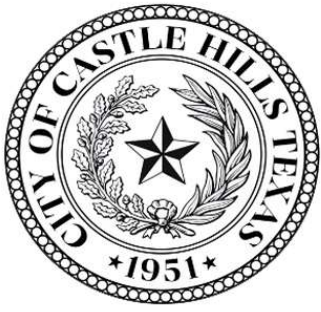


July / August 2025



The Castle Hills **Reporter**



CASTLE HILLS
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The City of Castle Hills is a timeless community that evokes an engaging sense of quality, friendliness, and creativity in a contemporary setting, with homes and businesses nestled in nature's beauty, conveniently located in the heart of America's 7th largest city.

A bi-monthly newsletter for the residents of the City of Castle Hills published by Neighborhood News, Inc.



CITY COUNCIL

JR Trevino..... Mayor
 Jason Smith.....Place 1
 Denise Haley.....Place 2
 Kurt May.....Place 3
 Jack Joyce.....Place 4
 Beth Daines, Mayor Pro Tem, Place 5

CITY STAFF

Chris Duque
 City Manager
 (210) 293-9673

Nichole Heinrich
 City Secretary, (210)293-9681

Nora Davis
 Finance, (210) 293-9674

James "Jim" Ladewig
 Fire Chief
 (210) 342-2341, ext. 217

Police Chief
 Vacant

Rick Harada
 Public Works & Animal Control
 Department Director
 (210) 293-9676

**ALL EMERGENCIES, EMT,
 FIRE & POLICE CALL 911**
 Non-emergency (210) 342-2341

Monthly Meetings

All meetings are held at
 City Hall unless otherwise posted.

City Council
 2nd Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.

**Architectural Review
 Committee**
 1st Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.
 Upon Request

Board of Adjustment
 4th Monday, 5:30 p.m.
 Upon Request

Zoning Commission
 1st Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
 Upon Request

**Crime Control
 & Prevention District**
 3rd Monday, 5:30 p.m.
 Quarterly or as needed

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



Happy Summer Neighbors,

First and foremost, thank you for your support in being re-elected to Mayor! To be honest, it was a previously held belief that elected officials should only serve a short amount of time. However, having been your Mayor for 6 years there are still things being learned daily. It has been an incredibly humbling journey. The 6 short years have provided an amazing basis to build relationships, learn city operations, and plan for the future. Recently, that tenure has helped ensure that Castle Hills can continue to move forward without missing a beat through the onboarding of our new City Manager. In retrospect, short tenures do not allow elected officials to become well situated so that they can best serve their community. By the time you have good understanding of how things work and you're operating most efficiently, your time to serve can be done.

New City Manager

At our June regularly scheduled Council meeting we appointed a new City Manager. Mr. Chris Duque. Before sharing all the details about Mr. Duque, it is important to share the process so that you know the lengths we went through to find the right leader for our Castle Hills.

Following Mr. Rapelye's departure, we immediately posted the job on the Texas Municipal League website and formed an application review committee. That committee consisted of Councilwoman Beth Daines, Councilman Jason Smith, and myself.

Councilwoman Daines has extensive experience in Corporate America working at AT&T for nearly 3 decades. Her final role was as a Senior Manager for Portfolio Management. She also specialized in Project Management, so her experience in picking and forming teams was seen as a valuable tool in this process.

Councilman Jason Smith serves as a transactional attorney for real estate projects where he regularly reviews contracts and agreements. He has a very detail-oriented eye that was guaranteed to be helpful in reviewing numerous applications and

discerning important details.

Throughout the process we received nearly 50 applications to serve as City Manager. We compiled a shortlist and started with the first round of interviews. After the first round, we all believed that we had identified a standout. We then followed up with a second interview that included our Interim City Manager and Fire Chief Jim Ladewig. After this last interview, all the interviewers were confident that we had identified the strongest candidate. What followed was a review of references, comprehensive background check, and giving the candidate an opportunity to talk with other Councilmembers, individually.

It is great pleasure to share that Council unanimously voted to appoint Mr. Duque as City Manager for 2 years. While Ms. Daines was not present due to planned travel, she certainly would have supported as she was on the committee that chose to advance Mr. Duque.

