



Trail Prepped for Spring Debut

Workers add details and finishing touches to Brays Bayou Connector Trail



Bird's Eye View: This picture of the Brays Bayou Connector Trail taken by a drone shows a stretch of the 1.92-mile trail as it runs south to Art Storey Park.

Only a year after its groundbreaking ceremony, the Brays Bayou Connector Trail (BBCT) is nearing completion and will be open for walkers, joggers and bicyclists by late spring. The 1.92-mile off-street trail features underpasses at Richmond Avenue, Westpark Drive, Westpark Tollway, Harwin Drive and Bellaire Boulevard. Ranging from 8 to 10 feet wide, the concrete path will include benches, water fountains, trash bins, landscaping, wildflowers, tree groves and a four-piece workout station. It's the delivery of a first-class amenity long-envisioned by District staff and board members and is the culmination of years of negotiations, design and construction.

A challenging path

"One of our greatest challenges was finding the

right partners for the job," said Irma Sanchez, Westchase District's vice president of projects. "We began this project during the midst of a citywide construction boom and had to bid it three times before we found a firm willing to do the work within our budget. Fortunately, Miranda Construction has done an outstanding job of building the trail to our high expectations."

Aside from weather delays, one of Miranda's biggest challenges was creating the S-shaped, curved retaining wall at the Westpark tollway underpass. "We had limited clearance between the trail and the bridge and we had to make sure we met accessibility standards," said Enrique Allende, project engineer with Miranda. "It looks great now, but it was hard to visualize at the time as to how it would turn out."

When completed, the curve will have handrails and feature landscaped berms.

Linked to a METRO line

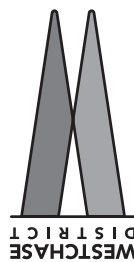
In addition to connecting to Harwin Park and Arthur Storey Park, the BBCT makes a direct connection to METRO's Westchase Park & Ride facility on Harwin. This connection enables users access to METRO's bus route 151 - the Westpark Express - which travels to downtown.

"METRO is proud to be partnering again with Westchase District to bring transit solutions for commuters," said METRO President and CEO Tom Lambert. "Our internal engineering and design staff collaborated with the Westchase team to come up with a plan that safely connects the Park & Ride customers

(Continued on Page 8)



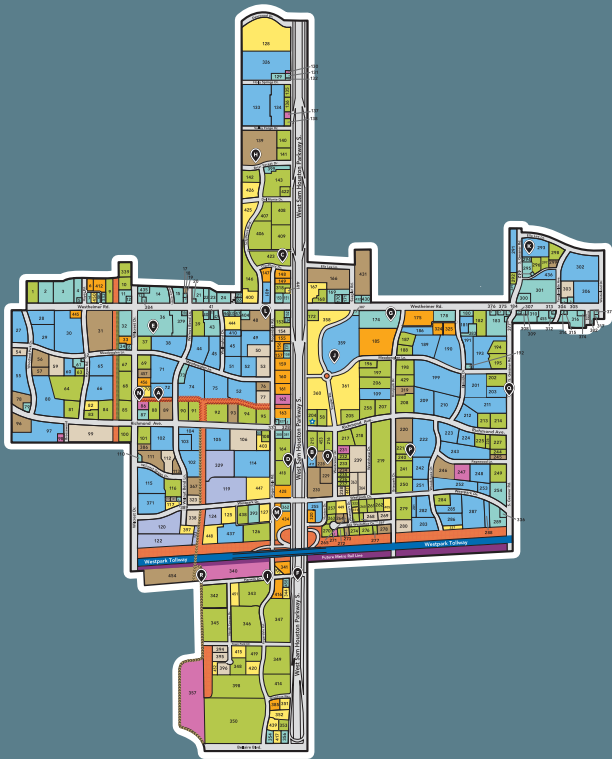
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WESTCHASE TODAY is published quarterly by Westchase District, a municipal management district funded by local property owners in a 4.2 square-mile area centered on the Sam Houston Tollway between I-10 and US-59 on the west side of Houston, Texas. We promote economic growth by enhancing mobility, beautification, public safety, planning and development of the District.



Jim Murphy
General Manager

Dave Gilkeson
VP, COO

Sherry Fox
VP, Communications

Irma Sanchez
VP, Projects

Mark Hubenak
Public Safety Director

Jonathan Lowe
Assistant
Communications Director

Louis Jullien
Projects Director

John Carey
Farmers Market Manager

Lauren Cullins
Projects Manager

Kathy Kaufman
Administrative Assistant

Everything But the Feed Store

Houston is a big city. It is second largest in land area and soon to pass Chicago to be third largest in population in the USA. Getting around and through it can take time and effort. We don't mind occasional jaunts outside our neighborhoods. We are blessed to have a full complement of professional sports teams and resident ballet, opera, and symphony companies. Seeing them in action makes for rare and worthwhile trips. But for the most part, people want to stay close to home.

Urban planners talk about "complete" communities and sometimes the jargon describes the ideal place as one where you can live, work, play and pray. The exact definition of "complete" varies over time and among different constituencies. We don't have a feed store in Westchase District. But 150 years ago, when this was a farming and ranching community, a lack of one would have been a real shortcoming.

