasons and fuel has accumulated around the structure, creating a continuous pathway for surface fire from natural vegetation to the structure. A low-cost mitigation strategy to reduce risk of this home would be to remove all leaves of debris in the first 5 feet and prune up the yaupon into single stemmed trees in the 5–30-foot zone.



Many homes in West Lake hills have wooden porches or balconies. These areas are of high importance for maintenance. It is recommended to keep porches and the area below them clean of leaf debris that can harbor an ember fire. Firewood should be kept 30 feet from a structure when not actively being used, and potted vegetation should be kept live and healthy. Patio furniture and other appliances on porch areas should also be treated as a possible fuel in a wildfire. Store patio furniture pillows inside when not in use, and during times of high fire danger move flammable items such as gardening, and home improvement supplies to a garage. Remember that porches are a part of the structure, and the home ignition zone begins at the boundary of these attachments, not just the home.

It is important to pay attention to bushes planted around a structure's foundation. If these shrubs are not maintained by annual pruning to remove dead growth and keep growth from touching the structure, they can act as ladder fuel. It is recommended to have all shrubs or trees at least 5 feet from a structure to provide the best chance of structure survival. Ladder fuels function as a stepping on point where a low-intensity surface fire can climb vertically in a receptive fuel bed. The higher off the ground a fire is, the more risk to the structure and first responders. Ladder fuels include anything flammable growing or stored under another flammable objects. Spare

lumber and firewood often act as ladder fuels when stored under wooden porches or near sheds much like how shrubs and small trees do the same when under or near mature canopies and near eaves, wooden fences, etc. When choosing a new ornamental shrub consider something with less dense branching patterns. Keep shrubs healthy, pruned, and away from vulnerable spots in structures like windows and vents that could fail under high heat or allow embers into a structure.

“Limbing up” vegetative ladder fuel around a house is a great way to keep the yard attractive and also reduce the risk of a surface fire being able to climb into the canopy. Note in the photo to the right, the property owner has taken positive action by keeping mature native trees in place, but also maintained the understory to reduce ladder fuels. Keeping vegetation healthy, properly pruned, and removing dead vegetation and old leaves on or near a house, is a great way to keep your yard “lean, clean, and green.” Decreasing the competition for space and resources such as water and nutrients helps the remaining vegetation in the long run.



Most all residential structures observed have a mature shaded tree overstory. National recommendations for tree spacing require that no tree limbs are within 10-feet of a house, and while that is a great way of decreasing the potential for a crown fire to spread to the structure, this is usually not a desirable course of action for owners and is often not necessary with no flammable ladder materials to carry fire into the crown of trees in maintained yards. As



mentioned above, flammable material under the mature crown should be reduced in height or removed, the debris the mature tree creates should be cleared from the roof and not allowed to gather around the base of the structure and it’s wooden attachments (especially during high fire

danger), and the crowns of mature trees should be isolated from other stands of mature trees. In the example to the right, the home is near multiple mature oak trees that are valuable additions, ecologically, to the landscape. From a wildfire perspective, the main risk presents itself in the debris dropped which gathers on the roofline or the landscaped beds along the structure. The potential for the crown to become involved if the vegetation below ignites is highly unlikely due to absence of ladder fuels.

For more information on ways residents in West Lake Hills can reduce risk of fires with proper tree care, visit the Austin Energy website: <https://austinenergy.com/residential/residential-services/tree-trimming>

Using non-combustible material around structures and access roads provides a buffer where a surface fire cannot continue horizontally. Substituting mulch with rock landscaping in the immediate zone reduces continuity of surface fuels and keeps embers from igniting fuels adjacent to a structure's foundation. The wooden fence shown here could carry fire from the natural surroundings toward structures, however it becomes a fire-resistant metal fence before reaching the structure, mitigating this risk.



The highest risk of WUI fire impacting the community lies along its boundary with the Wild Basin Preserve. Homes along this area should take highest priority for further assessment and for ensuring home hardening techniques to withstand the rare possibility of a wildfire moving from Wild Basin into West Lake Hills. While Firewise USA outlines actionable items to the individual homeowner, identifying collaborative efforts with outside neighboring properties is encouraged.