Chris Duque

Mr. Duque has served as City Manager for 16 years in his last city of Nederland. The typical City Manager tenure is 5 to 7 years. City Managers are known to transition to larger cities or the political winds can shift and accelerate that departure. Regardless serving in one city for 16 years is no small feat. The Committee saw his long previous tenure as a strong side that we can continue to maintain continuity in Castle Hills. Nederland, like Castle Hills, is small city that is next to a larger city. Similarly, they also have Court, Dispatch, Fire, Police, and Public Works. A big draw to the San Antonio area for Mr. Duque was having family here and his college age children being enrolled here as well.

In introducing Mr. Duque to City team members, it was great to hear him talking their language about their individual roles and exploring areas for improvement. Admittedly one area that Mr. Duque will be slightly at a disadvantage is local relationships. Fortunately, there is a plan to address that as well. Over the next few months, we will embark on a "roadtrip" all over San Antonio to introduce Mr. Duque to City, County, and State elected officials. Of course we are going to include our liaisons for CPS Energy, SAWS, and TxDOT. First

things first though, City Budget!

Castle Hills Budget

It is that time of the year where Council gets to review all the numbers responsible for making Castle Hills work. Fortunately, Council decided to get on a normal government budget cycle October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026. This will help us accurately forecast our expenses. Preliminary indicators are suggesting that we will see a drop in ad valorem taxes. This means that many of our property values are going down, as been known to happen cyclically.

Please don't question your investment in Castle Hills. This trend is being seen across Bexar County. It ultimately means that there is less money coming into the City of Castle Hills. Which is an opportunity for us to review City spending and see if there are areas where we can save. Keep in mind that saving money does not mean cutting services. It is very early in the process, but the goal is to minimize the impact to you the resident.

We are in a great place where we have made a lot of progress with street and drainage improvements and improvements to the Commons. But there is still a lot of work to be done. The next big project that we will need to tackle is our alleys that many residents rely on to access their property or garages.

Project Updates - Carolwood

Speaking of projects, there are a few quick updates. First, our flagship project on Carolwood is progressing nicely. We are scheduled to complete Dec 2025. At the end of June, Lockhill-Selma will be closed to install the culverts underneath. This has resulted in some traffic diversion, we apologize in advance, but it should be quick.

Manton

The North Manton project is progressing nicely. The culverts are in place and will allow for the average rainfall to flow under the road and minimize the risk to vehicular traffic. This also means that Public Works and First Responders will not need to place barricades for the smallest rain event. Most importantly, properly addressing the water flow will allow us to finally repave Manton Lane!

Krameria/Mimosa

The project engineering is scheduled to be completed mid July. From there we will work with SAWS to ensure that all work being done doesn't impact their infrastructure that is in the work area. We have been advised that SAWS can take up to 6 months to complete this process. As soon as we have a greenlight from SAWS, we will put the project out to bid and

get started.

Legislative Updates - State

In a previous Reporter it was mentioned that we were up at the State Capitol advocating against other cities or counties taking an ownership stake in multifamily properties in other cities and taking them off the tax role without providing prior notice. This can wreak havoc on small budgets like those of Castle Hills. The passage of House Bill 21 effectively stops that. Thank you to Representatives Gary Gates for authoring the bill and to San Antonio area Representative Trey Martinez Fischer for being one of the coauthors.

Local

We are still in the moratorium for Short Term Rentals. In an effort to allow the Zoning Commission sufficient time to solicit feedback and assemble recommendations, City Council voted to extend the moratorium until September 9th, 2025. Thank you to our Zoning Commission for their hard work of soliciting community feedback to ensure that we are adapting City ordinances as the STR landscape is changing as well. It has been a time-consuming process that would not have been possible were it not for their service to Castle Hills.

As you can see there has been a lot happening in Castle Hills! Thank you for patience and grace as we continue to work to bring you the best possible City. We look forward to seeing you in the Commons.