In this issue you can read about the nearly complete Brays Bayou Connector Trail and the HCC Campus Trail now under construction. These are our newest additions to the package of amenities that help us offer our residents, visitors and employees a complete community. The trails provide recreation and transportation. And by expanding our public (i.e. people) spaces, they assist in building connections among the people in our community. We encourage you to enjoy them often.

We mentioned employees, residents and visitors as groups of people we want to serve but that list also includes students, shoppers, congregants, diners, guests and more. The trails



Westchase District Board Chair Philip Schneidau and General Manager Jim Murphy.

we are building, plus the addition of Wilcrest Park in 2018, provide types of amenities that were previously almost non-existent here and are highly desired by each of these constituencies. In today's world of flexible schedules, online learning and high speed connectivity that allows people to live and work virtually anywhere, being the workplace or residential location of choice requires ongoing development and progress.

As an example, our higher education component is being expanded by HCC's West Houston Institute which will focus on the energy industry and bring more students and research opportunities to our area. Our list goes on: 100 restaurants, 23 hotels, 22 banks and a dozen houses of worship - all just a short walk, ride or drive away and now easier to access.

We don't see a feed store in our future but if your herd consists of a couple of head of Labradors, we tally about eight stores where you can stock up. And if you're looking for some new amenity, chances are it is just around the corner.

Meet a Multifamily Management Maestro

Westchase District ingrained in the career of new Board member Stacy Hunt

With 440,000 multifamily units in locations around the world, Greystar is the largest apartment property management firm on the planet. In Westchase District, Greystar manages four apartment communities: CityWest Apartments, Plaza at Westchase; Retreat at Westchase; and Richmond Townhomes. Stacy Hunt, one of the company's executive directors, joined the District's Board of Directors last year and his mix of regional roots and global expertise has brought a unique perspective to the District's vision for the future.

a teenager with his family to Houston, where his father worked as a custom residential homebuilder. Stacy also worked and played golf at a nine-hole three par course called Piney Point, which is where Woodlake is today. "It was a lighted course at the corner of Westheimer and Gessner," Hunt said. "My friends and I would play at night fending off mosquitos. I remember seeing black angus cattle across the street that belonged to R.E. "Bob" Smith, one of the owners of the land that became Westchase District."

During his studies at the University of Texas at Austin, Hunt decided he'd rather finance homes than build them. After a decade of financing apartments and condos, in 1982 he began

Local connections

Born in Decatur, Texas, Hunt moved as

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Original Recipes are “Quick N Ezee,” Fresh and Healthy

Manish’s Indian Food a consistent seller since market debut

Among the components of a successful farmers market: offer an assortment of prepared foods available for hungry customers either to eat on site or to take home. One of Westchase District Farmers Market’s steadfast vendors from the beginning has been Manish’s Quick N Ezee Indian Food (formerly Nisha’s). Manish’s offers a modern take on traditional Indian cuisine, conveniently packaged for folks on the move.

Texas twist

Owner Manish Puri immigrated to the United States in 1996 from Delhi, India, moving to Houston in 2008. “I had a storefront for a while, but the restaurant business is a full-time job where you’re chained to the store every day from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.,” he said. “The markets allow me to be more flexible with my schedule, plus my food can be in more places than just at a single location without the costs of running multiple restaurants. I have my food at 18 different farmers markets in Houston every week.”

Malik Rizwan has been selling Puri’s Indian cuisine ever since the Westchase District Farmers Market opened in October 2013. “I work ten markets per week and I think this market is my favorite,” he said. “Our most popular items are the samosas, the cilantro peanut chutney and the chicken tikka masala.”

Puri’s dishes are a unique mix of Indian and American styles. “I learned the cooking trade in India, but all of my recipes are uniquely mine,” he said. “My customers were enjoying my mango chutney but wanted something

spicier, so I created a spicy version of it along with a jalapeno chutney,” he said.

According to Puri, variety is his key to success. “We have three chicken dishes, one lamb dish, 10 vegetarian dishes (seven of which are also vegan), five different kinds of samosas (triangular pastries stuffed with vegetables or meat), 10 different kinds of bread (five are whole-wheat and one is gluten-free), and four different kinds of chutneys,” he said. “So we have something for everyone.”

Questions and quality

Puri said one of his sales techniques for attracting customers is to narrow their preferences until they arrive at one of his products that fits

their tastes. “We first ask, ‘Vegetarian or non-vegetarian?’ Then we ask ‘Do you like mild or spicy?’ Then we know exactly what they want,” he said. “And if kids are with them, the chicken tikka and some naan always works.”

Many of the seasonal ingredients for Puri’s cooking come from fellow farmers market vendors. “I buy a lot of my produce from Atkinson Farm,” he said. “I make sure that all of my ingredients are as fresh and healthy as possible.” That commitment to top quality has served him well, especially when his commercial kitchen in northwest Houston received a recent surprise visit from the Food and Drug



Selling Samosas: Each week, Malik Rizwan vends the triangular pastries filled with mildly spiced mixed vegetables or minced meat.



