



# Oak Ridge North Community News

## Fall is approaching with major projects

From the Mayor

Hello Neighbors,

It's that time of year again. Dog days of summer are here and the heat is again a major factor. I know this time frame is from July 3rd through August 11th. Let's hope temperatures do drop soon. Please be careful outside during the day (If you can stand the heat) and stay hydrated. Difficult time of year for water resources also, please be cautious when using water.

Quick update regarding the health of our city. Myself, council, and staff completed working through the Capital Improvement budget and the general budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The city remains in a healthy position, and sales tax revenues continue to trend upward. The city does see continued

economic growth. City staff, Economic Development Corporation, and your elected officials continue to seek out opportunities for economic growth.

Public Works and the Police Department will move across Hanna Road, off of Robinson Road in the near future. The contract for the relocation of the existing Police Department buildings is approved. Contracts are in process, as well as pre-construction meetings for the relocation of our Public Works Department.

Robinson Road widening and realignment project is progressing, slow but true. Entergy staged temporary electrical poles and continues to work toward underground utilities on Robinson Road. Bids for the Robinson Road construction project are expected to go out in August.

Our goal is to continue cultivating opportunity for economic growth and development. Economic development, Robinson Road project, and the Plaza District are an opportunity for future sustainability. As always it is an honor to serve the City of Oak Ridge North.

God Bless,

Paul Bond



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# Budget and Taxes

## From the City Manager

The city is quickly preparing to adopt its annual budget for the fiscal year 2024. The city's fiscal year runs from October 1 to September 30. City staff begins the budget process in May and approves the budget by September 1, to be posted for thirty days prior to going into effect.

The city's goal for budgeting is always to stay as fiscally conservative as possible while still maintaining the integrity of our infrastructure as well as quality of life in the City of Oak Ridge North.

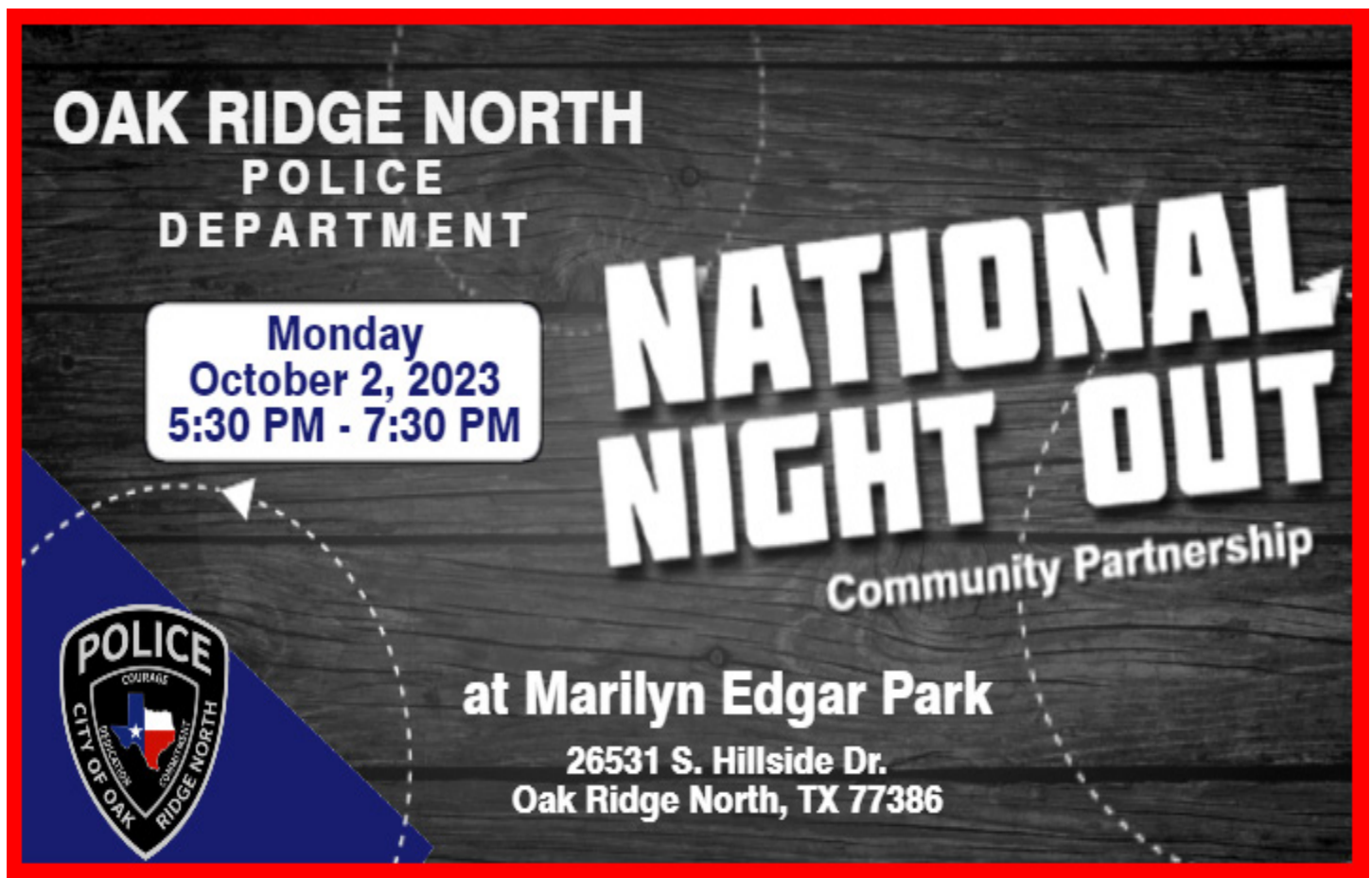
The budget is made up of separate funds for the general budget, debt service, water/sewer, economic development corporation, and the tax increment reinvestment zone. The general fund revenue is comprised mainly of property tax and sales tax, with sales tax making up approximately 75% of the general fund revenue.

