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IMPACTS

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TO-DO LIST

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GUIDE

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DINING FEATURE

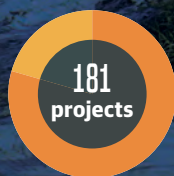
25

Rowing against the current

CI SPECIAL REPORT

As millions of dollars worth of flood control projects progress along Cypress Creek, officials said tens of thousands of homes could be removed from the flood plain over the next decade. However, flooding will continue to be an issue in low-lying areas.

INSIDE 28



144 active

37 pending

\$427M of \$2.5B in funds have been authorized from a 2018 bond referendum.

Roughly \$300 million overall is dedicated to Cypress Creek.

SOURCE: HARRIS COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

The Harris County Flood Control District has begun work on channel improvements near the Timberlake Estates and Ravensway neighborhoods in Cy-Fair, which is expected to be completed in 2021. (Shawn Arraji/Community Impact Newspaper)



Community of Faith church members donned face masks to welcome attendees back in June. (Courtesy Community of Faith)

Religious groups regather, find new normal in pandemic

BY DANICA LLOYD

When county officials called for closures this spring to curb the spread of the coronavirus, a number of churches in Cy-Fair pivoted to exclusively virtual services. Many have since found ways to reopen for in-person worship, but subtle and overt reminders of the pandemic's effects remain, from prepackaged Communion elements to a lack of handshakes and hugs.

Vivian Mueller, the director of business operations at The

CONTINUED ON 30



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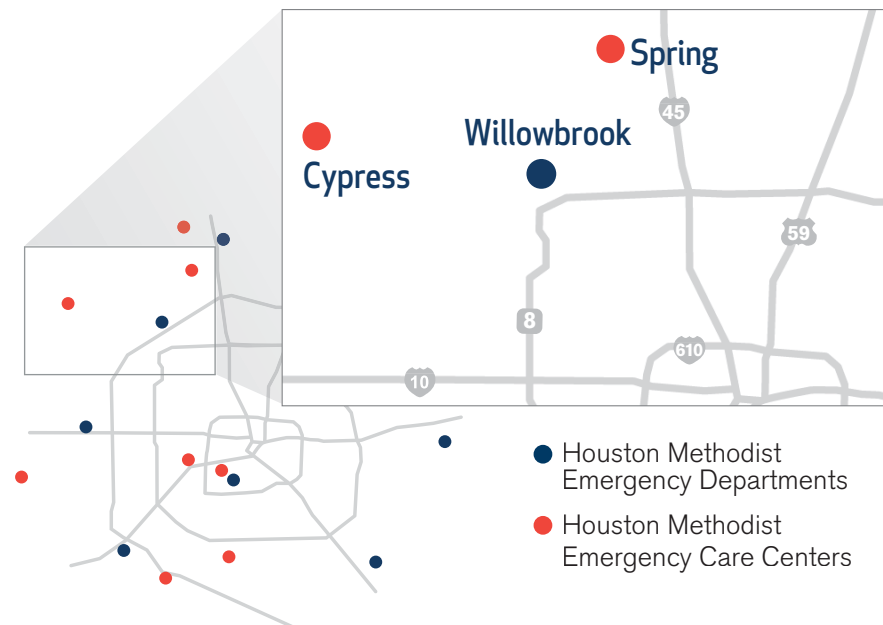
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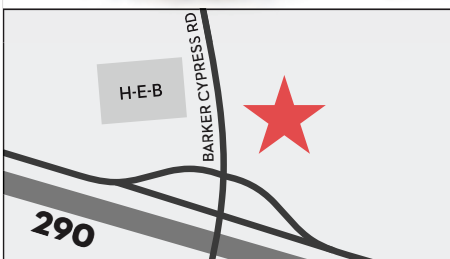
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John and Jennifer Garrett began *Community Impact Newspaper* in 2005 in Pflugerville, TX. The company's mission is to build communities of informed citizens and thriving businesses through the collaboration of a passionate team. Today, we operate across five metropolitan areas, providing hyperlocal, nonpartisan news produced by our full-time journalists in each community we serve.

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THIS ISSUE

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS MONTH



FROM EMILY: Our passionate Cy-Fair team and I are grateful for the opportunity to deliver hyperlocal and trustworthy news to our loyal readers. We are also thankful for the local businesses that partner with us to allow us to provide this paper free of charge. Please show support for our business community by browsing our advertisements and our Impact Deals section. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Emily Heineman, **GENERAL MANAGER**

FROM SHAWN: This month's paper features the third and final part of our series on flooding on Cypress Creek, which takes a look at what progress has been made since a \$2.5 billion bond referendum was passed in 2018 and what can be expected in the long term. As the holiday season approaches, many families are looking for ways to celebrate while also staying safe. Our second cover story explores creative ways local churches are fostering a sense of community.

Shawn Arrajj, **EDITOR**



THIS ISSUE BY THE NUMBERS

33 Local sources

14 New businesses

12 Community events

29 Local senior living communities

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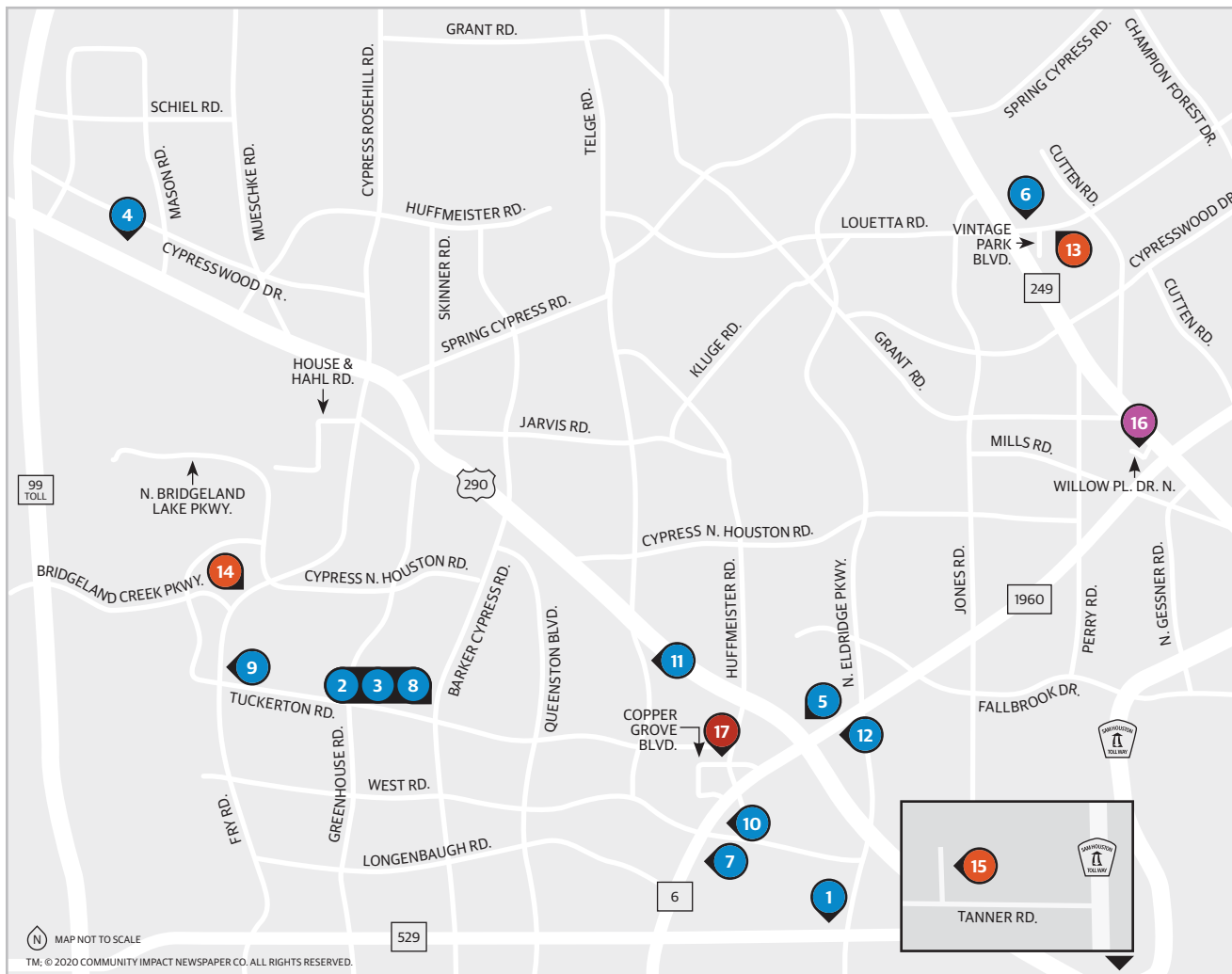
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NOW OPEN

1 Pronto Southwest Grill opened in late September at 13110 FM 529, Ste. 4, Houston. The locally owned eatery serves burgers, sandwiches, tacos, baked potatoes, salads and fajitas and offers free ice cream with every meal. 833-320-1150. www.prontosouthwest.com

2 First Watch celebrated a grand opening Nov. 16 at the Boardwalk at Towne Lake, 9915 Barker Cypress Road, Cypress. The cafe offers classic breakfast items, such as omelets and pancakes, in addition to avocado toast, wraps, breakfast tacos,

salads, sandwiches and fresh juices. First Watch is open daily from 7 a.m.-2:30 p.m. 346-396-4402. www.firstwatch.com

3 Crumbl Cookies opened Nov. 12 at the Boardwalk at Towne Lake, 9915 Barker Cypress Road, Ste. 155, Cypress. The bakery offers a rotating weekly menu of specialty cookies in addition to classic sugar and chocolate chip cookies. Cookies are prepared in an open kitchen designed so customers can see the entire process. Curbside pickup and delivery options are also available. 346-278-2112. www.crumblcookies.com/townelake

4 Fairfield Town Center welcomed a

new tenant, **Five Below**, to its shopping center in October at 28802 Hwy. 290, Ste. D-01, Cypress. The specialty discount store is known for the fact that most products it offers, from clothing items to toys, snacks and home decor, cost \$5 or less. 832-402-1814. www.fivebelow.com

5 Jolene's Wings & Beer, a new virtual restaurant exclusively offering delivery and takeout services through its website and third-party apps, opened at Lazy Dog Restaurant & Bar, 20030 Hwy. 290, Houston, on Nov. 11. The new eatery offers eight flavors of bone-in and boneless wings, including Nashville Hot, Buffalo, Kung Pao, Sweet Chili,



First Watch

COURTESY FIRST WATCH

Cajun Lime, Smokey BBQ, Garlic Parm and Naked. House-made dipping sauces, salads, desserts and sides, such as umami fries and sweet potato tots, are also on the menu. Four-packs of 16-ounce cans of Lazy Dog's house beers are available for \$15 each. www.jolenes.com

6 Raising Cane's celebrated the grand opening of its newest restaurant, located at 10950 Louetta Road, Houston, on Oct. 29. The Louisiana-based eatery is known for its chicken tenders, crinkle-cut fries, coleslaw, Texas toast and signature Cane's sauce. 281-251-0668. www.raisingcanes.com

7 California-based Dog Haus Biergarten opened Nov. 21 at 8422 N. Hwy. 6, Houston. It is the first Houston area location of the franchise, which is known for its gourmet hot dogs and handcrafted hamburgers. The eatery also offers fried chicken sandwiches, wings, shakes and 24 craft beers on tap. The 3,264-square-foot location features high-definition big-screen TVs and a full bar with wine and house cocktails. 832-427-1284. <http://copperfield.doghaus.com>

8 Nekter Juice Bar opened a new location at the Boardwalk at Towne Lake, 9915 Barker Cypress Road, Ste. 165, Cypress, in November. The business offers fresh juices, smoothies, acai bowls, cleanses and catering. www.neκτηrjuicebar.com

9 Rosati's Pizza held a grand opening Nov. 2 at 9814 Fry Road, Ste. 120, Cypress. The restaurant's menu includes Chicago-style deep dish, double dough, thin crust and gluten-free pizzas as well as wings, salads, pastas and sandwiches. 832-402-1100.