Quick N Ezee: Varieties of chutneys, masalas and samosas are prepared and packaged with the grab-and-go crowd in mind.

Administration. “Our kitchen was recently inspected by the FDA, and they gave us a perfect score,” Puri said proudly.

What’s next for the Indian entrepreneur? “I’ve started selling at markets in Phoenix, Arizona,” he said. “I’ve passed through Phoenix often on my way to visit family in California. The population there seems health conscious and I have the perfect products for it. It’s the best to-go food you can buy.”



Flexible Flavors: Manish Puri, owner of Manish’s Indian Food, adjusts his recipes to suit his customers’ tastes.

Westchase District Farmers Market

Year-round, rain or shine, Thursdays @ 3 p.m.

St. Cyril of Alexandria Catholic Church
10503 Westheimer Road
(at Rogerdale Road, one block west of Beltway 8)

www.westchasedistrictfarmersmarket.com

managing apartment properties for Greystone. One of the firm’s early management assignments was the Celebration at Westchase (now The Belvedere), at Meadowglen and Walnut Bend. “That management assignment in Westchase has always been special to me,” he said.

Management and maintenance

In the multifamily property management industry for the past 35 years, Hunt currently leads a nationwide team of about 17 business relations and client development executives, traveling about four days a month. “For all the assets we manage, Greystar’s greatest assets are our people, because about 90 percent of what we do is work for other people,” he said. “We’re constantly learning what our clients’ needs are, managing their concerns and understanding where they want to grow.”

So where does Hunt see the growth potential for Westchase District’s multifamily market? “I think it’s important for Westchase District to have institutional players investing in multifamily properties,” he said. “CityWest is owned by Goldman Sachs. Plaza at Westchase is owned by Eaton Vance. Even new projects under construction like Patrinely Group’s and

USAA Real Estate’s Folio West – these all attract the attention of other large institutional investment firms who might be looking to purchase and sometimes even redevelop multifamily communities. You can always count on the institutional owners to place capital into a property to maintain it well, and that solid stewardship is vital to value preservation.”

Meat and potatoes

Hunt said he thinks Westchase District has done a good job over the years of making sure the area is well-maintained. “Part of why I joined the Board is because I believe the District is adding some real meat and potatoes with things like trails and parks and making sure the area continues to improve in value,” he said. “For now, Houston is overbuilt in multifamily, but eventually developers will start looking at buying properties and redeveloping them. If Westchase District can attract those pension fund managers to invest in its mature apartment assets, then it will be well-poised when the demand for more apartment development and acquisition picks up again.”



Cross-Country Runner: As executive director with Greystar Management Services, Stacy Hunt runs a team of property management professionals nationwide.

At Cantina Laredo, “No one’s allowed to say ‘no’ to the customer.”

Restaurateur John Vargas always finds a way to make authentic modern Mexican food work

When Cantina Laredo opened in December 2003, the gourmet Mexican restaurant prided itself on providing a contemporary spin on traditional Mexican recipes. Thirteen years later, the venue has become one of the jewels in Westchase District’s culinary crown (or sombrero, take your pick), all the while maintaining a modern-day look, atmosphere and menu.

Founded in Dallas in 1984, the upscale chain is owned by Consolidated Restaurant Operations, Inc. and was named by *Restaurant Business* magazine the fastest growing full-service Mexican brand. The Westchase District location is one of only a dozen stateside (there are international sites in Abu Dhabi and London). Part of that growth is due to franchise agreements such as the one held by General Manager John Vargas, who represents a true Westchase District success story.

Keeping contemporary

One of the longest-serving GMs at any Cantina Laredo with 13 years at the same location, Vargas purchased the restaurant with a group of investors two years ago and immediately began extensive renovations. “We moved the entrance which really opened up the space,” he said. Other improvements include: a private dining room that seats 26; all new furniture, booths and tables; fresh paint inside and outside; and upgraded restrooms. “I listened to feedback from the ladies,” he added, “They wanted bigger mirrors, more lighting and hooks for their purses, so they got it all.”

Amazingly, all of the remodeling occurred while the restaurant stayed open. “Over a two year period we only had to close the restaurant early once,” he said. “The rest of the work was completed after hours and we were cleaned up and ready for customers the next day.”

Distinctive dining

Cantina Laredo’s menu has stayed fresh over the years as well. Known for its margaritas made with top-shelf tequilas and fresh lime juice (“no powders, no mixes,” Vargas said), the restaurant occasionally rolls out new drinks for each season. One unique offering is the restaurant’s tequila dinner, an exclusive four-course meal served only once a quarter that features tastings of premium tequilas. “They’re not something that’s ever on the menu,” Vargas said. “The chef may not make these specialties for another several years.”

Despite many menu changes, Vargas makes sure that regular customers requesting older, off-menu items are accommodated. “At my restaurant, no one is allowed to say ‘no’ to the customer,” he said. “We’ll always find a way to say ‘yes.’”