Yours in Service,

JR Treviño — Mayor

JTrevino@CastleHills-TX.Gov

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MESSAGE FROM THE CITY MANAGER

By Chris Duque, City Manager

Hello Castle Hills! ~ ¡Hola Castle Hills!

On Wednesday, June 11th, I began my tenure as Castle Hills City Manager. I want to thank the City Council for their support and trust with this appointment. Prior to Castle Hills, I served at the cities of Nederland, TX and Mission, TX for over twenty years. I am a strong proponent of transparency and community engagement. I look forward to meeting the many wonderful Castle Hills residents and business owners, and I look forward to working with the wonderful team of public servants at the City. I want to assure residents, business owners, and visitors that my Office will always be open to hear your concerns or to answer your

questions. I can be contacted at cduque@castlehills-tx.gov or (210) 293-9673.

This month, the City staff began the fiscal year 2025-2026 budget process. The first budget workshop was held on June 10th with the next scheduled for Tuesday, June 24th at 6:30PM. On July 1st, a proposed budget will be submitted to the City Secretary; following this, the City will wait for the certified tax roll (property appraisals) and the tax rate calculations. On August 5th, another budget workshop is scheduled. Adoption of the budget and tax rate is scheduled for September 9th. These meetings are open to the public and offer citizens and taxpayers an opportunity to address any concerns they have or to ask for more information.

Next month, we will celebrate our nation's Independence Day. City offices will be closed on Friday, July 4th in observance of this holiday. As we celebrate the Fourth of July, we must pause to reflect and thank the brave men and women who have ensured and protected our country and its freedoms. God Bless you and God Bless the United States of America!

MESSAGE FROM Jack Joyce, Alderman Place 4, CITY OF CASTLE HILLS

Friends and Neighbors,

I hope you are enjoying the summer so far and are getting a bit of down time.

We have made great progress with Comprehensive Plan priorities and so I thought it was time for an update on this progress:

- 1. Priority One, Economic Development:** The Economic Development Committee has been meeting for over a year, and after a number of town hall meetings with stakeholders, including this past May, we expect to present the outline of the Economic Development plan to City Council at their August meeting.
- 2. Priority Two, Branding:** A new brand, including a logo and tagline, has been developed and is in the process of being implemented.
- 3. Priority Three, Greenspace:** a) The Commons has received the benefit of considerable investment, including the construction of two pavilions, which provide shade during hot weather. The Parks and Projects Commission is studying the rental of the pavilions and will soon have some recommendations for Council. b) Also in the Commons a permanent stage has been built for the numerous concerts and performances that take place throughout the year, and a shaded play structure has been added for the youngsters. c) The Commons will become a sculpture garden for the City, and so seven concrete sculpture pads have been added, in keeping with Priority Seven. The sculptures are planned to be added in the fall.
- 4. Priority Four, Connectivity and Safety:** Subject to confirmation, the City has been awarded funding by

the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to study potential bike and walking routes throughout the City, with a main goal of connecting to Hardberger Park.

- 5. Priority Nine, City Facilities and Services:** Page Architects has begun the study of potential options to either renovate, add onto, or replace City Hall. The study is expected to be completed in September.

I would love to hear your thoughts on these topics.

Feel free to contact me.

Have a great summer!

Jack Joyce — jjoyce@castlehills-tx.gov / 210-827-7222

CASTLE HILLS COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

School Supply Drive

JULY 18 - 26

DROP OFF

**City Hall Lobby
209 Lemonwood**

**Supplies will be divided between
Castle Hills Elementary and
Jackson-Keller Elementary**

castlehillscommunityorg@gmail.com



MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL MEMBER, PLACE 2

Denise Haley
dhaley@castlehills-tx.org

Hello, Castle Hills,

In May, Councilmember Beth Daines and I attended the Small Town Conference in Fredericksburg presented by the Texas Municipal League. I appreciate the opportunity and thank the City for its investment in our continuing education and leadership development.