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10 Local Asian-fusion eatery **Bao Bros. Bistro** opened Oct. 24 at 8574 Hwy. 6 N., Houston. The restaurant's menu features steamed buns, or bao, as well as boba tea and beer. Owner Chris Garcia, a Copperfield native, has pledged to give 20% of profits back to his employees and local community. 832-674-8343. www.baobrosbistro.com

11 A new office, warehouse and showroom space for **Cubiture** opened at the end of September at 10704 Telge Road, Houston. The commercial-grade office furniture company specializes in commercial furnishings, new cubicle systems and remanufactured Herman Miller cubicle systems. In addition to selling a variety of office furniture, the business also provides various services, such as custom millwork, relocation, storage and flooring. 713-412-0900. www.cubiture.com

12 **Cheerz Daiquiris To-Go** opened in early November at 12925A W. FM 1960, Houston. In addition to frozen beverages, Cajun-style dishes are also available for takeout, including wings, fish, shrimp, chicken, gumbo and sides. 713-389-5565. www.cheerzto-go.com

A new branch of the home cleaning service **You've Got Maids** opened Nov. 4 servicing the Cypress area. Clients who contact You've Got Maids can have uniformed employees and a trained supervisor arrive at their house in a car with the company logo. Employees bring all cleaning products and equipment. Services can be arranged on a weekly or biweekly basis. The new branch is run by the husband-wife duo Marqela and Justin



Tumble 22

COURTESY TUMBLE 22

Goff. 832-400-6243. www.youvegottmaids.com/house-cleaning/tx/cypress

COMING SOON

13 **Tumble 22**, an Austin-based eatery, is planning to open its fourth restaurant in Vintage Park in the former location of PDQ, located at 10723 Louetta Road, Houston. Inspired by Nashville hot chicken, the new restaurant's menu will offer chicken tender bites, jumbo chicken tenders, chicken sandwiches and bone-in chicken with five heat levels, from "Wimpy" to "Cluckin' Hot." The menu will also offer salads; family pack options; sides, such as the dirty mac-n-cheese, which is made with pulled hot chicken and ranch; and dessert options. A projected opening date has not yet been announced as of press time. 281-547-6300. www.tumble22.com

14 **Kumon Math and Reading Program** is set to open in a 1,300-square-foot space at Lakeland Village Center, 10615 Fry Road, Ste. B2-200, in January. Instructors and assistants tailor individualized reading and math curriculum for students from 3 years old to high school for enrichment or remediation. www.kumon.com

15 Basketball training center **Shoot 360** is slated to open Dec. 15 at 13018 Brittmoore Park Drive, Houston, with an open house planned for Dec. 19 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Athletes of all ages can take advantage of expert coaching and interactive technology to test, train, track and compete. www.shoot360.com/houston



CUT! by Cinemark Cypress opened Nov. 12 in the Fairfield Town Center in Cypress.

SHAWN ARRAJJ/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

FEATURED IMPACT

NOW OPEN

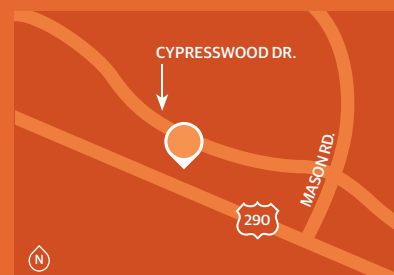
CUT! by Cinemark Cypress opened to the public Nov. 12 at 29030 Hwy. 290, Cypress. The eight-screen movie theater also features electric-powered, oversized recliners and an outdoor patio with a fireplace.

Movigoers can order from a full food and drink menu, including pizzas, burgers, wings, salads, popcorn, candy, wine, beer and signature cocktails, to have items delivered directly to their seats in the theater.

"Cinemark is pleased to continue to evolve the moviegoing experience with our CUT! concept at a time when people need entertainment and an escape from reality the most," Cinemark CEO Mark Zoradi said in a press release.

Tickets for new and classic films are

available for purchase online, and private watch parties, which allow customers to rent an entire theater, are also available. Safety measures in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic include extensive disinfection in between showings, limited capacities, mandatory face masks and no-contact payment methods. 281-256-8744. www.cinemark.com



ANNIVERSARIES

16 **Aerodrome Ice Skating Complex** is celebrating 25 years in business with festivities throughout the month of December. The complex offers public skating, private lessons and hockey programs. A pro-shop tent sale is planned Dec. 4-5 at 8220 Willow Place Drive North, Houston, featuring discounted hockey gear and figure skating merchandise. 281-847-5283. www.aerodromes.com

CLOSINGS

17 Kimberly Williams-Watson, owner of **Watson Pediatrics** at 15322 Copper Grove Blvd., Houston, announced this fall her practice would close Dec. 30 due to the economic downturn. The clinic operated under Privia Medical Group and specialized in general pediatric medicine. 281-859-7596. www.watsonpediatrics.com

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Cy Fair Nutcracker Market

December 12th - 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
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DEC. 03-06 VISIT THE CIRCUS
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UniverSoul Circus makes a tour stop in Houston, featuring an outdoor, open-air concept with COVID-19 precautions in place. 7 p.m. (Thu., Fri.); noon, 4 p.m., 7:30 p.m. (Sat.); 12:30 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m. (Sun.). \$22-\$49. 7575 N. Sam Houston Parkway W., Houston. www.universoulcircus.com



DEC. 19 SIP WINE AND DO YOGA WITH LLAMAS
FIGMENT RANCH

Figment Ranch in Cypress invites guests to do yoga, feed and pet rescue llamas, and sip wine in an outdoor patio area. The event is limited in attendance, and preregistration is required. 2-5 p.m. \$35. 17102 Mueschke Road, Cypress. 713-249-3893. www.figmentranch.com



Runners high-five Santa Claus at Houston's 12K of Christmas.

DECEMBER

04 THROUGH 19 CATCH A PERFORMANCE OF 'THE SOUND OF MUSIC'

Playhouse 1960 hosts Rodgers & Hammerstein's "The Sound of Music" with eight showings. Masks and social distancing will be required. 8 p.m. (Fri., Sat.); 3 p.m. (Sun.). \$10-\$21. Playhouse 1960, 6814 Gant Road, Houston. 281-587-8243. www.ph1960.com

05 THROUGH 20 SEE A CHRISTMAS PLAY AT STAGWORKS

The local theater performs Ken Ludwig's take on "Twas the Night Before Christmas." This family-friendly show caters to younger audiences age 3 and older. 11 a.m. (Sat.), noon (Sun.), 7 p.m. (Wed.). \$15-\$22. Stageworks Theatre, 10760 Grant Road, Houston. 281-587-6100. www.stageworkstx.org

05 THROUGH 6, 12 THROUGH 13 CHECK OUT THE HEART TO MARKET POP-UP SHOP

The family-friendly traveling pop-up market features a curated mix of vendors and products that are local to each area and aimed at mothers and their children.

10 a.m.-4 p.m. daily. Free (admission). Boardwalk at Towne Lake, 9945 Barker Cypress Road. 832-860-8314. www.hearttomarket.com

05 THROUGH 6 FIGHT FOR YOUR TEAM AT PAINTBALL EVENT

TXR Paintball hosts its Grinch in Da Hood scenario event, featuring paintball matches over two days. Guests can stay overnight Dec. 5 to enjoy camping, food and a fire. 7:30 a.m. (Dec. 5)-2 p.m. (Dec. 6). \$45-\$65. TXR Paintball, 15550 Grant Road, Cypress. 281-357-4300. www.txrpaintball.com

06 SHOP A HANUKKAH POP-UP MARKET

Chabad of Cypress hosts an outdoor Hanukkah pop-up shop featuring holiday gifts, menorahs, dreidels, games, decor and traditional food. 2-4 p.m. Free (admission). Talon Controls, 10625 Telge Road, Houston. 832-651-6964. www.facebook.com/jewishnwh

12 SHOP THE CYFAIR NUTCRACKER MARKET

The event features clothing, home and holiday decorations, jewelry, gourmet food items and gifts. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Free (admission). Berry Center,

8877 Barker Cypress Road, Cypress. www.facebook.com/cyfairholidayextravaganza

21 THROUGH JAN. 1 SPEND THE HOLIDAY BREAK WITH THE KIDS

Cy-Fair ISD facilities will be closed to students and staff for two weeks for the winter holiday break. Classes resume Jan. 4. 281-897-4000. www.cfsd.net

VIRTUAL EVENTS

05 SEE HOUSTON'S HOLIDAY LIGHTS

The city of Houston hosts The Reliant Lights Mayor's Holiday Spectacular, featuring virtual holiday vignettes from local entertainers. 6:30-8 p.m. Free. The virtual event will be streamed on the city of Houston's digital platforms.

16 TUNE INTO A HOLIDAY READING

Harris County Precinct 4 Commissioner Jack Cagle will perform a virtual reading of "Twas the Night Before Christmas," and the Jersey Village High School Choir will sing Christmas carols. Noon. Free. The event will be streamed at www.facebook.com/hcprecinct4.

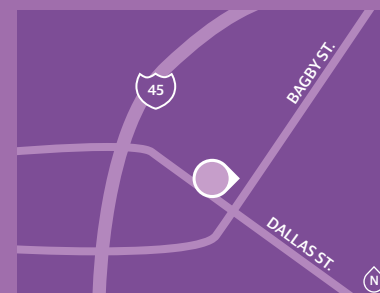
FEATURED EVENT

Spread holiday cheer at Christmas-themed run

Dec. 19

Karbach Brewing Co. presents Houston's 12K of Christmas, featuring 12K and 6K runs, hot cocoa, carolers and an appearance by Santa Claus. After the run, attendees can enjoy live music, Karbach beer and snacks. 7:30 a.m. \$15-\$50.

Sam Houston Park
1100 Bagby St., Houston
713-680-8886
www.karbachbrewing.com



Find more or submit Cy-Fair events at communityimpact.com/event-calendar. Event organizers can submit local events online to be considered for the print edition. Submitting details for consideration does not guarantee publication.

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Officials approve \$300M transfer of surplus toll revenue

Harris County commissioners approved the transfer of \$300 million in surplus toll revenue to the county's general fund Nov. 10 that will be used for transportation needs.

The move followed a discussion at a Sept. 15 meeting at which the county considered forming a new limited government corporation that would use surplus toll road revenue for more purposes, including those that fell outside the realm of infrastructure and mobility. At the Nov. 10 meeting, Harris County Budget Director Dave Berry said the county had since moved away from that idea.

"The \$300 million transfer, which was originally contemplated in a limited government corporation, would still be made to the county," Berry said. "Now it would be restricted to transportation-related purposes."

Once transferred to the general



The Harris County Toll Road Authority made a \$300 million transfer of surplus revenue to Harris County's general fund in November. That money can be used for a variety of transportation needs countywide. (Anna Lotz/Community Impact Newspaper)

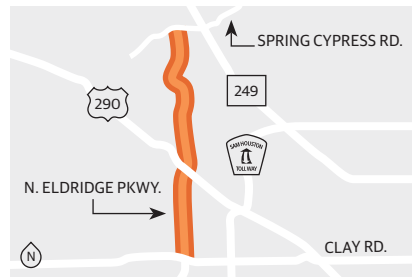
fund, County Judge Lina Hidalgo said the funding could be used to pay off road debt and on projects that fall at the nexus of transportation and flood control, among other uses.

During the September discussions, Precinct 3 Commissioner Steve Radack and Precinct 4 Commissioner Jack Cagle opposed the formation of the LGC, arguing the money collected from toll roads should not fund

projects unrelated to infrastructure.

About \$137 million in toll road revenue was transferred to the county's precincts for local mobility projects in fiscal year 2019-20. Hidalgo said the allocations to precincts would increase to \$175 million under the new plan. The county's engineering department is conducting a study to determine how that funding should be allocated across precincts.

COMPLETED PROJECT



North Eldridge Parkway improvements

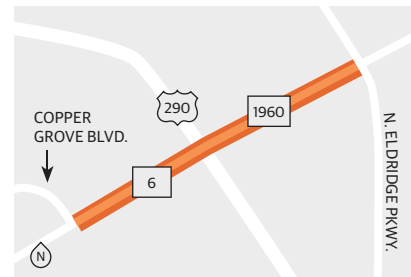
A joint project between Harris County Precinct 4 and the Texas Department of Transportation was completed Sept. 30 which aims to improve traffic flow along North Eldridge Parkway between Clay and Spring Cypress roads. The project included new traffic signals at several Cy-Fair intersections, including at Castlebridge, Chriswood, Firebrick, Normont and Quail Creek drives. Part of the project entailed extending the northbound and southbound left turn lanes on North Eldridge at FM 1960.

Timeline: April 8, 2019-Sept. 30, 2020

Cost: \$4.3 million

Funding sources: Harris County, TxDOT

PROJECT MILESTONE



Hwy. 6 bridge

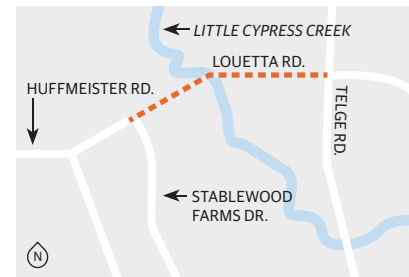
A new four-lane flyover bridge connecting FM 1960 to Hwy. 6 over Hwy. 290 opened to traffic in Cy-Fair on Nov. 1, several weeks ahead of schedule. Although the bridge is open, crews with TxDOT will continue to work on the final elements of the project through December, which includes work on new northbound Hwy. 6 frontage roads that will remain closed during construction.

Timeline: September 2019-December 2020

Cost: \$41.4 million

Funding source: TxDOT

PROJECT UPDATE



Louetta Road extension

Harris County Precinct 3 is working to build a new segment of Louetta Road connecting Stablewood Farms Drive to Telge Road in a joint project with Precinct 4. Precinct 3 is working on the part of the project west of Little Cypress Creek, and Precinct 4 is completing the bridge over the creek and the part of the road to the east. When completed, the road will be a four-lane concrete boulevard with twin bridges over Little Cypress Creek.