I’ll run across the street to Whole Foods for the ingredients if I have to.” One thing customers can enjoy regularly is live music, provided by Mary’s Band. “Mary’s been with me for 13 years as well,” he said. “She and her band play salsa, bachata, cumbia and Latin jazz every Thursday, Friday and Saturday.”



Raising the Bar: Whether at the bar or at a booth, general manager John Vargas says Cantina Laredo serves the best margaritas in Westchase District, bar none.

Custom catering

While customers dining at the restaurant enjoy a lively, modern atmosphere, Vargas said the majority of his customers come through his healthy catering business. “I’m proud to say we do more caterings than any Cantina Laredo in the world,” he said. “I have corporate clients in and around Westchase District who order regularly. I have one client who has us cater lunch four times a week every week for 140 people. A lot of it isn’t even Mexican food – they’re that impressed with what we can do,” he said. “I’ve catered Italian weddings and even served a lady a bowl of fresh cucumbers. Again, whatever the customer wants, we’ll always find a way to say ‘yes.’ I don’t think there are a lot of restaurants around who can say that.”

Cantina Laredo

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facebook.com/cantinalaredohouston

Kicking, Dodging, Shooting, Bouncing and _____?

As Corporate Challenge celebrates 20 years, new mystery event keeps things fresh and interesting

Since 1998, business people from Westchase District have networked with one another and experienced team-building moments via the District’s annual Corporate Challenge, taking place on March 31 at Quillian Recreation Center. Featuring “No Serious Athletics, Just Serious Fun,” the outdoor occasion gathers teams of four to six persons who compete in five events: soccer kick; NBA 2-Ball; dodgeball and briefcase relay. This year, organizers are replacing the fifth event (previously the football toss) with a brand-new mystery competition.

Secret tweak

“The football toss has proved to be a tough event, especially for non-athletes,” said Sherry Fox, Westchase District’s vice president of communications. “So we decided for our 20th anniversary, we’d mix it up with something fresh and surprising.” The new event is a creation between Westchase District and Camp Gladiator, a fitness boot camp that hosts early-morning classes three times a week in the parking lot of Whole Foods, 11041 Westheimer Road.

“The contest is not too strenuous for the average person, but it does require a fair amount of strategy and lots of communication,” Fox said. “We think it will be an entertaining addition to the challenge and will definitely spice things up.” Fox will reveal the mystery event to team captains at a meeting the week before the challenge.

Charitable support

In addition to providing fun and surprises, the Corporate Challenge serves as the year’s largest fundraising event for the Westchase District Community Fund, the charitable arm of Westchase District.

Since 1998, Corporate Challenge has raised more than \$229,000 for area charities, including the Westchase District Community Fund and the Quillian Center’s summer day camps.

Tim Johnson, the community fund’s board chair said the fund’s ability to help address community needs for those living in Westchase District is tied directly to the success of the event. “We simply couldn’t distribute to as many worthwhile local organizations without the funds raised during the annual Corporate Challenge,” he said.

Joining in

Johnson expressed his appreciation to this year’s title sponsor, Amegy Bank, as well as to major sponsors (as of press time) Camden, D.E. Harvey Builders, First Methodist Houston, Frost Bank, Houston Marriott Westchase, IronEdge Group, Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam, Olympus Property, Pape-Dawson Engineers, PS LIGHTWAVE, Parkway Properties and Quillian Center.

But be careful, sponsoring the challenge can lead to more fun. Ruben Lombrana and Lance Eaker with IronEdge Group, a computer support and services firm located on 3000 Wilcrest Drive, assisted last year with the dodgeball event and the company was an event host. “We had so much fun that this year we decided to put together a team, as well as become a major sponsor,” Lombrana said. “I think it’s a great way to get exposure in front of dozens of Westchase District businesses, plus the whole day is a blast.”



Hoop Dreams: American InterContinental University is returning with a team this year to compete in Westchase District’s 20th Annual Corporate Challenge.

Westchase District Breaks Ground on Third Hike and Bike Trail

One of first trails in Houston to be built along a CenterPoint transmission corridor

Westchase District staff and West Houston civic leaders broke ground in January on the HCC Campus Trail, Westchase District's third hike and bike trail. The 10-foot-wide concrete path will run north-south between Westheimer Road and Richmond Avenue, with a mid-block crossing at Meadowglen Lane.

The trail is funded by a federal transportation grant and the District's 380 Area Agreement with the City of Houston. Project completion should be about 100 days after construction begins. It is part of a larger effort between CenterPoint Energy and the City of Houston to enhance the use of some 500 miles of transmission corridors throughout the city.

Unused Greenspace

For those who are hearing of the HCC Campus trail for the first time, the project might seem like an overnight success that has suddenly cropped up to be built in 100 days. In fact, it is the culmination of years of negotiations and planning among the District, CenterPoint Energy and the adjoining landholders.

The trail's concept originally materialized as part of Westchase District's Long Range Plan in 2006. Planners at urban design firm SWA Group suggested that the management district, located in an area with little public greenspace and limited undeveloped land, might maximize the wide swath of land along CenterPoint Energy's transmission corridor running between Westheimer Road and Richmond Avenue to create a trail.