These examples are not intended to cover all potential considerations leadership should be aware of when moving forward with the Firewise USA™ program. The immediate zone, vegetation management, fire resistant landscaping, and evacuation routes are simply items that were noted during the onsite assessment.

Successful Wildfire Resilience Modifications

The Firewise USA™ program seeks to create a sustainable balance that will allow communities to live safely while maintaining environmental harmony in a WUI setting. Homeowners already balance their decisions about fire protection measures against their desire for certain flammable components on their properties. It is important for them to understand the implications of the choices they are making. These choices directly relate to the ignitability of the home ignition zones during a wildfire.

When adequately prepared, a house can likely withstand a wildfire without the intervention of the fire service. Further, a house and its surrounding community can be both wildfire resilient and compatible with the area's ecosystem. The Firewise USA[®] program is designed to enable communities to achieve a high level of protection against WUI fire loss even as a sustainable ecosystem balance is maintained.

Communities must focus attention on the home ignition zone and eliminate a step in the fire's potential relationship with the house. This can be accomplished by disconnecting the house from high and/or low-intensity fire that could occur around it. Combining fire-resistant construction with fire-resistant landscaping will increase the probability of surviving a wildfire. Solutions to "harden a home" from a wildfire include:

- Using noncombustible roofing, siding, fencing, and decking materials.
- Installing metal screens over vents and underneath decks to reduce the chance of embers entering the structure or finding receptive beds of material to slowly build up heat.
- Installing double-paned or tempered glass windows with metal frames when replacing older windows.
- Boxing in eaves with non-combustible material.
- Installing metal gutters and gutter guards to reduce the build-up of flammable material.

Next, residents should work to follow fire resistant landscaping principles. This means cleaning out plant beds near their homes, removing flammable materials such as mulch, dead leaves, and needles. In addition, plants within the immediate zone are recommended to be pruned back, especially beneath windows and other higher risk points, such as near wooden structures or when touching the house directly. Ladder fuels should be removed or trimmed so that fire cannot reach the crowns of trees. It is recommended that trees be pruned up six to ten feet from the ground; shorter trees should not exceed 1/3 of the overall tree height. Visit <https://agrillife.org/treecarekit/planting-tree-maintenance/how-to-prune-a-tree/> for more details on tree pruning.

For more examples of proper principles, please visit [Firewise.org](https://www.firewise.org).

Next Steps & Final Thoughts

For more information on the HIZ topic visit <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/ProtectYourHome/>

For an interactive, virtual course, register at <https://www.nfpa.org/wildfirepreparedness> for "Reducing Wildfire Risk to Property: Protecting Your Home or Business" a free, 1-hour session.

After reviewing the contents of this assessment and its recommendations, the West Lake Hills Firewise Board will determine whether it wishes to continue seeking Firewise USA[®] recognition.

If the site assessment and recommendations are accepted and recognition will be sought, the West Lake Hills Firewise Board will continue to create agreed-upon, area-specific solutions to the recommendations and update their written action plan every three years-

Assuming the assessment area seeks to achieve national Firewise USA® recognition status, it will integrate the following standards into its continued plan of action:

1. Maintain a local Firewise board comprised of residents and other applicable stakeholders. This group will collaborate on developing the site's risk reduction priorities, develop a multi-year action plan based on the risk assessment, and oversee the completion of the annual renewal requirements needed to retain an "in good standing" status. Action plans are a prioritized list of risk reduction projects/investments for the participating site, along with suggested homeowner actions and education activities that participants will strive to complete annually or over a period of multiple years. Action plans are developed by the board and need updating at least every three years.
2. At a minimum, each site is required to invest the equivalent of one volunteer hour (currently \$29.95) per dwelling unit in wildfire risk reduction actions annually (the rate is based on the 2023 annual National Hourly Volunteer Rate, which is updated every year in April when the new amount is published). Qualifying expenditures include contractor costs, rental equipment, volunteer hours, etc. Residents completing select home modifications, along with any qualifying work performed at their home and in the adjacent home ignition zones can contribute related hours and/or costs towards meeting the site's collective investment amount.
3. Each participating site is required to have a minimum of one wildfire risk reduction educational outreach event or related activity annually.
4. Every year participating sites must submit an annual renewal to maintain their "In Good Standing" status. The annual renewal application can be accessed through the Firewise USA™ online management portal (<http://portal.firewise.org/>).