Timeline: Sept. 14, 2020-March 2022

Cost: \$8.8 million (split evenly between each precinct)

Funding sources: Harris County Precinct 3 and Precinct 4

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Cy-Fair sees high turnout, shift favoring Republicans in election

BY SHAWN ARRAJJ

The Cy-Fair area saw historic voter turnout in November elections with more than 165,000 ballots cast across 57 area precincts. Although voters in Harris County overall backed Democrats Joe Biden for president and MJ Hegar for Senate, Republicans held on to local seats in Cy-Fair while also flipping one seat taken by Democrats in 2018.

“There was definitely a Republican wave that benefited down-ballot Republicans, and it showed that locally, the Republican brand was still strong despite some dissatisfaction with Donald Trump,” said Brandon Rottinghaus, a University of Houston political science professor.

The 165,461 ballots cast for president in Cy-Fair compares to 110,149 ballots for U.S. Senate in 2018 and 128,545 ballots for president in 2016, according to data from the Harris County Clerk’s Office.

In an interview conducted near the end of the early voting process, Marlene Lobberecht, the president of the Cy-Fair chapter of the League of Women Voters, said the suburb’s high voter turnout rates could be attributed to the promotion of voter turnout by community organizations and new initiatives introduced by Harris County officials this year.

“I think after 2016, people understand that their vote does matter and they really do count, and Harris County has worked very hard to make it easier to vote,” she said.

County election officials provided individuals who chose to vote by mail the ability to track their ballot status, and Lobberecht said that gave voters the confidence that their ballots will be counted.

In-person voters could also visit the Texas secretary of state’s website and see the names of county residents who have cast their ballot by date. Lobberecht said this also contributes to election security and confidence in the system by allowing state officials to ensure people only vote once.

“It’s much more transparent than it’s ever been, and I think that’s strongly encouraging,” she said.

Republican advantages

Among the Cy-Fair area Republicans who won races was Mike Schofield, who won Texas House District 132 against Democratic incumbent Gina Calanni with 51.8% of the vote. The district, which covers parts of Katy and Cypress, was narrowly won by Calanni in 2018 by a margin of 113 votes.

Republicans were also able to capture the county commissioner seat representing Harris County Precinct 3, which covers parts of Cypress, Katy and the western edge of the city of Houston. The seat was up for grabs after Republican incumbent Steve Radack announced he would not run for re-election. Republican Tom Ramsey ended up besting Democrat Michael Moore in the contest, earning 52.4% of the vote.

Similar forces affecting national races may have tilted the balance in favor of Ramsey, Rottinghaus said. Had Moore won, it would have given Democrats a supermajority.

“Savvy Republican voters saw that and reversed course,” Rottinghaus said.

Democratic Rep. Jon Rosenthal, who won the race of Texas House District 135 in 2018, managed to hold onto his seat, defeating Republican Justin Ray by 300 votes. Rosenthal won by about 1,700 votes in 2018.

An analysis of voting trends in Cy-Fair south of Hwy. 290—in areas relevant to the Harris County Precinct 3 commissioner race as well as Texas House districts 132 and 135—shows several precincts that favored Democrats in 2018 switched to favoring Republicans in 2020, including parts of Miramesa and Coppefield. Meanwhile, areas near Yaupon Ranch and Remington Grove, which heavily favored Democrats in 2018, continued to favor them in 2020 but to a lesser degree.

Some Democrats, including Calanni, may have suffered from attacks painting them as being associated with the most liberal wing of the party, Rottinghaus said. It also did not help that Biden signaled interest in moving away from oil- and gas-based energy sources, he said.

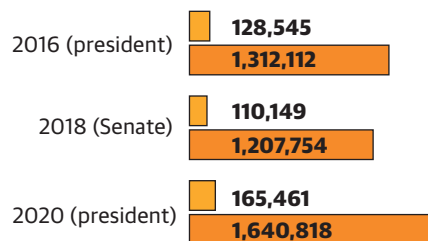
Democratic candidates may have also been hurt by the cautious

RECORD TURNOUT

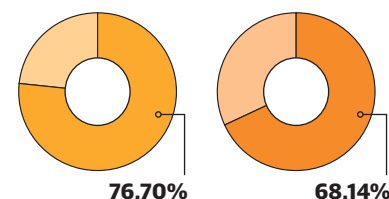


Harris County saw record voter turnout during the November election. The percentage of registered voters to cast ballots was higher in Cy-Fair than the county overall.

VOTES CAST

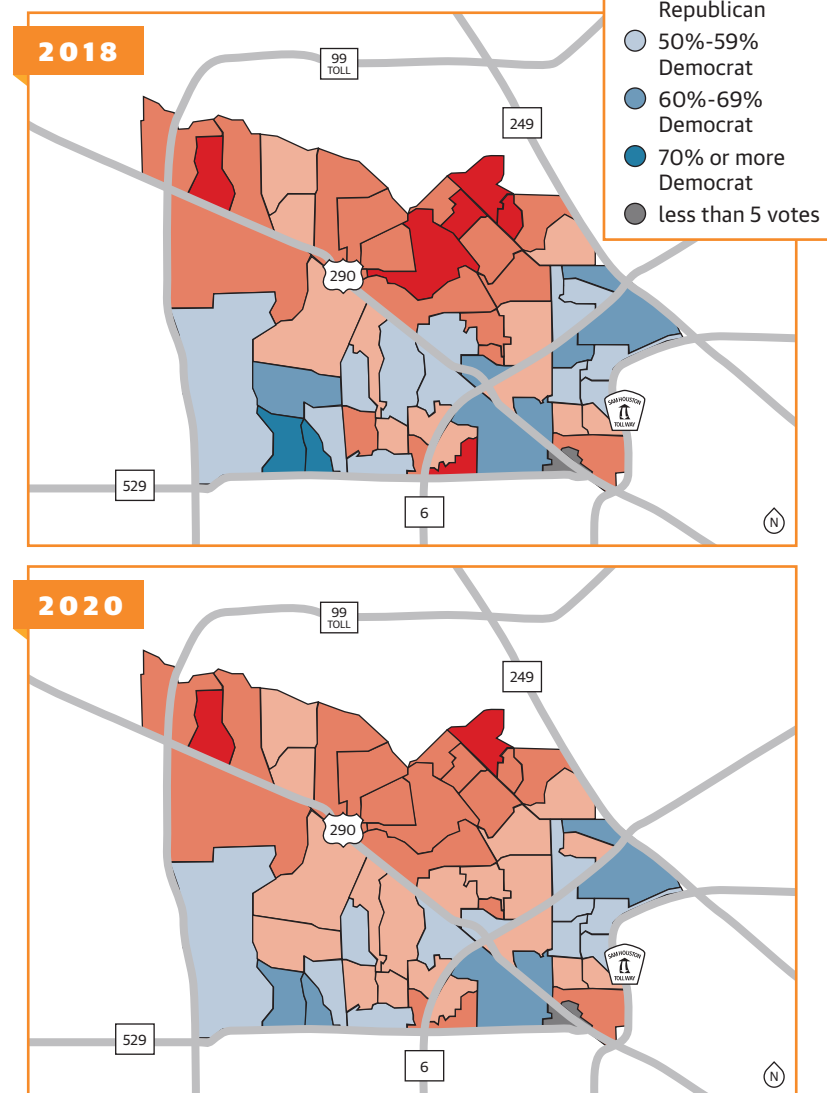


2020 voter turnout



VOTER TRENDS

An analysis of voting trends in 57 Cy-Fair precincts shows several precincts that favored Democratic candidates in 2018 shifting to favor Republican candidates in 2020.



SOURCE: HARRIS COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

approach to campaigning in person, said Michael Marshall, a professor of comparative politics at Prairie View A&M University.

“It wasn’t until September and October that Democrats began meeting people in socially distant

ways,” he said. “This distance may have been the right thing to do from a public health perspective, but may have hurt the Democrats when it comes to their election process.”

Matt Dulin and Danica Lloyd contributed to this report.

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Pandemic, election lead to record-high firearm sales

BY DANICA LLOYD

Nearly 26.7 million firearm background checks were conducted across the U.S. from March through October—up from 18.6 million during the same time frame in 2019, according to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

Ed Scruggs, the board president of Gun Sense, a statewide gun violence prevention nonprofit, said it is typical to see an uptick in gun sales following traumatic events such as mass shootings or economic insecurity. The events of 2020 have made many feel uneasy and at risk, resulting in an unprecedented season of boosted sales, he said.

“This year really was a storm of several things coming together,” Scruggs said. “We not only had the pandemic; we had unrest in cities and urban areas; we had the presidential election, and all of those things have combined to just see these skyrocketing sales numbers.”

Eric Ward, a certified firearms instructor based in Cy-Fair, said compared to last year, he has done about six months’ worth of business every month at 4Ward Defense since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

More people are purchasing firearms to feel protected, he said, and while many of these individuals previously owned guns, he said the biggest trend he has seen in his business is first-time gun owners.

“We have had a dramatic increase in what we call new shooters—people who are like, ‘I have no idea what I’m

doing. I’m here because, for whatever reason, I’m scared of something, and I feel the need to learn this skill set,’” Ward said.

On top of this, the COVID-19 pandemic has put new restrictions on the manufacturing process, such as limiting the number of people who can work at any given time to produce new merchandise.

“Ammunition has been in short supply since March, and it continues to be,” Scruggs said. “You can go into some of the big-box stores, and the ammunition aisle looks like the bread aisle in a grocery store back in April.”

Safety and security

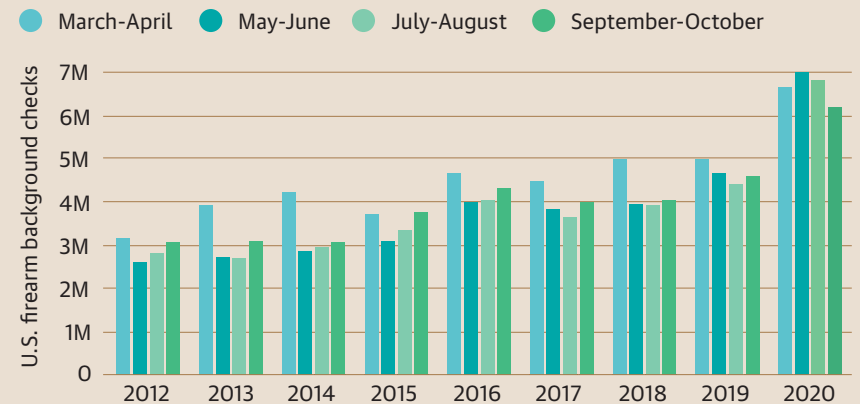
While purchasing firearms might make people feel safer, Scruggs said he believes more guns in homes make families less safe—especially when first-time buyers make an impulse purchase before understanding the responsibility that comes with owning them. He encouraged gun owners to receive proper training and acquire safe storage options.

Gun Sense advocates for Texas lawmakers to enact an extreme risk protection order law, which would allow a judge to determine whether an individual threatening to harm themselves or others is competent to own firearms. Scruggs said this measure could reduce incidents of mass shootings, domestic violence and suicide statewide.

Texas saw 3,522 gun-related deaths in 2018—up from 2,848 four years earlier, according to the Centers for

A SPIKE IN SALES

A rise in firearm background checks since March mirrors the trends gun dealers across the state have seen throughout 2020.



SOURCES: TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, RAND CORP., CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, PEW RESEARCH CENTER/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

Disease Control and Prevention.

Another policy priority for Gun Sense is universal background checks of individuals seeking to purchase a gun. Scruggs said it is too easy to buy a firearm in Texas without a background check.

“What’s interesting is there was already more than 300 million firearms in America before this recent round started,” Scruggs said. “We just keep adding to the stockpile, and we don’t see the value in that, obviously. We think there’s more than enough to go around.”

On the other hand, Ward said he believes gun laws are an infringement on individuals’ rights to be able to protect themselves at all costs.

“At the end of the day, this is a right,” Ward said. “With rights come responsibilities, obviously, but I do think that more guns in the hands of individuals is a freer society and a better-off society, for sure.”

BY THE NUMBERS



1.4 MILLION
active handgun license
holders in Texas in 2018

3,522

Texans died in a gun-related incident in 2018.



67%
of American
gun owners cite
protection as a
major reason.



37%
of Texans
own guns.



86%
of Democrats
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should be stricter.



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Hidalgo warns of coronavirus resurgence in annual county address

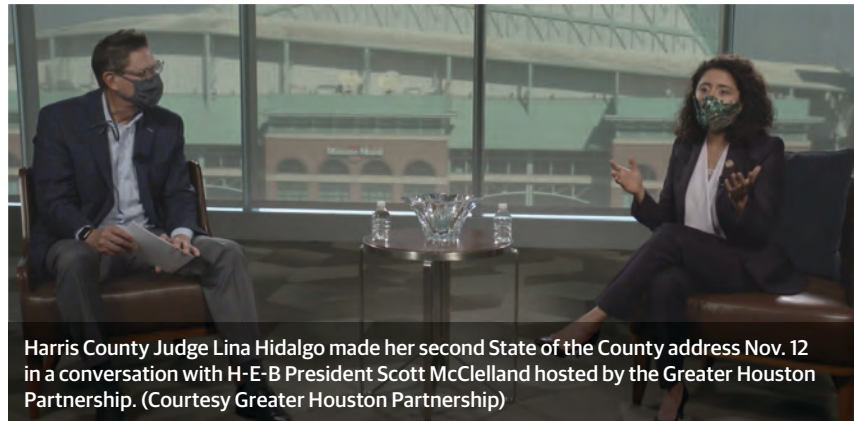
BY SHAWN ARRAJJ

HARRIS COUNTY With her second year in office coming to a close, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo made her second State of the County address Nov. 12 in a conversation with H-E-B President Scott McClelland. The conversation largely revolved around the coronavirus pandemic.