"We are pleased to be part of this hike and bike trail," said Tracy Bridge, executive vice president and Electric Division president for CenterPoint Energy. "We recognize that in an urban environment, green space is at a premium. Allowing the public to access our transmission corridors is a great example of how private assets can be used for public benefit."

From aspiration to actualization

Jim Murphy, general manager of Westchase District and Texas state representative, submitted bills allowing such trails to occur within Harris County during three sessions of the Texas legislature (2009, 2011, and 2013). The 2013 version of the bill received support from the City of Houston, former Houston Mayor Annise Parker and former state senator Rodney Ellis, and became law. Each trail is subject to a license agreement with CenterPoint Energy and must meet stringent insurance requirements, design standards and maintenance plans.

It took another three years for the District to secure easement consents from pre-existing easement holders along the powerline corridor, to develop the license agreement and to design the trail. It is

the second trail in the city to be constructed under a CenterPoint agreement and the first of its kind in West Houston. The soon-to-be-built trail will provide connectivity to city transit on Westheimer, to other trails in Westchase District, to a planned park on Wilcrest Drive, the Robinson-Westchase Neighborhood Library and to Houston Community College's Westchase campus and its nearly-completed West Houston Institute.

"HCC is excited to have this new trail in its back yard," said Dr. Zachary Hodges, president of Houston Community College-Northwest. "It will connect students and the community to our growing and innovative Westchase campus, future home of the West Houston Institute, which will be a catalyst for innovation and creativity in higher education."

"This trail has all the benefits and features that add value to create real transportation alternatives," added Murphy. "Now we will have the newest addition to our four-mile trail network that runs from Westheimer to Bellaire. Whether for recreation purposes or from getting from point to point, this trail opens up options to new users who can take advantage of what we've created and connectivity to lots of great places. It's really quite an astounding accomplishment."



Dig This: Members of the Westchase District community broke ground on the .6-mile HCC Campus Trail near Westheimer and Hayes Road. (From left): Jack Pidgeon, West Houston Christian Center; James Koski, Office of Mayor Sylvester Turner; Zachary Hodges, HCC Northwest; Tracy Bridge, CenterPoint Energy; Beth Van Winkle, Milestone Management; and Jim Murphy, Westchase District.

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Outdoor Art for Everyone to Enjoy

New “muralitos” by Larry Crawford bring character and whimsy to Westchase District

Everyone’s favorite mural artist Larry Crawford has been at it again, painting three new traffic signal control boxes throughout the District. His latest creations are some of his most popular and creative yet.

Scraping the sky

Westchase District is home to several of Houston’s iconic office buildings and skyscrapers. Crawford stood on the southwest corner of Richmond Avenue and Briarpark Drive, looked around him and began painting. His 360 perspective captures the magnitude and beauty of the area on a clear day.

“While I was working on the mural, I got a lot of people who would honk at me and wave,” he said. “Some walkers would stop and chat with me and tell me how much they enjoyed my work in the area. It’s rewarding to know that people notice them.”

The cost of the muralito was underwritten by Woodbranch Management with proceeds benefitting the Westchase District Community Fund. “We love how it turned out,” said Kim Peck, property manager with Woodbranch. “We’re proud to sponsor public art in the District and I’m looking forward to seeing more around the area.”



“It was a difficult muralito to paint because of rainy weather,” he said. “There was a lot of runoff and dirt that accumulated at the base of the signal box. On the bright side, there’s a big field and a pond nearby so my dog, Rocket, had lots of room to roam and swim. He loved swimming in the pond chasing swans.”

Of books and birds

Just north of the corner of Richmond and Wilcrest sits the Robinson-Westchase Neighborhood Library, currently undergoing a major renovation, as well as the District’s Library Loop Trail, which features three Little Free Libraries. Those features made a bookshelf theme a natural for Crawford, though he encountered a curve ball when designing it. “I was thrown a bit because this signal box had an extra little box on the side that I hadn’t counted on,”

he said. “So I improvised and made the little box a birdhouse attached to the bookshelf.”

Later this year and beyond

So what’s the next painting project in the District for Crawford?

“Toward the end of the year, we’ll have Larry paint one more muralito at the corner of Wilcrest Drive and Briar Forest Drive,” said Louis Jullien, projects director for Westchase District. “While not technically in Westchase District, the intersection falls into the area covered by our 380 Area Agreement with the City of Houston. After that? Well, we’re still designing our parks, but I’d bet that Larry will have something to do with public art in those greenspaces.”

You can view images of all of Westchase District’s public art installations, including Crawford’s two larger trail murals, online at westchasedistrict.com/publicart. But really, to enjoy them to their fullest we recommend you get in your car and explore the District looking for Crawford’s muralito masterpieces.

Building a better box

At the southernmost end of Westchase District, Rogerdale Road dead ends into Bellaire Boulevard, right into the parking lot of a Home Depot. It was the concept of building projects that inspired Crawford to paint stacks of snap-together LEGO® bricks along with two LEGO® mini-figures dressed as construction workers. A female construction worker was added as a subtle statement depicting that creative building is not something limited to boys.