Along with sessions on legal issues, including nuisance abatement and code enforcement; land uses; economic development for small towns; retail recruitment strategies and how to “sell” your city, and how to be a more effective leader, there was a “What’s Working in Your Community?” session. Hearing people speak with such pride about what is working in their communities all across Texas was inspiring and encouraging. Here are takeaways from a couple of those speakers:

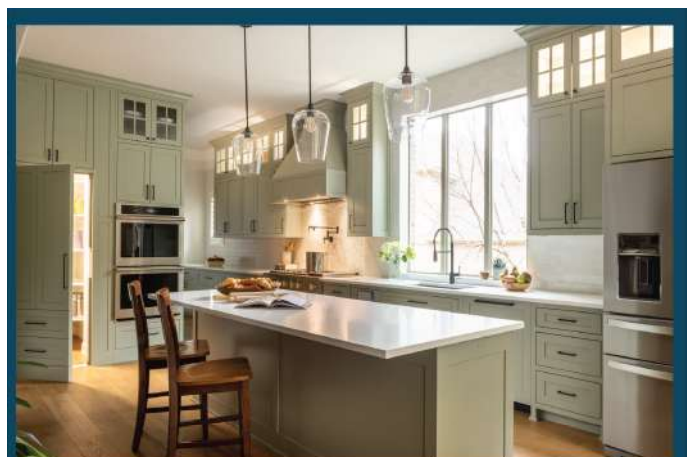
- A mayor shared that he publishes a newsletter describing the things the community wants and how much those things cost. Hearing that, I thought about budgeting and our upcoming budget process for the coming fiscal year. What do we want, and how much does it cost may seem oversimplified, but it gives us a way to prioritize and figure it out – the things we need, of course, and then the things we want.
- The Economic Development Director of Yoakum told us about students at their high school who asked for a \$5,000 grant to power wash and clean up their school so that people could know more about the excellence

inside the school because of what they could see on the outside. That beautification idea expanded from the \$5,000 EDC grant to an \$80,000 project funded by more grants from other organizations to the school. Hearing that, I thought about the pride and enthusiasm of those students and the support from the community, and also about beautification and a new way to look at why it matters- to see the excellence on the inside by beautifying the outside.

One last thing. Have you signed up for **Love Notes**, our monthly e-newsletter? Launched in April, **Love Notes** has opened a window for a different way to share news about life in our city, both to our citizens and the wider community – as wide as wherever our subscribers are. Whether it’s news about community happenings, business spotlights, some fun “did you know?” snippets, introductions to Castle Hills team members, or updates on city projects (currently, progress on the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan), **Love Notes** is a quick read that can have a long reach.

Send your email to info@castlehills-tx.org to be added to the distribution list. If you’d like the April and May issues, we can email them to you as well.

So, it’s like I always say – Move over, Go Spurs Go!
Love it ... Here is in Castle Hills – where there is so much to love, and where Community always matters.
Reach out to me anytime with questions or ideas
– I’d love to hear from you!



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CASTLE HILLS POLICE DEPT.

By Sgt. Gary Tomblin



ANNOUNCEMENT

The Castle Hills Police Department would like to announce that we are starting a new Police Explorer Program, designed to provide young individuals, aged 14 to 20, with a hands-on introduction to careers in law enforcement. This initiative is being conducted in partnership with the Boy Scouts of America and aims to inspire future generations of public safety professionals.



The Police Explorer Program offers participants the opportunity to learn about police procedures, community service, and leadership through training, ride-alongs, and real-world experiences under the guidance of sworn officers. The program also emphasizes teamwork, responsibility, and ethical decision-making—skills that benefit young adults, regardless of their ultimate career paths.

This program is about building relationships with our youth while giving them an inside look at how law enforcement operates. It's a way to mentor, educate, and inspire. No prior experience is required, just a willingness to learn and serve.

Applicants must be between 14 and 20 years old and maintain good academic standing within their respective Schools. Applicants shall have at least two letters of recommendation from faculty members at their schools, or other extracurricular organizations of which they belong and a copy of their transcript.

The selection process will consist of a written test, physical fitness test, oral board interview and review of school transcript. If selected to join the program the applicant can expect an orientation, and an initial training session scheduled for this upcoming Fall.