Hidalgo said the county has seen a 40% increase in new COVID-19 cases over the course of November along with a rise in hospitalizations and testing positivity. The pandemic is far from over, she said.

"We are headed in the wrong direction," Hidalgo said. "My concern is this is the result of half-measures by the state and federal government so far, and something has to change."

Although work on a vaccine is moving forward, Hidalgo said it will not immediately become widely available to the general public. In the meantime, she said she hopes a more comprehensive strategy will emerge



Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo made her second State of the County address Nov. 12 in a conversation with H-E-B President Scott McClelland hosted by the Greater Houston Partnership. (Courtesy Greater Houston Partnership)

to prevent the spread of the virus at the federal level.

Hidalgo criticized how the state has had to close and reopen businesses several times, describing it as a "ping-pong effect" that is "based on no data in particular." She said she feared another round of closures with cases starting to rise.

In her 2019 State of the County address, Hidalgo said early-childhood education would be a priority in her

next year in office, setting the stage for a major investment. Although those plans had to be scaled back this year, Hidalgo said the county was still able to make what she called a "seed investment" of \$10 million to kick-start the initiative.

"We are fielding applications for three to four programs that we are going to fund and incubate and hopefully bring in additional investments," she said.

Commission proposes tweak to city charter related to election term rules

BY SHAWN ARRAJJ

JERSEY VILLAGE An ongoing review in the city of Jersey Village has yielded two proposed changes to the city's charter that would affect how City Council terms are handled when council members step down.

One update would allow a new council member to be appointed to a council position without it counting as an official term in office. Currently, when someone is appointed to a council position between elections, the

time they serve leading up to the next election counts as a full term.

The second proposed change would require council members to resign from office if they qualify and intend to run for another municipal office.

Council members serving on positions 2 and 3—the two positions that are elected alongside the mayor in odd-numbered years—cannot run for mayor without having to also give up their council seat, regardless of if they win or lose. Council members elected

in even-numbered years do not face the same barrier, Commission Chair Sheri Sheppard said.

"This puts both cycles on equal footing," Sheppard said.

Changes to the city charter require citizen approval, and none of the proposed changes would be official unless approved by city voters. The ballot language for each change will be drafted by city staff and come back to the council for approval at a later date.

CITY HIGHLIGHTS

HARRIS COUNTY Harris County is moving forward with two new initiatives that will put \$2.5 million into programs meant to help immigrants with legal services. In a 3-2 vote Nov. 10, the court approved \$2 million in funding for an Immigrant Legal Services Fund and \$500,000 to help immigrant crime victims obtain visas that allow them to interact with law enforcement without fear of deportation.

HARRIS COUNTY Approximately \$14.7 million in assistance programs will soon be available to Harris County residents for early-childhood education during the coronavirus pandemic. In an Oct. 27 meeting, county commissioners put \$4.7 million to help fund support services such as after-school programs, distance learning and child care for essential workers. The county will also spearhead an effort to establish a \$10 million Early Childhood Impact Fund.

HARRIS COUNTY Umair Shah, executive director of the county's Public Health Department, announced he would be stepping down Dec. 18 to serve as secretary of health for the state of Washington. County officials said they were expecting to discuss the process of replacing Shah at a Dec. 1 meeting of the Harris County Commissioners Court. County Judge Lina Hidalgo said residents should not expect any lapse in services.

MEETINGS WE COVER

Livestreams can be accessed via websites.

Jersey Village City Council will meet at 7 p.m. on Dec. 21. 713-466-2100 www.jerseyvillagetx.com

Harris County Commissioners Court will meet at 10 a.m. on Dec. 15. 713-698-1102 www.harriscountytexas.gov



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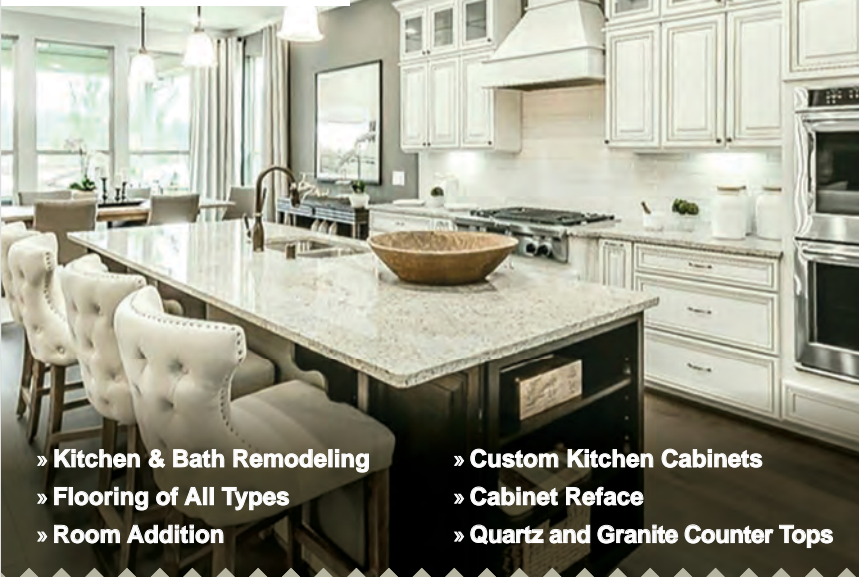
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Cy-Fair ISD considers stipends for all employees

BY DANICA LLOYD

CY-FAIR ISD Cy-Fair ISD employees could see a one-time stipend on their Dec. 15 paychecks for the additional efforts they have made so far in the 2020-21 school year. At a public hearing Nov. 5, trustees expressed their support for the district's \$8.3 million plan to give full-time employees a \$500 stipend and part-time employees a \$250 stipend.

"I understand it's not enough," Superintendent Mark Henry said. "But it is an effort to say 'thank you' from the administration and the board of this district—[to say] we know that you've gone above and beyond."

The revised staff compensation plan will be presented to the board for final approval at the December board meeting, according to Leslie Francis, the assistant superintendent for communication and community relations.

Chief Financial Officer Karen Smith said all employees hired by Oct. 31 who are still employed as of Nov. 30 would be eligible for the one-time stipend, which is intended to address morale and retention.

Donna Lord, the president of the Cy-Fair Texas State Teachers Association, thanked district officials Nov. 9 for proposing the stipend and for establishing remote learning days. She asked the board to continue listening to employee concerns and addressing morale.

"On behalf of our members, I want to take this opportunity to thank the board and senior administration for beginning to take small steps forward in recognizing the efforts made by the staff and the additional burdens being placed on the teachers this school year," Lord said.

This is not the only step taken since the start of the school year

to show staff they are appreciated, Henry said.

District officials have also implemented monthly remote learning days for students, providing teachers additional planning time.

Other efforts include reducing district benchmarks, minimizing staff meetings and trainings, allowing principals to hire more long-term substitute teachers and designating funds for employee appreciation initiatives, Henry said.

On Nov. 9, the board unanimously approved waiving comprehensive evaluations for eligible teachers for one year to alleviate anxiety and stress amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers may decline the waiver and opt to be evaluated anyway. All first-year teachers and those with documented deficiencies will be evaluated as normal, according to district officials.



ALLEVIATING TEACHER STRESS

In a year when many teachers are experiencing heavier workloads due to the pandemic, Cy-Fair ISD officials have taken the following steps to alleviate stress.

- ✓ Budgeting for all employees to receive retention stipends
- ✓ Waiving the requirement for most teachers to be evaluated
- ✓ Implementing monthly remote learning days for planning purposes
- ✓ Decreasing the number of district benchmarks
- ✓ Minimizing district meetings and trainings
- ✓ Hiring additional long-term substitute teachers

SOURCE: CY-FAIR ISD/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

Priorities for 87th Texas Legislature finalized by Cy-Fair ISD officials

BY DANICA LLOYD

CY-FAIR ISD Cy-Fair ISD officials presented their priorities for the 87th Texas Legislature at a Nov. 5 meeting, which the board of trustees approved Nov. 9. The upcoming legislative session officially convenes in January, but state lawmakers began prefilming bills in early November.

Following the passage of House Bill 3 in the 86th Texas Legislature in 2019, the Texas House and

Senate agreed to invest \$11.6 billion in public school systems. This allowed CFISD to provide salary increases and launch full-day pre-K districtwide.

CFISD Chief of Staff Teresa Hull said the district hopes to see the measures laid out in HB 3 maintained despite state budgetary constraints due to the pandemic.

"I think this is going to be a do-no-harm session," Hull said. "We're just

going to have to be prepared to run good defense and make certain that we're able to maintain the level of funding that we currently have—all of the great things that we felt came out of HB 3, to see that that's maintained and carried forward."

The district is also asking legislators to consider waiving the state's A-F accountability rating system for the 2020-21 school year. All districts and campuses in the state received a label of Not Rated for the 2019-20 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We all know we are in the middle of a pandemic," Chief Academic

Officer Linda Macias said. "There are many challenges that our students are facing—many gaps in their instruction and their education—and we believe that this needs to be waived for the 2020-21 school year."

Other priorities on the list of 22 items covered the opposition to the expansion of charter schools into high-performing school districts, increasing the state's contribution to public school employee health insurance plans, maintaining local control over the implementation of safety and security measures, and increasing the percentage of reimbursement for transportation costs.

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Senior Living

As the numbers of senior adults nationwide and in the Cy-Fair area continue to grow, so does demand for residential options. The following list is not comprehensive.



Definitions / Key

Independent-living communities cater to older adults with limited care needs. Most include amenities, such as fitness programs, housekeeping, communal meals and more.

Assisted-living communities specialize in providing care and supervision. These facilities frequently offer a full range of amenities as well as limited medical assistance.

Memory care facilities specialize in providing care to seniors with Alzheimer's, dementia and other cognitive issues. Staff members are trained to help residents manage these diseases.

Hospice care is intended to relieve symptoms and suffering associated with a terminal illness in those who have been given six months or less to live.

Nursing home/skilled nursing facilities provide care to those with illnesses or mental conditions requiring full-time monitoring and medical care. The patient must choose to forgo further curative treatment.

Mixed-use facilities offer some or all of these services.

COMPILED BY DANICA LLOYD

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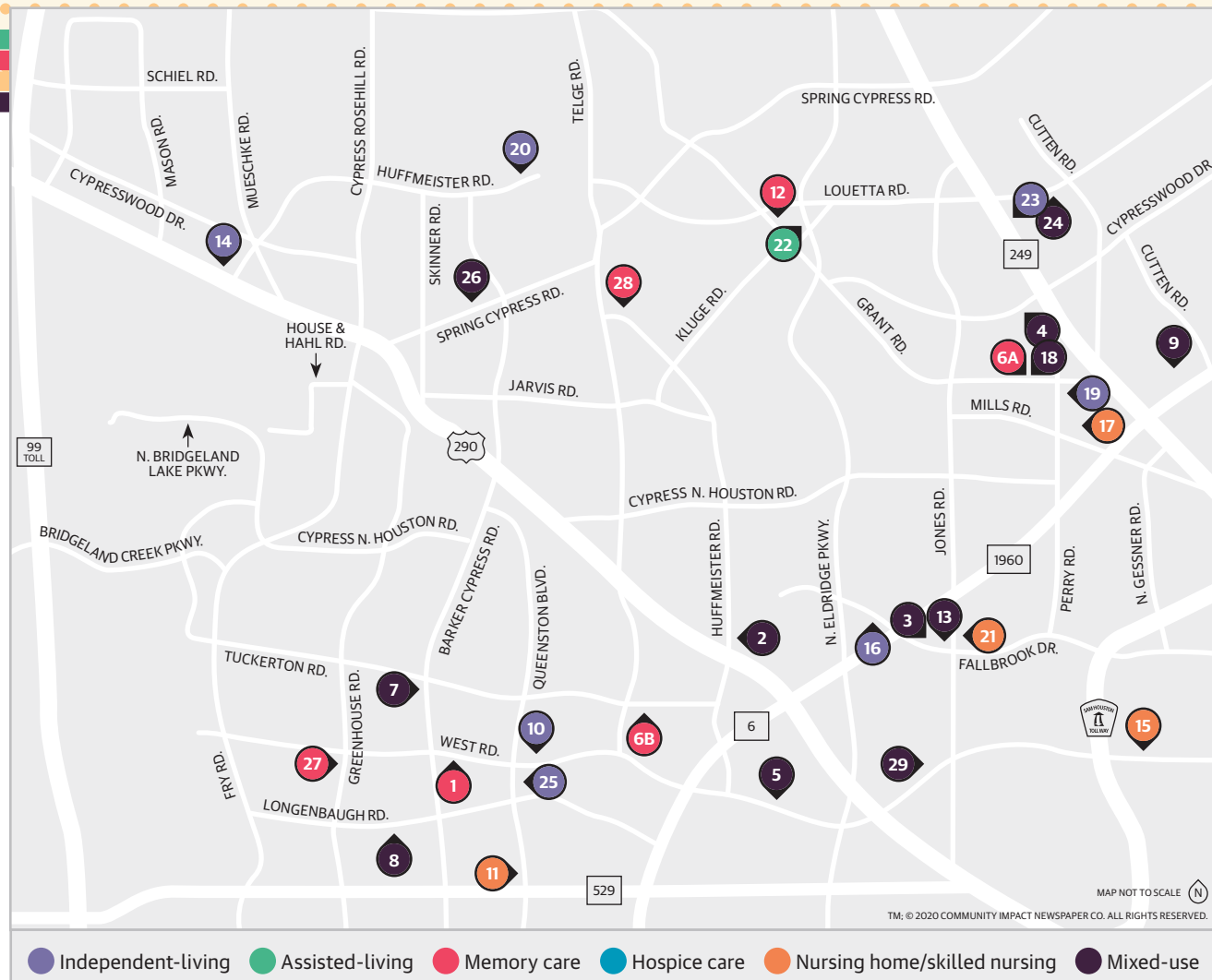
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BUSINESS FEATURE

Callegari Equestrian Center opened on North Eldridge Parkway in 1999. (Photos by Shawn Arraji/Community Impact Newspaper)

Callegari Equestrian Center

Long-standing center caters to Cypress horse community

BY SHAWN ARRAJI

Horse enthusiasts Eduardo and Candace Callegari first moved to the Cypress area in 1989, an area Eduardo said was known at the time as a place where horse riding was a major staple of life for many families.