Find It: Westchase District at Your Fingertips

Users now can locate transit routes, amenities with new online map

Several METRO bus routes run through Westchase District, but which ones? Where’s the nearest bank? How do I find where the District’s trails are located? The answers to these questions and more can now be found within a new online map created by the District to help users find what they’re searching for with just a few clicks or taps.

The map includes: METRO bus routes and park and ride stations; trails; restaurants; hotels; banks; schools; and churches. “The project started out

as a mobility map to show users several transportation options for getting to, from and around the District,” said Louis Jullien, Westchase District’s projects director. “As it progressed, we realized people would want to search for various amenities offered within the District as well.”

Dealing with dynamic data

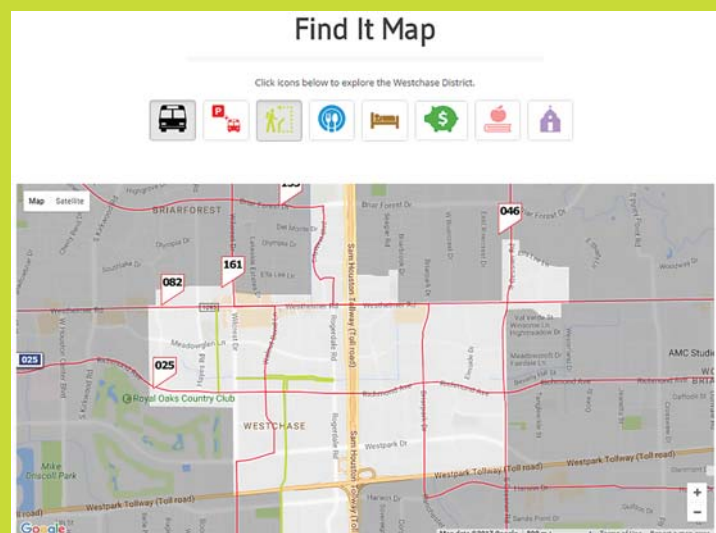
Westchase District has long featured directories of many of these amenities on its website, but only as lists without the ability to get directions or additional information. The District also has distributed printed welcome guides for newcomers to the area.

“The problem with physical maps is that in an ever-changing community they often are out-of-date the moment they are printed. It’s the same with static lists posted online,” Jullien said. “Plus, nowadays most people search for destinations either on their desktop computer or on their smartphone. We wanted to create a digital tool that would provide useful information about Westchase District in a way that was already familiar to how people normally search for things.”

A curated catalog

The answer to keeping current with fluctuating information is one based on a foundation with which most users are familiar: Google Maps. “We’re able to layer over Google Maps to not only show an outline of the District, but also to show the surrounding area,” Jullien said. “You can zoom in and out just like you would with other Google Maps and when you click on specific pin drops, more information pops up including pictures, addresses and phone numbers, hours of operation and links to websites. Google takes care of all of that. The only things we have to update and maintain are the pin drops, which highlight the existing businesses and entities.

You can test out the map for yourself at westchasedistrict.com/findit.



Fast Finds on Phones or Flatscreens: Users can now search for transportation routes and various amenities in Westchase District via an online map.

HPD Contact for Safety Patrol Completes a Strong Run

Retiring Assistant Chief Don McKinney passes liaison baton to Captain Larry Satterwhite

Westchase District employs more than 50 Houston Police Department officers who, when not on duty for HPD, patrol the area in specially-marked vehicles, as two-person bicycle teams, on foot patrols and even on a golf cart. It's a partnership that has yielded strong results: overall crime in the District has decreased by 29 percent since 2011. For the past nine years, Assistant Police Chief Don McKinney has been HPD's point person to work closely with Mark Hubenak, Westchase District's public safety director. Now McKinney is retiring after 32 years on the force and handing over duties to Captain Larry Satterwhite, continuing the solid relationship the District enjoys with HPD.

A single point

Westchase District's HPD coordinator is responsible for finding suitable officers (bike certified, etc.) to cover all shifts and for filling extra shifts during special events or holiday seasons, ensuring that patrol officers are wearing proper uniforms and following the latest HPD policies and guidelines, and meeting weekly with Hubenak to review local crime statistics, strategize on new initiatives and how to address hot spots of criminal activity.

Hubenak said having a high-ranking, single point of contact from HPD has been helpful. "It's allowed us to be more efficient in communicating with the officers and we know that the information being disseminated is accurate and up-to-date," he said. "Don has done a great job of doing that over the years."

A distinguished career

When McKinney first became Westchase District's HPD coordinator, he had 23 years of experience on the force. "In the time he's been working for us, Don has overseen the Crime Analysis division, Special Investigations command, South Central Patrol Command and Criminal Investigations Command," Hubenak said. "I think that really speaks to the high level of integrity he has as well as to the high caliber of his abilities and the great respect he receives from other officers."

For now, McKinney's next assignment is simply looking for some stress-free down time. "I'm looking forward to some golfing, woodworking and tackling

some items on my honey-do list," he said. "Actually, the honey-dos will probably come first."