The Police Explorers represents a new chapter in the department's ongoing commitment to youth engagement and community partnership. Interested applicants and parents can contact Sgt. Tomblin at the Castle Hills Police Department.



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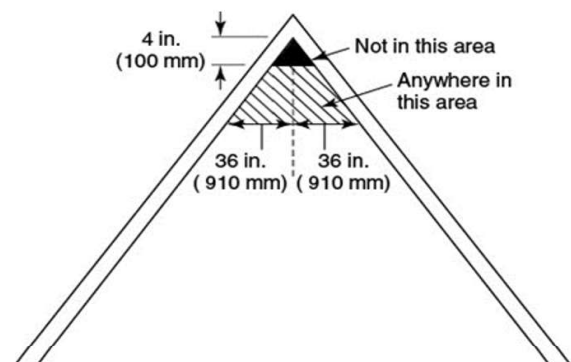
CASTLE HILLS FIRE DEPT.

By Chief Jim Ladewig



As we spend more time with family this summer and having more activities at home, it is important to keep everyone safe. It is important to make sure all fire protection systems are operating properly and replaced when needed. Smoke alarms are the first line of fire prevention. Ensuring proper placement and operating smoke alarms should be a priority around the home. Below, are a few guidelines from the NFPA on smoke detector installation!

- Choose smoke alarms that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- Install smoke alarms inside each bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- On levels without bedrooms, install alarms in the living room (or den or family room) or near the stairway to the upper level, or in both locations.
- Smoke alarms installed in the basement should be installed on the ceiling at the bottom of the stairs leading to the next level.
- Smoke alarms should be installed at least 10 feet (3 meters) from a cooking appliance to minimize false alarms when cooking.
- Mount smoke alarms high on walls or ceilings (remember, smoke rises). Wall-mounted alarms should be installed not more than 12 inches away from the ceiling (to the top of the alarm).
- If you have ceilings that are pitched, install the alarm within



3 feet of the peak but not within the apex of the peak (four inches down from the peak).

Figure A.29.8.3.1 from NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code (2021 edition).

- Don't install smoke alarms near windows, doors, or ducts where drafts might interfere with their operation.
- Never paint smoke alarms. Paint, stickers, or other decorations could keep the alarms from working.
- For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound. Interconnection can be done using hard-wiring or wireless technology.

(Continued from page 6)

- When interconnected smoke alarms are installed, it is important that all of the alarms are from the same manufacturer. If the alarms are not compatible, they may not sound.
- There are two types of smoke alarms – ionization and photoelectric. An ionization smoke alarm is generally more responsive to flaming fires, and a photoelectric smoke alarm is generally more responsive to smoldering fires. For the best protection, both types of alarms or combination ionization-photoelectric alarms, also known as dual sensor smoke alarms, are recommended.
- Keep manufacturer's instructions for reference.
- If you are unsure of location or installation, please feel free to call the fire department at 210-342-2341 and we will be glad to assist you.... The Life You Save May Be Yours!!



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Please email us at:
castlehillswomansclub@gmail.com

Our club is a multigenerational group of women who have a lot of fun contributing our time and talents to our city.



2025-2026 Program Lineup:

Wednesday, Sept 10/25 -12:00pm
Saturday, Nov-8/25 -10:00am
Wednesday, Feb-11/26 -12:00pm
Saturday, April 11/26 -10:00am

Castle Hills Garden Club Fresh Roots, New Vibes!

We're shaking, things up for the 2025-2026 season, and trust us - this isn't your grandma's garden club.

We've traded Tuesday mornings for a dynamic new-schedule, and we're open to anyone in Castle Hills who loves plants, community, or just good company!

Why Join?

- Connect with fellow plant lovers
- Get exclusive access to San Antonio Garden Center programs
- Be part of community projects like welcoming new businesses and recognizing the Yard of the Month
- Help choose our annual charitable donation



Pay via Zelle (castlehillsgardenclub@gmail.com) or mail a check to
107 Squires Row by August 1st to be included in our member directory!

Have questions or want to join? Let's grow together -email or DM us on Facebook today!



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