Ten years later, the couple launched Callegari Equestrian Center on North Eldridge Parkway. In 2020, even as development has filled green spaces, Eduardo said horse riding is just as popular as ever.

"Horse riding has been here forever," he said. "If there's any place in Houston that houses the most horses per mile, it's Cypress. This is it."

The couple both maintain day jobs as software engineers, but boarding and breeding horses is a passion they share together, said Eduardo, who has won national awards for his work breeding Arabian horses. Launching the equestrian center came almost naturally to them given how much time they already spent caring for their own horses, he said.

"When we bought this land, it was just going to be for our house and private barn," he said. "Then we went crazy, and one thing led to another, and we built the boarding facility. Next thing you know we had people coming in."

The center is located on 25 acres and features

enough stables to board 100 horses, said manager Jessica Kile, who recently joined the staff after years of boarding her own horse, Tequila, at the facility.

The business offers full-service horse boarding along with horse riding lesson program that Kile said can cater to any skill level and discipline. Lessons include tips on how to groom horses, and well-trained school horses are available to students who do not have their own, Kile said.

The center features two covered arenas and two covered round pens where riders can ride and train horses, as well as a connection to Harris County hiking trails that can take riders along a number of paths between Hwy. 249 and Little Cypress Creek.

"We tend to say it's more like a horse equestrian club," Eduardo said. "It's a place you can come to relax and ride after a stressful day."

Over the years, Eduardo said maintaining the sense of community among riders has been paramount to his mission. To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the business last year, he had pendants crafted with the center's mission etched into the fabric.

That epithet is what Eduardo said is on his mind every time he comes to work: "A beautiful place where we socialize and build community through a love of horses."



Eduardo Callegari, owner of Callegari Equestrian Center, holds up a pendant he had made to celebrate the center's 20th anniversary last year.



Horses that are boarded at Callegari Equestrian Center spend time each day in an outdoor pasture area.

Lesson levels

One-hour lessons at Callegari Equestrian Center cater to different skill levels.

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Local Table

Eatery brings big-city flair to the Houston suburbs

Longtime Houston-area restaurateur Shervin Sharifi opened Local Table in Bridgeland last year after operating several successful restaurants in the Greater Houston area alongside his brother, Neima, and their three cousins.

Local Table's story began in 2016 when its first location opened in Katy as a spin-off concept of the Hungry's eateries Sharifi ran in Houston. He said the idea was to bring fresh, quality cuisine to the region's master-planned communities in a family-friendly setting with affordable prices.

"We bring that quality that some people come to expect inside the city at a nicer restaurant, but you kind of lose that when you move out to the suburbs, [where] you're dealing with fast food and Chinese food and pizza or some kind of chain restaurant," he said. "[With] everything we have, we try to be organic—farm to table."

Sharifi said the eatery sources ingredients locally whenever possible, from meats and breads to handcrafted cocktails and salad dressings made from scratch. Menu items are reminiscent of the Hungry's brand with a Mediterranean flair, he said.

Popular items on the menu include the honey ginger-glazed salmon, the kabob plate, the meatloaf and the Brussels sprouts salad. Diners also have an extensive selection of burgers,

sandwiches, wraps, tacos, pizzas and vegan entrees available. Brunch is served on the weekends, including croissant French toast, omelets and smoked salmon avocado toast.

Local Table has a full indoor-outdoor bar concept, and the Sharifi and Nowamooz families expanded their Cypress presence in December 2019 by opening Local Bar next door.

"You can have your dining experience, have a nice dinner and go next door to the bar and lounge area and have some cocktails after if you choose to," Sharifi said.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Sharifi said the restaurant has innovated to mini-

mize contact by launching QR code menus at tables and QR code payment options on all receipts. Pickup and delivery

options through the restaurant include family meal packs to serve two to four people, and holiday catering options are available through Dec. 31.

Despite the economic downturn, Local Table's expansion into neighboring communities continues. A Fulshear location opened this October, and another is slated to open in Garden Oaks next March; it will be the restaurant's fourth Houston location.

"We wanted to make it a local gathering point, somewhere in the neighborhood where people are comfortable coming by there, hanging out and getting together," Sharifi said.

"[WITH] EVERYTHING WE HAVE, WE TRY TO BE ORGANIC—FARM TO TABLE."

SHERVIN SHARIFI, CO-OWNER OF LOCAL TABLE



3 DISHES TO TRY
Southern Crispy Chicken & Eggs (\$14) is available at brunch. (Photos courtesy Local Table)

Brussels Sprouts & Goat Cheese Pizza (\$14) is a Local Table specialty.



The Lemon Pasta (\$14) is topped with capers, crushed red pepper and sun-dried tomatoes.

From left: Alborz Nowamooz, Shervin Sharifi, Neima Sharifi and Ashkan Nowamooz own Local Table eateries in the Houston area.



Local Table

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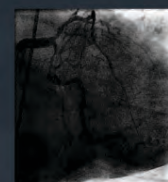
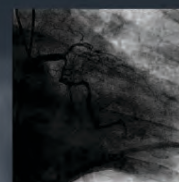
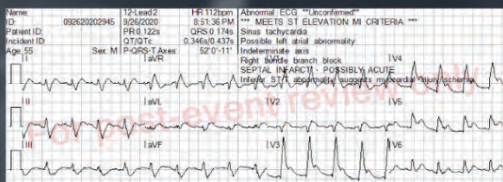
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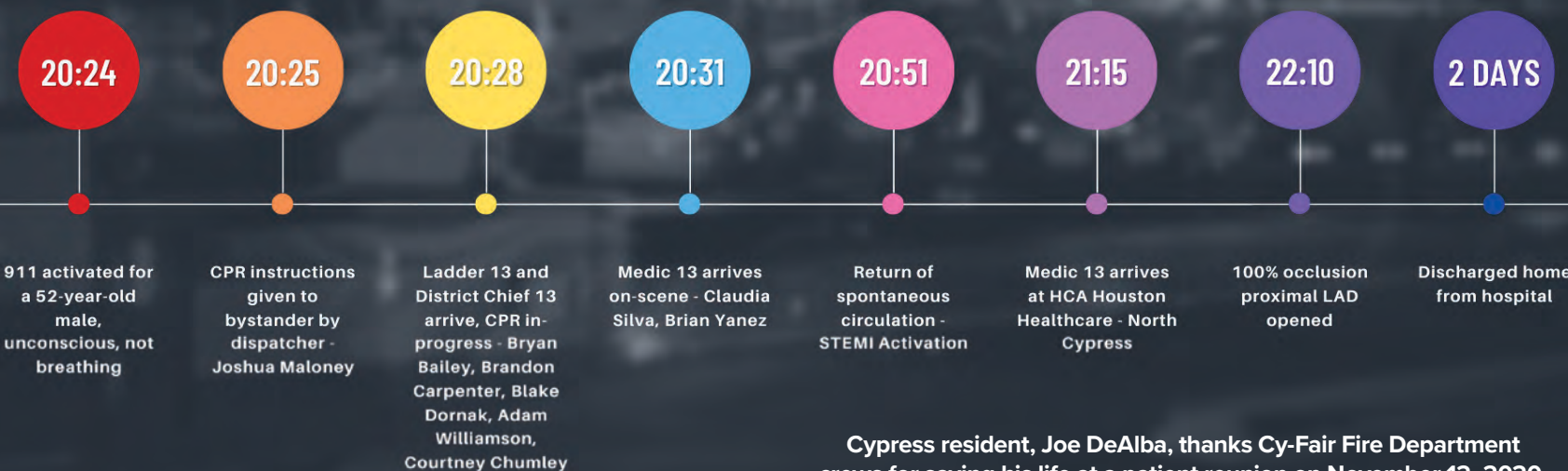
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Cypress resident, Joe DeAlba, thanks Cy-Fair Fire Department crews for saving his life at a patient reunion on November 12, 2020, at Cy-Fair FD Station 13 in Cypress. Together, with the assistance of bystanders, who quickly began CPR and dialed 911, crews successfully revived DeAlba after he suffered from sudden cardiac arrest while working in the Chilosas Fresh-Mex Kitchen in Cypress. Crews successfully revived DeAlba after 27 minutes of CPR, medication, and nine administered shocks from an AED.

Bystanders in the restaurant witnessed DeAlba fall to the ground. When they checked on him they discovered he was not breathing and did not have a pulse, so they began CPR and called 911.

Among the bystanders was Misha Dorsey, a local Cy-Fair area nurse, and several other off-duty military personnel. Cy-Fair FD Dispatch received the 911 call and assisted the bystanders by providing CPR instruction over the phone until emergency crews arrived. Cy-Fair FD crews arrived in four minutes and took over CPR and began advanced life support treatment.

Medics identified DeAlba had a blockage in his heart and shocked DeAlba over nine times with an AED. After 27 minutes of CPR DeAlba regained a pulse. Crews transported DeAlba to HCA Houston Healthcare North Cypress, where he received life-saving surgery to remove the blockage in his heart. DeAlba was released from the hospital two days later.

Recognizing the sudden cardiac arrest, calling 911, and early CPR are the first steps in a successful chain of survival according to the American Heart Association. "Had he not received bystander CPR I don't think he will be here talking to us today," District Chief – EMS Courtney Chumley said. "I don't have words to tell you how much I appreciate you... maybe it was not my time, my family and I appreciate it," DeAlba said with tears in his eyes.



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Keith and Scott Vrana

Brothers invest in Cy-Fair community

Keith and Scott Vrana may have been born in Waco, but the two brothers said they took separate paths to Cy-Fair, where they have become business owners, philanthropists, and founders of a holiday charity event that is expected to amass more than 100 bicycles for children this year.

The Vranas ended up in Houston in the early 2000s, Scott, after pursuing a job opportunity with Berlin Packaging, and Keith, after his wife got a job with Spring Branch ISD.

Scott was approached by the owner of one of his customers, the contract packaging company Consolidated Mills, in 2003; they asked him about taking over the business. Scott said he was interested, but he had one stipulation.

"I told him, 'If we're going to do this, I want to do it with my brother,'" he said.

Since then, the Vranas have

overseen the company as it has gone from about \$4.2 million in sales a year to nearly \$11 million in sales this year. The staff has grown from a little over 20 people to more than 50.

"From there, we decided this is our home," Scott said. "This is where our company is, and it's time for us to start getting involved in our community."

Keith became involved with the Cy-Fair Houston Chamber of Commerce eventually being called upon to serve as chairman of the board. Both brothers played a role in the early days of Cy-Hope, a local nonprofit that launched in 2004. Through Consolidated Mills, the Vranas donated 400 cases of salsa, with which they said organizers were able to sell to raise around \$14,000.

On top of that, the Vranas have come up with their own way to give back: the Santa Hat Classic, a combined golf event and holiday charity



Scott (left) and Keith Vrana, owners of Consolidated Mills, have prioritized giving back to the Cy-Fair community over the years. (Shawn Arrajj/Community Impact Newspaper)

drive that sees hundreds of people participate each year.

There are two rules for participants: They must wear Santa Hats at all times, and they must bring a toy donation—ideally, a bicycle—for the nonprofit Cypress Assistance Ministries to give to a family in need, Keith said.

The event is set for Dec. 5 this year, and although it is likely to sell out, Scott said people who are not golfing can still stop by to donate a bike. He

said seeing the event grow has made him very proud.