A fresh pair of eyes

Satterwhite comes to the position with 27 years of experience. His extensive involvement with bike patrols, SWAT teams, tactical and gang units, special events and homeland security all contributed to his being named HPD's 2015 Manager of the Year. "We've selected another highly qualified, highly respected leader," Hubenak said. "I'm excited about the fresh pair of eyes with which Larry is able to view our program and how his experience will help shape our patrol in the future."

Already Satterwhite has completed several ride-alongs around the District with patrol officers and said he's impressed with officers' knowledge of the area. "Public safety is Westchase District's top priority," he said. "Our officers are alert and ready to protect it and keep this community one of the safest in the city."



In Control of the Patrol: Former Assistant Police Chief Don McKinney (left) has worked with Mark Hubenak (center), Westchase District's public safety director, for nearly a decade. Captain Larry Satterwhite (right) is Westchase District's new HPD coordinator.

From Fixing Fighter Jets to Finding Felons

Whether it's F-16s or the streets of Westchase District, Officer Tim Vaca knows the ins and outs

This past winter, Westchase District Patrol officers passed out 2017 promotional calendars to apartment managers, office managers and retail owners. The calendars served two purposes: creating awareness about the patrols and providing occasions for officers to mingle with Westchase District stakeholders. It's an opportunity relished by Officer Tim Vaca.

"I like working Westchase District because I get to interact with people more than on my regular shift," he said. "I'm always moving around and I'm not confined to one area."

The path to police work

Vaca's never been one to be confined. A 2001 graduate of Kempner High School in Sugar Land, he joined the U.S. Air Force, as an avionics specialist working on F-16 fighter jets. "It was pretty cool working on those planes and I had always wanted to be in the military ever since I was young," he said. "I was deployed to Italy and to Utah, but once I had my son, I didn't want to be traveling so much."

Another childhood dream was to be in law

enforcement. A 2009 graduate of the Houston Police Department's Training Academy, Vaca was assigned to Westside Division as a patrol officer.

Operating in another outfit

Recently, Vaca was assigned to Westside's Robbery Division, where he works as a plainclothes officer. "I think the people committing robberies are some of the most dangerous kinds of bad guys because they're often armed, which makes them potential murderers and they come at people randomly, so there's no telling what could happen," he said. "Taking those guys off the street is pretty important."

As a member of the Robbery Division, Vaca spends many hours in research trying to identify suspects and combing through surveillance video. "There's a lot of paperwork, but it all contributes to putting the bad guys in jail and getting justice for victims," he said. "While plainclothes duty is cool, I find I'm on alert more when I'm in uniform, because I'm more visible, which can be a good deterrent, but it also can make me a target for criminals."

DWIs and dance recitals

While on duty for Westchase District Patrol, Vaca said the most common targets for crime he encounters are trespassers and drunk drivers. "It's all about looking for things that seem out of place, like people hanging out where they shouldn't," he said. "What I encounter on patrol in Westchase District is pretty varied, which is good because I'm not just standing around like with some other off-duty work."

When not on duty, Vaca said he enjoys spending time with his family. "It seems like every weekend we're going to another birthday party," he said. "Either that, or I'm taking my daughter to dance class or attending a recital." Vaca said recently he's taken up playing golf. "Lessons are pretty expensive, so I've been teaching myself with YouTube videos and practicing with some buddies. We try to get together for 18 holes about once a month when we can."



Interactive: Westchase District Patrol officer Tim Vaca (right) chats with Traci Henderson of The Orchard at Westchase apartments. Interacting with Westchase District stakeholders is a key component of Vaca's patrol activities.

(Continued from Page 1)

with the area's evolving bike network. We're looking forward to engaging more riders."

Adding area interest

One new component along the BBCT – also to be installed on the District's Library Loop Trail – is a series of wayfinding signs that will include information about the history and ecology of the area, as well as the role of transportation as a key theme to Westchase District. These metal "trail spikes" will be placed along the trails at key decision points as well as at areas of interest.

"We want to share with the public information about the Westchase area we've collected from previous historical research," said Louis Jullien, Westchase District's projects director. "The information on these signs will give trail users some interesting knowledge at a glance about such important figures as Bob Smith, Mitchell Louis Westheimer and E.W.K. Andrau, all businessmen who played a key role in acquiring the land in and around Westchase District. The signs also discuss the roles that German and Asian immigrants played in the early growth of the Alief area."

In addition to historical facts, the trail spikes will describe the flora and fauna often seen along the trails. "Most people wouldn't consider that our flood control channels qualify as wetlands, but they do," Jullien said. "We want them to be appreciated not only for their role in flood control, but as natural resources that contribute to water quality and wildlife habitat." Jullien said users can expect to learn about everything from the trees to the birds to the aquatic life found along the District's trail network.