"What started out as four guys having a fun day playing golf in Santa hats has turned into what I consider a tremendous local event that really impacts a lot of families, putting bikes under Christmas trees," he said.

As they raise their families in Bridgeland, Keith said he feels lucky fate brought him to Cy-Fair.

"It's been just a blessing," he said. "It's an incredible community."

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HDI20K00014

Despite millions spent on projects, flooding to remain a reality on Cypress Creek, experts say

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

BY SHAWN ARRAJJ, DANICA LLOYD & HANNAH ZEDAKER

Editor's note: This article is the third and final in a series looking at flooding in the Cypress Creek watershed.

On the heels of the busiest tropical storm season in history in the Gulf of Mexico, Harris County is spending more on flood control along Cypress Creek than it has at any other point in history. While the investment is expected to reduce the likelihood of flooding for thousands of homes over the next decade, experts said flooding will remain a problem for the many homes built in low-lying areas.

The bulk of these efforts took form after voters approved a \$2.5 billion bond referendum for the Harris County Flood Control District in 2018, which put roughly \$300 million toward Cypress Creek projects.

Flood control officials said plans are coming together for more concrete efforts to mitigate flooding on the creek. Bond projects will be carried

out through 2030. Other concepts that are still being studied, such as a proposed underground flood tunnel, would take even longer.

"I think that in Harris County, flooding will always be a risk for people in the Cypress Creek watershed and in all of our watersheds," HCFCD Deputy Executive Director Matt Zeve said. "But we do feel very strongly that we will be lowering the risk of flooding for tens of thousands of people in the Cypress Creek watershed in the coming decade."

Despite the investment, Harris County officials, local advocacy groups, and scientific experts all acknowledged that due to how the area was developed over the years, flooding will never be completely solved along Cypress Creek. Meanwhile, climate change is contributing to more hurricanes and storms that produce more rain.

"Will we continue to see storms that are more intense? Yes," said Stephanie Glenn, program director

for hydrology and watersheds at the Houston Advanced Research Center. "But can we continue to plan so that the impacts we see aren't as intense? I think, as a region, we have the capability to do so."

From passive to aggressive

More than 8,700 homes flooded along Cypress Creek during Hurricane Harvey, and another 1,700 homes did so during the Tax Day floods of 2016. Some of the more heavily affected neighborhoods in Cy-Fair include Norchester, Ravensway, Enchanted Valley and Lakewood Forest.

When the bond referendum was passed in 2018, the bulk of the \$300 million for Cypress Creek was set aside for acquiring land, performing maintenance and building stormwater detention basins in buyout areas.

Late in the summer of this year, plans for detention basins started to emerge when district officials announced they would be taking a more aggressive approach to flood control planning.

The recent developments represent the first time there has been a specific plan for how to address flooding on Cypress Creek, Zeve said.

Decisions on where new detention basins will be built are being guided by a study of Cypress Creek and its tributaries that was completed in February and an ongoing follow-up study. The tributary study also called for channel improvements to parts of the creek where tributaries, such as Faulkey and Pillot gullies, connect. One basin is proposed at Stuebner Airline Road; four are proposed between Hwy. 249 and I-45; and three are proposed downstream of I-45. However, more basins are likely to be proposed.

The study also called for a large expansion of a detention basin in Cypress Park near North Eldridge Parkway in Cy-Fair. The cost and timeline have yet to be determined.

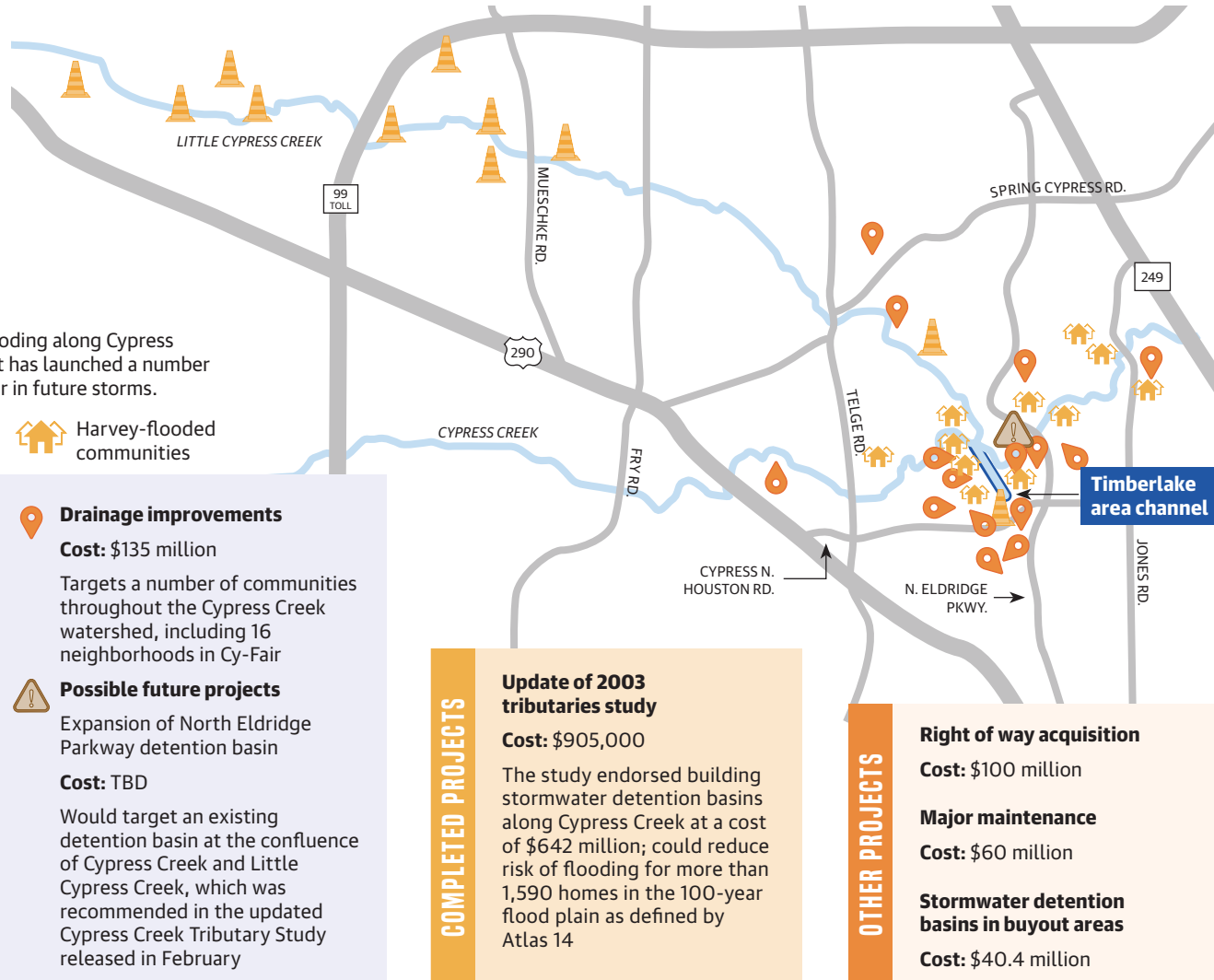
Flood control officials said they are looking to add another 25,000 acre-feet of detention along Cypress Creek. Comparatively, about 50,000 acre-feet of detention have been constructed across the county by the district since it was established in 1937, officials said.

"We were able to complete the study, so now, we have a plan, and now, we're executing the plan," Zeve said. "We

Making a DENT

Although no easy fix exists to fully address flooding along Cypress Creek, the Harris County Flood Control District has launched a number of initiatives to lessen damage that could occur in future storms.

SOURCE: HARRIS COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT/ COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER



will very aggressively, as much as we can, pursue other funding sources, including our own capital improvement funds, to execute the plan.”

Local advocates, including those from the Cypress Creek Flood Control Coalition, said the move toward building more detention in the watershed is a step in the right direction. Dick Smith, president of the Cypress Creek Flood Control Coalition, lauded the work being done by the flood control district and said he was glad to see the tributaries study updated. However, he said he was concerned about development taking place in the northwestern part of the Cypress Creek watershed near Waller.

The implications could mean worse flooding on Mound Creek and, by extension, Cypress Creek, Smith said. He said he believed Mound Creek was not sufficiently addressed in the study.

“Mound Creek has a potential for, going into the future, an immense amount of water coming down through it,” Smith said. “When you’re talking about Cypress Creek tributaries, that is our biggest concern.”

Hard rains coming

As the flood control district set about updating the 2003 tributaries study, Zeve said, engineers took new rainfall data into account that was

published in 2019 by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. That data, referred to as Atlas 14, showed an increase in rainfall that can be expected in future storm events across the board in Harris County.

For example, under old rainfall tables, a 100-year storm in the Cypress Creek watershed would be estimated to generate 12.4 inches of rain over a 24-hour period. Under the new tables, the same storm would now be estimated to generate 16.3 inches of rain over the same period of time.

This increase in rainfall can be tied to warmer temperatures in the Gulf of Mexico, Glenn said.

The number of storms that formed in the Atlantic Ocean during the 2020 season is indicative of what can be expected moving forward, Glenn said. Although the effects of storms on the Houston area were minimal, a total of 31 storms formed in the Gulf since May, the most in the 170 years records have been tracked.

At the same time, the hurricanes themselves are getting more severe, Glenn said.

“The current predictions are more frequent and more intense storms, [which bring] more and bigger flood events,” Glenn said.

What the future holds depends in part on what governments across the world are able to achieve in terms of

forming a set of agreed-upon protocols and reducing atmospheric emissions, Glenn said.

After Harvey, the HCFCD brought on John Nielsen-Gammon, a climatologist and professor with Texas A&M University, to study the effects climate change could have on rainfall events in Harris County. Nielsen-Gammon released the results of his study in May, which show that a “robust upward trend in extreme precipitation is present across the southern and southeastern United States.”

“The historic upward trend is very likely to continue with global warming,” Nielsen-Gammon wrote.

The report also found that an event as severe as Harvey was not likely to hit the Houston area a second time in the foreseeable future.

Planning for the future

Officials with the flood control district stressed that the \$2.5 billion in bond funding is not nearly enough to address all the needed projects in Harris County. HCFCD Executive Director Russ Poppe has previously told county commissioners at least \$30 billion would be needed to fully protect the county against 100-year floods.

A decision on when another bond referendum could be called and how large it could be falls to the five-member Harris County Commissioners

Court, which would have to vote in favor of putting a bond before county voters in a future election.

Precinct 4 Commissioner Jack Cagle, who represents parts of Cy-Fair and Spring, has said a second bond is all but inevitable. However, in a Nov. 12 interview, Cagle said it was too early to be talking about a second bond at this point in time.

“I have always said that we need to have a second bond, but before we can go to the public with a second bond, we have to be faithful stewards with the first,” he said.

One potentially pricey concept that could play a major role in the county’s efforts on Cypress Creek is an underground flood tunnel. In 2019, the county completed a study that showed the soil in Harris County is suitable for a flood tunnel, and the county is 75% of the way through a yearlong study that will determine more details about installing a tunnel, including where it might be located.

Zeve said the Cypress Creek corridor is one of the routes being studied.

“The flood control district and our consultants feel like a large-diameter, deep tunnel system could be effective as a flood damage reduction tool in the Cypress Creek watershed,” he said. “So we’re moving that analysis forward, and we hope to have community engagement meetings and have a draft final report out [by] maybe February or March of next year.”

In 2019, Harris County commissioners also adopted a new framework for how flood control projects are prioritized to ensure that lower-income and marginalized neighborhoods are not left behind. The new framework did not have any immediate effects on projects in the Cy-Fair area, as most of them had already been launched, Zeve said.

Zeve said flood control officials are working to get through projects as quickly as they can, but a number of factors require time, including obtaining federal grant money. Cathy Spies, president of the Enchanted Valley Homeowner’s Association, said the Telge Road community saw flooding in 2015, 2016 and 2017. Three years after Harvey, she said residents still feel uneasy.

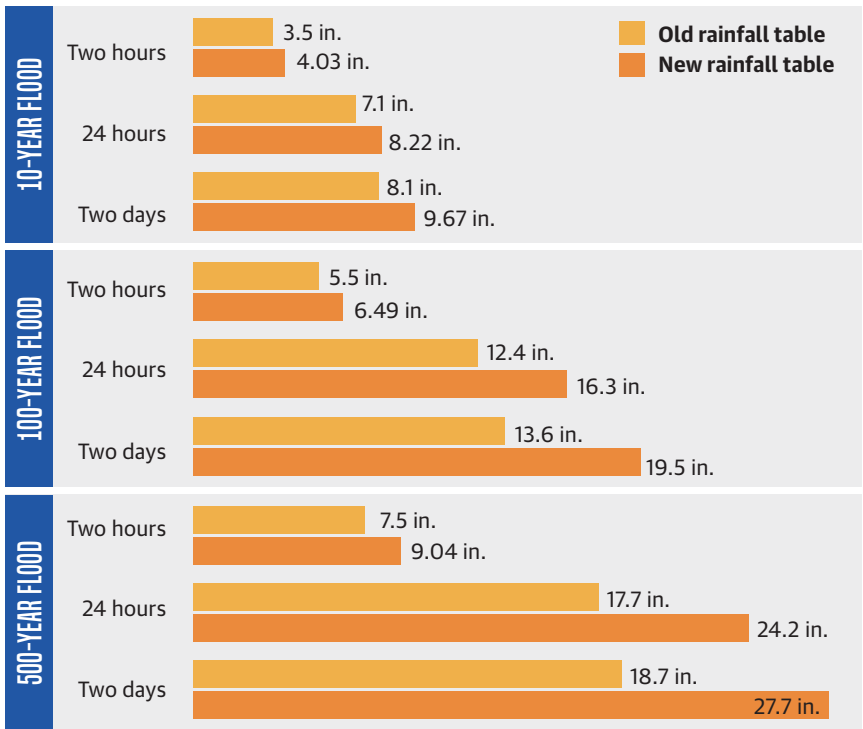
“We all hold our breath when thunderstorms are predicted, and many—including me—make sure valuables are in an upper story,” she said.

Changing the FOUNDATION

New rainfall data for the Cypress Creek watershed released in 2019 shows significantly more rain is expected to fall during storm events of varying severity.

SOURCE: NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

Frequency of rain expected in Cypress Creek watershed



Projecting AHEAD

A study released for the Houston area in August by ATMOS Research & Consulting looked into future predictions for several climate change metrics related to precipitation, including rising sea levels in the Gulf of Mexico.

The study found:

- Sea levels could rise globally by **0.3-0.6 feet** by 2030
- A historic 100-year flood could occur anywhere from **once a year to once every 30 years** across the Gulf Coast region by 2100
- The average wettest three-day period in Houston could increase from **6.4 inches** from 1971-90 to **8.6 inches** from 2050-71.

SOURCE: CLIMATE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR CITY OF HOUSTON/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

For more information, visit communityimpact.com.

FAITH IN THE AGE OF COVID-19

When local churches were forced to close their doors this spring, leaders innovated new ways to engage their members and have safer practices once congregations regathered in person.



After several weeks of virtual programming, CyLife Church regathered for in-person worship services this fall.



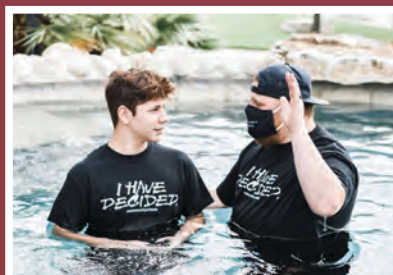
Chabad of Cypress puts together "Sukkah on the go," allowing members to celebrate traditional holidays in a safer environment.



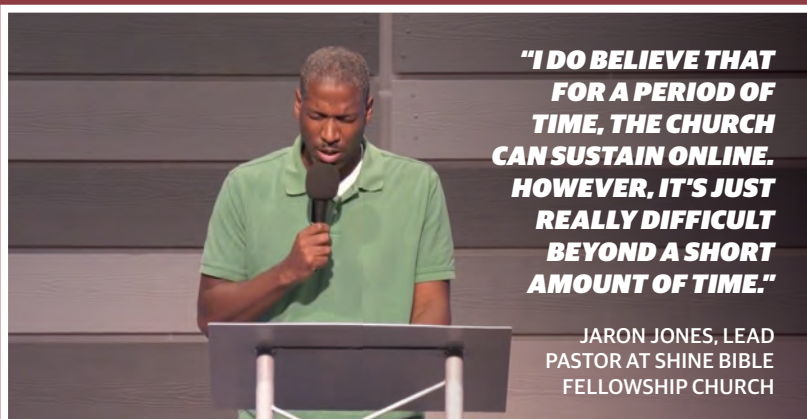
Father Sean Horrigan leads a drive-thru Blessing of the Pets event at Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church.



Attendees of The Family of Faith Lutheran Church take part in Communion with prepackaged elements.



Community of Faith officials offered to meet individuals at the swimming pool or pond of their choice to conduct baptisms this summer.



"I DO BELIEVE THAT FOR A PERIOD OF TIME, THE CHURCH CAN SUSTAIN ONLINE. HOWEVER, IT'S JUST REALLY DIFFICULT BEYOND A SHORT AMOUNT OF TIME."

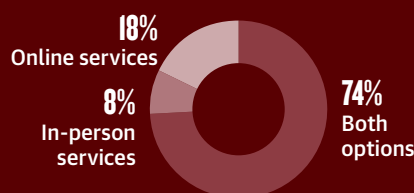
JARON JONES, LEAD PASTOR AT SHINE BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Jaron Jones leads Sunday morning services via Facebook Live for his congregation at Shine Bible Fellowship Church.

STAYING ENGAGING

A survey of 1,400 Protestant and Catholic churches nationwide conducted by Ministry Brands between July and September found technology is a central part of church operations in 2020.

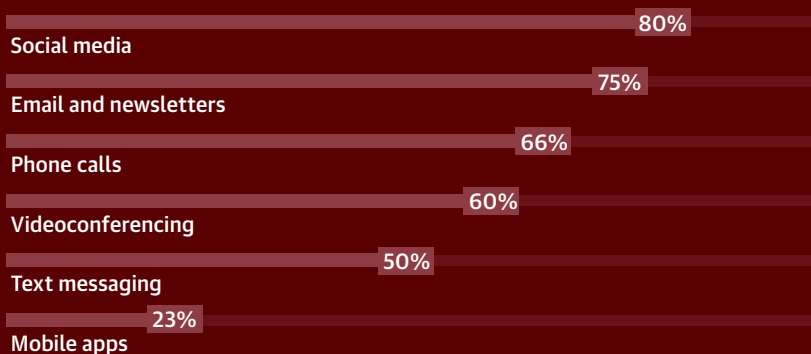
Service formats



Top challenges



Respondents on which engagement tools have been important:



SOURCE: MINISTRY BRANDS/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

CONTINUED FROM 1

Family of Faith Lutheran Church in Copperfield, said most members were already accustomed to precautionary measures when the church reopened in late May because the pandemic has affected other aspects of life as well.

"It's kind of the new normal now—taking temperatures and wearing a mask," she said. "A lot of them were happy to go back just because ... in-person [service] is just so much different than watching it from home."

There were about 80 COVID-19 cases confirmed countywide when Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo issued a stay-at-home order March 24, which mandated places of worship operate remotely. Gov. Greg Abbott signed an executive order a week later, deeming religious activities essential and authorizing socially distanced services, although most local churches at the time opted to continue streaming services for the next several weeks as case counts surged.

"It's one thing when you make a decision for yourself. It's another thing when you're making a decision for 1,500-1,800 people and trying to take everything into consideration for what's best, what's wise, what's cautious," said Bob Reed, the lead pastor of CyLife Church, which reopened its doors in late September. "It has nothing to do with trusting God; I think he also tells us to use our brains and use wisdom and be respectful."

By the end of November, the county's COVID-19 case count had exceeded 190,000 since March, but like businesses and schools, churches have adapted to operate in new ways.

In addition to offering alternative service options, Harris County Public Health urges places of worship to encourage face coverings, social distance and limit shared objects.

According to a national survey from Ministry Brands, a group of church software programs, about 18% of services were exclusively online and 8% were exclusively in person between July and September. During that time, however, most congregations had the choice of either option.

Rabbi Levi Marinovsky, who leads local Jewish nonprofit Chabad of Cypress, said people tend to cling to their faith in times of crisis as a source of hope. Throughout the pandemic, slowing down and connecting with like-minded believers has provided strength for those enduring challenges such as unemployment, he said.

"When people are busy with their life, they don't stop or pause to ask those questions: What are their priorities? What do they value? What do they feel is their purpose and meaning?" Marinovsky said.

Embracing change

While some area congregations were already posting services online before the pandemic, this was new territory for churches such as Shine Bible

Fellowship Church near Beltway 8.

Lead pastor Jaron Jones said after about three months of exclusively online services, he noticed a gradual drop in engagement from members.

"We believe there is serious online Zoom fatigue. Everybody's online [for work]; kids are online for school," he said. "I do believe that for a period of time, the church can sustain online. However, it's just really difficult beyond a short amount of time."

Shine Bible Fellowship reopened in October after planning to do so twice ahead of COVID-19 case increases.

Jones said a church provides a sense of community and belonging and that finding encouragement is tough without in-person interactions. He said he is hopeful the Christmas season brings renewed energy as the church plans to incorporate more creative elements in a series called The New Nativity.

At Community of Faith in Hockley, Creative Arts Director Sheree Howard said one of the staff's biggest challenges was measuring church members' readiness to return. The campus reopened in September with social distancing in mind.

In addition to continuing to offer online streaming and space in between parties in the primary worship space, she said the church designated a space for immunocompromised attendees where masks are required to ensure their comfort.

"You can't really know how every individual in your congregation is going to respond and react to coming back to church," Howard said. "We can't know how people feel, so what we've taken the responsibility of is making sure that we offer a safe place so that whenever they are ready, they can come back."

Despite the challenges COVID-19 has presented, religious leaders in Cy-Fair continue to find ways to

meet community needs by hosting food drives and blood drives. Most churches also have protocols in place to reach out to members to assess needs—whether through small groups or by individual contact.

Marinovsky said he contacted all members of his organization, ensuring no one was overlooked. Activities were virtual from March through September, but the organization innovated when celebrating Jewish traditions.

For instance, the group distributed "Shabbat to-go" and "Passover to-go" packages with essential food items and reading materials in lieu of gathering for communal dinners. While these efforts increased his workload, Marinovsky said he knew he had to adapt rather than eliminate programming during this time of need.

"We wear a mask and stay safe, but at the same time, we remember it's God who keeps us safe," he said. "When we do charity and when we care about others and share with others, that is one of the surest ways that we can be sure of God's compassion and care for us."

Keeping the faith

The Rev. Sean Horrigan, pastor at Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church, said he continues to preach the message of hope during a time of darkness as parishioners have experienced anxiety throughout the year. Counseling services are also available on-site for those dealing with emotional, mental and spiritual adversities.

"We always want to provide a listening heart and a place of refuge that they can come and talk to someone ... and for us as Catholics, also providing the sacraments of the church—Holy Communion, reconciliation—just the rhythm of our Catholic life," he said. "I think when people were out of that rhythm, they disconnected."

Small group meetings within the

congregation at CyLife Church are the key to connection, Reed said, as most groups have continued to meet via Zoom or in outdoor settings. Others have gotten comfortable not going to church and staying home to watch services online, if at all, he said.

"I hear all the time, 'I can't wait until it goes back to normal.' I don't really think it's going to, and I'm not sure what the new normal is yet," he said. "We were in the midst of looking at having to build more buildings, build new office space because we were running out of space and all of a sudden, COVID put a major halt on that."

Even so, Reed said the church has gained new members and financial contributions remain fairly steady despite the pandemic, allowing for the continuance of charitable efforts, counseling and recovery ministries.

As the holiday season approaches, faith leaders said they are preparing for a spike in attendance, although it is difficult to estimate crowd sizes. To maintain distance, Community of Faith is planning five Christmas Eve services in two days, and Christ the Redeemer has seven Mass services scheduled with overflow space across two days.

"There's a great tradition of people coming to church on Christmas," Horrigan said. "They may not even be Catholic ... or maybe they're not actively practicing their faith every week, but they still come back or come to visit family at Christmas."

Leaders from The Family of Faith, Shine Bible Fellowship and Christ the Redeemer—none of which previously streamed services online—agreed the new feature is here to stay beyond the pandemic as it expands their reach.

Still, uncertainty looms as budgeting and other plans for 2021 are underway, but religious leaders said their faith remains the same despite church looking different. Jones said he believes

CELEBRATING SAFELY

Federal and local reopening guidance for faith communities includes steps to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

-  Offer alternative service options such as virtual, drive-in or outdoor when possible.
-  Consider limiting in-person gatherings to allow social distancing between parties.
-  Encourage the use of cloth face coverings.
-  Limit the use of shared or passed objects such as pamphlets and collection plates.
-  Encourage safe alternative greetings instead of hugs or handshakes.
-  Maintain an adequate supply of soap and hand sanitizer.
-  Establish a model for notifying health officials and participants if someone who attended a gathering becomes ill.

SOURCES: HARRIS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

the pandemic has forced society to become more flexible, and the church will keep adapting to meet the community's needs.

"Everything's so different and so uncertain," he said. "[Maybe your] favorite restaurant's not open; grocery store hours are different, and they may not have all the things they used to have. Taco Bell has [limited] their menu. I think we're just learning to be more flexible and not so entitled."