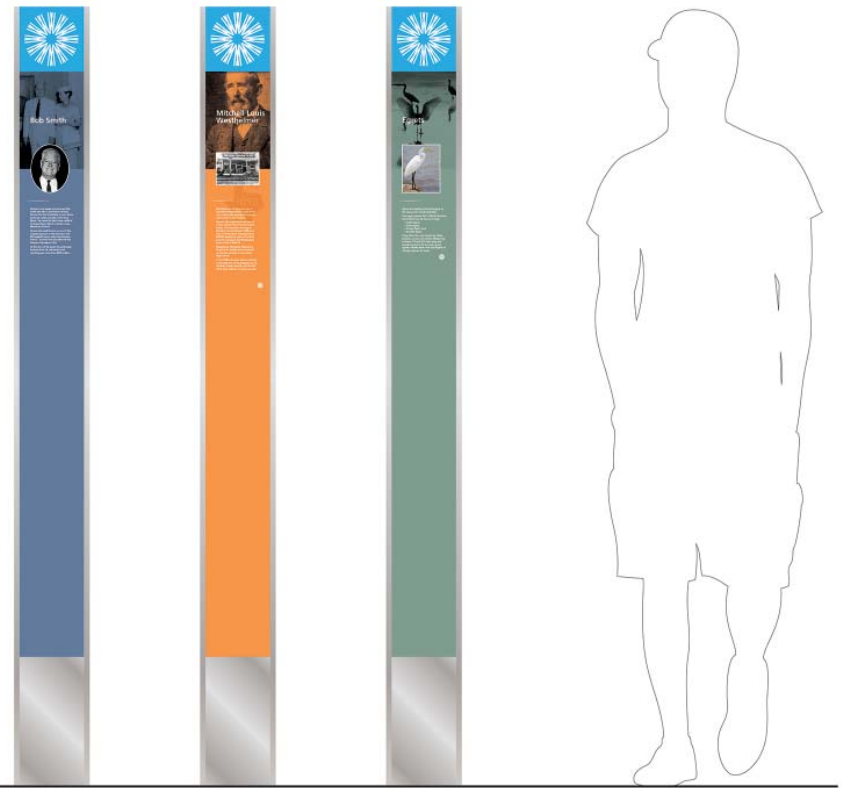
Eager to access

Though not officially open to the public, Sanchez said she has seen office workers out walking on sections of the trail. About a dozen businesses are either adjacent to the trail or a short walk to it, which means that thousands of area employees have access to BBCT for lunchtime strolls or break time speed walks.

"We have a lot of employees who walk our parking lot during lunch, so I think

many of them will use the trail, especially now that our six days of winter are over," said Michael Swick, facilities manager with M-I SWACO, whose building backs up to the BBCT. "I've already walked a bit of it myself just to see where it leads. I've seen them putting in benches and sprinkler heads – it seems pretty nice."

Be on the lookout for information about a BBCT ribbon cutting ceremony in future issues of *The Wire*, our e-newsletter sent twice monthly, or via our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram social media channels.



Okay, who spiked the trail? Special wayfinding signs called "trail spikes" (seen here in a rendering) will inform users about the history, ecology and transportation aspects of Westchase District.

Neighborhood News

The City of Houston has finalized purchase of a 3.4-acre parcel of land on Wilcrest Drive just north of Richmond Avenue and the District's Library Loop Trail.

"Now that the land is purchased, our next action is to sign an interlocal agreement with the City allowing us to **build a park** on the land," said Jim Murphy, Westchase District general manager. "This is a huge step forward in our dream of having a public park in Westchase District."

The park, as well as the hike and bike trail, add value to several office buildings that are next to them or nearby, such as the Westchase I, II and III buildings, as well as the Silverstone building, Richmond Park, Richmond Centre, The Colonnade and Columbia Centre. These amenities are useful selling points when pitching office space to potential tenants.

The **Office of James Burnett** will handle design of the park. This prominent landscape architecture firm recently designed Levy Park - opening this month at 3801 Eastside. OJB's design process should take about a year. Once designed, completion of the park is expected sometime in 2018.



Kyle Brown recently was appointed as president of the Houston Apartment Association. He is the regional supervisor with Milestone Management for Richmond Green Apartments, located in Westchase District at 9940 Richmond Avenue.

Brown is not the only professional with ties to the District who has played a leadership role in the multifamily industry. Westchase District Board of Directors member Beth Van Winkle has been both HAA President as well as former president for the Texas Apartment Association. Congratulations, Kyle!

With the recent redesign of Westchase District's logo comes new flags for businesses, apartment communities and retailers. Show that you're proud to be a part of Westchase District by flying this 6' x 4' flag (top right) outside your property. Other sizes are available. To request a flag, or to replace an old one, contact Louis Jullien, ljullien@westchasedistrict.com, 713-780-9434.



As it nears completion, **Folio West**, located at 2525 CityWest Boulevard, has begun pre-leasing one- two- and three-bedroom units. A development of Patrinely Group and USAA Real Estate Company, this 266-unit luxury apartment community will offer:

- a pool with an outdoor kitchen, spa and cabanas
- a courtyard with a firepit, bocce ball court and water feature
- an entertainment room with a media wall, billiards and gaming tables
- bike storage and repair
- a pet grooming station

Office hours for pre-leasing are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more, call 832-431-5249.