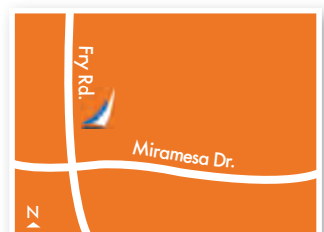
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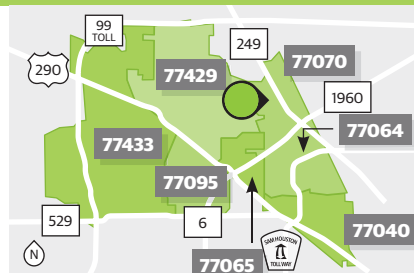
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Build-out year: 1972
Square footage: 1,986-3,445
Home values: \$165,000-\$330,000
HOA dues (estimated): \$550 annually
Schools (Cy-Fair ISD): Moore and Matzke elementary schools, Hamilton and Bleyl middle schools, Cypress Creek High School

Property taxes (in dollars):	
Lone Star College System	0.11
Harris County	
Dept. of Education	0.01
Harris County	0.41
Harris County Flood	
Control District	0.03
Harris County	
Hospital District	0.17
Cy-Fair ISD	1.37
Port of Houston Authority	0.01
Cypress Creek Utility District	0.35


Total (per \$100 valuation) 2.46

PROPERTY TAX INFORMATION DOES NOT INCLUDE
EMERGENCY SERVICE DISTRICTS.

NEIGHBORHOOD DATA PROVIDED BY DEBBIE MARSHALL
ROSS & MARSHALL REAL ESTATE, 12623 JONES ROAD, HOUSTON
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Median home value
\$209,539



Homes on the market*


2



Homes under contract

 Median annual property taxes
\$5,155

 Median price per square foot
\$81.59

 Average days on the market* **70**

*AS OF NOV 1



HOMES SOLD/AVERAGE DAYS ON THE MARKET

	77040	77064	77065	77070	77095	77429	77433
\$149,999 or under	6/15	2/64	-	1/3	1/3	-	2/4
\$150,000-\$199,999	3/35	9/14	6/5	14/11	14/12	7/22	18/28
\$200,000-\$299,999	20/32	12/23	15/7	43/37	63/21	73/23	73/31
\$300,000-\$399,999	8/48	5/16	6/15	4/25	11/22	41/30	69/55
\$400,000-\$499,999	-	-	-	1/21	2/7	12/75	24/38
\$500,000-\$599,999	-	-	-	2/35	-	3/37	24/40
\$600,000-\$799,999	-	-	-	-	-	4/129	13/96
\$800,000-\$999,999	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/2
\$1 million+	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/190

4 bed/3 bath 2,951 sq. ft.
Sold for \$250,001-\$285,000 on Nov. 3



4 bed/2.5 bath 2,576 sq. ft.
Sold for \$215,001-\$250,000 on Oct. 13



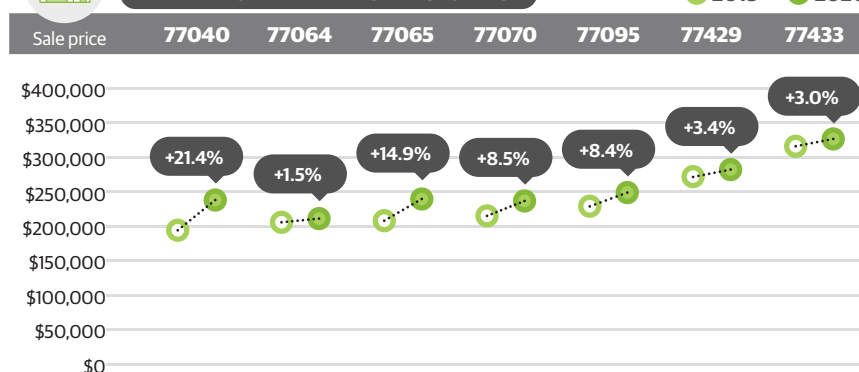
5 bed/2.5 bath 2,536 sq. ft.
Sold for \$215,001-\$250,000 on Sept. 28



4 bed/2.5 bath 2,859 sq. ft.
Sold for \$250,001-\$285,000 on Oct. 27

WITH YEAR-OVER-YEAR PERCENTAGE CHANGE

○ 2019 ● 2020



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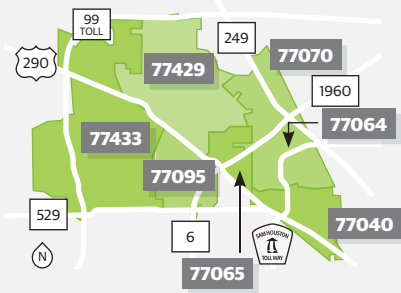
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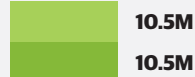
CY-FAIR NOVEMBER 2020 COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE DATA

The vacancy rate among industrial buildings in the Cy-Fair area is up by more than 5% since this time last year as compared to an increase of 2.5% in the office sector and an increase of less than 1% in the retail sector.

TOTAL SQUARE FEET OF SPACE

Q4 2019 As of Nov. 25

OFFICE



INDUSTRIAL



RETAIL

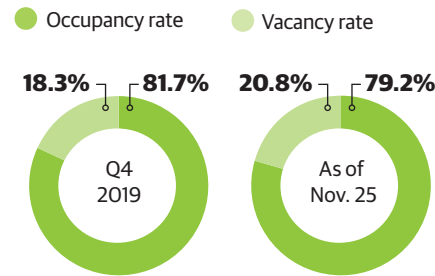


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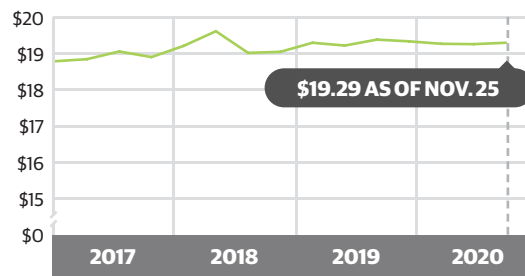
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OFFICE

OCCUPANCY VS. VACANCY



RENTAL RATES PER SQUARE FOOT



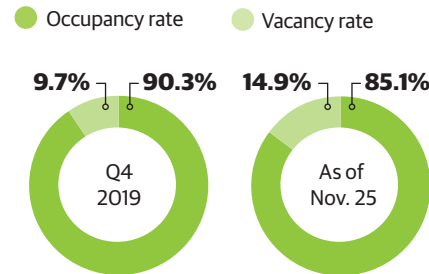
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

208,374 square feet

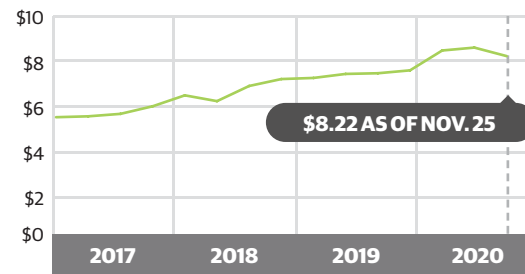
3 buildings

INDUSTRIAL

OCCUPANCY VS. VACANCY



RENTAL RATES PER SQUARE FOOT



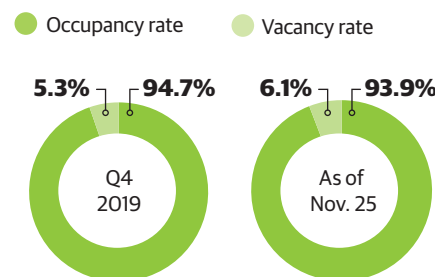
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

519,008 square feet

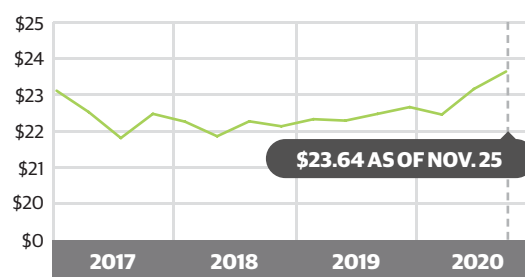
4 buildings

RETAIL

OCCUPANCY VS. VACANCY



RENTAL RATES PER SQUARE FOOT



UNDER CONSTRUCTION

147,250 square feet

7 buildings



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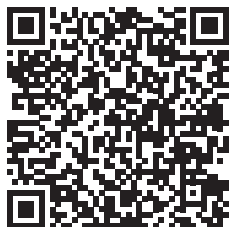


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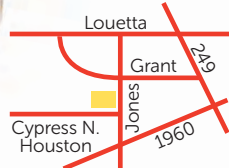
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Crawfish Pasta
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Crawfish Etouffee QT - \$25	1/2 Gal-\$45	Gal. \$90
Seafood Gumbo QT - \$20	1/2 Gal-\$35	Gal. \$65
Bread Pudding with Rum Sauce	1/2 pan	\$39.95
Side Item by the 1/2 Pan	\$19.95	
(Green Beans, Cornbread Stuffing, Potatoes Floyd, Mashed Potatoes Mac and Cheese + \$4.95)		

**Holiday Meals Available
12/19 - 12/24**
*all weights are pre-cooked.
Valid at Floyds Cajun Seafood - Cypress

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GREAT COURSE,
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MERRY CHRISTMAS GREEN FEE GIFT

December 24th – Christmas Eve (morning)

All Play for the day is an 8:30 Shotgun Start

Bye-Bye 20.20 – **\$40.00** green fees

(Includes Green Fee, Cart Fee & range balls)

Note: tee times made by foursomes or twosomes only- shared carts only
Limited to the first 136 players- make tee times 7 days in advance

THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

(DECEMBER 12TH THRU 23RD)

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KIDS EAT FREE WEDNESDAY 5 PM-CLOSE
SATURDAY BREAKFAST 8AM-12PM

12 & under. One free kids meal w/ each adult entree purchased. Dine in only.

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR OUR KID EVENT CALENDAR

BACKYARD GRILL

Get a **\$5 BYG Buck** with every gift card purchase of \$25

Promotion ends Dec 23.

HOLIDAY BEER DINNER

DECEMBER 10

7 PM

FOOD, BEER, FUN

ORDER TICKETS

ONLINE

SANTA CLAUS



Wednesday 12/16

6:00pm- 8:00pm

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Saturday 12/19

9:00am- 11:00am

KIDS EAT FREE

BACON EXPLOSION



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BUY 1 ENTREE AND 2 DRINKS
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HALF OFF**

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www.1101southernkitchen.com

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Sat. 10am-4pm (brunch menu) &
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Sun. 10am - 4pm (brunch menu)

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Offer Valid November 7th - December 31st.

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Reserve Your Holiday Meal Today!
Call 281-213-4136 to before Reserve Your Holiday Meal Today!
Ordering for holiday meals ends 12/21. Pickup no later than 12/23.

HOLIDAY FAMILY PACKAGES

- Whole Smoked Turkey &
Your Choice of Three Sides (quart)
(Feeds 8-10) **\$84.95**
- Whole Smoked Turkey &
Your Choice of Five Sides (quart)
(Feeds 12-14) **\$105.95**

(Substitute Whole Brisket for Turkey +\$24.95)

Whole Smoked Turkey - \$58.95 *14-16 pound average	Smoked Ham - \$48.95 *7 pound average
Whole Fried Turkey - \$58.95 *14-16 pound average	Whole Smoked Brisket - \$15.95/lb *cooked brisket average 6.5-7 pounds
Smoked Turkey Breast - \$49.95 *5 pound average	
Sides (served in half pans) - \$19.95	Apple Cobbler Pan - \$19.95
Mashed Potatoes, Cornbread Stuffing, Green Beans, Pinto Beans, Mac N Cheese +\$4.95	

*all weights are pre-cooked, larger smoked turkeys available by request

**BUY ONE ENTREE
GET ONE
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Map: Spring Cypress Rd., Northwest Fwy., Hempstead Rd., Jarvis Rd.

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**FREE ONE MINI
CUSTARD DISH**

Map: Spring Cypress Rd., Northwest Fwy., Hempstead Rd., Jarvis Rd.

FreddysUSA.com/locations

- Baytown - 10520 I-10 E
- Fulshear - 26806 FM 1093
- Jersey Village - 12407 FM 1960 W
- New Caney - 12007 N Grand Pkwy E
- Katy - 24433 Katy Freeway & 1705-b Fry Rd
- Magnolia - 32910 FM 2978
- Huntsville - 231 IH 45 South
- Spring - 19370 IH 45 & 21420 Kuykendahl Rd
- Sugar Land - 20450 SW Frwy
- Kingwood - 4519 Kingwood Dr
- Pasadena - 4637 E Sam Houston Pkwy S
- Pearland - 2620 Pearland Pkwy
- League City - NWC I-45 & FM 646
- Dairy Ashford - 1111 Dairy Ashford Rd
- Wallisville - 6125 E Sam Houston Pkwy N

Good for one single scoop dish. Must present this coupon. Only valid at these Freddy's locations. One per guest, per visit. Some restrictions may apply. Expires 2/28/2021 IMPACT

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Map: Fleur De Lis Blvd., Hufmeister Rd.

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FREE Lesson with purchase of training package.

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\$12 off Christmas Boarding

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Party & Pictures
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Friday, 12/11/20
Noon-4:00 pm



Tails are wagging & pets are bragging!

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4364

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**GET ONE
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with purchase of two beverages,
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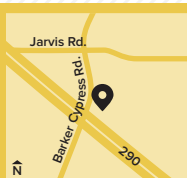
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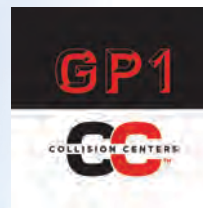


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