The property rate tax is made of a maintenance and operation rate in addition to a debt service rate. The debt service rate is used to pay off debt the city has issued. Currently, the

city only has two debts that are being paid with property tax rates. This includes a 2012 certificate of obligation as well as a 2019 general obligation debt (this was a refunding bond from earlier borrowing). The maintenance and operation rate are based on the city's general budget.

In the past several years, the City Council has approved a property tax rate called the no new revenue tax rate, which means the city will make the same amount in property taxes as it did the year before. Some residents tax bills may go up due to valuations being higher and other entities raising their rates, but the city has worked hard to keep expenses down to make sure residents aren't paying increased property taxes.

These rates and the budget are all approved at the last meeting of the council meeting in August, August 28, 2024. The City Council has other statutory dates to hear public comments. There will be public hearings for the tax rate and the budget on August 21, 2024. As always, the public is always welcome.




**OAK RIDGE NORTH  
POLICE  
DEPARTMENT**

**Monday  
October 2, 2023  
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM**

**NATIONAL  
NIGHT OUT**

Community Partnership

**at Marilyn Edgar Park**  
26531 S. Hillside Dr.  
Oak Ridge North, TX 77386



# Parents - A need to know!

## From the Police Department

Many people claim that social media is a menace, but few ever take the necessary steps to rid themselves of it. A Pew Research Center study found that sixty-four percent of U.S. adults say social media has a negative impact on their lives, but seventy-two percent maintain at least one social media account. There is now research establishing the rise of anxiety in correlation to the rise in the use of social media.

Aside from the decay of social media in our personal lives, parents are now allowing their children to have social media accounts at younger ages. Due to this uptick in use by adolescents, there has now been an increase in the use of social media by predators. Predators that seek to gain your child's trust and confidence away from their parents' protective eyes. Studies revealed that 89 percent of sexual advances directed at children occur in Internet

unfortunately you are wrong. Every time your child chats with a friend on a game platform, i.e. Roblox, they are using a chatroom. There are many children's apps that allow them to communicate with friends. These apps use third-party chatrooms for their programs such as Discord. Do you allow your child to have Instagram? Well, as of a 2019 study, Instagram, which has a direct message feature allowing users to "chat", is the leading social media platform for child grooming.

As a Detective, I have investigated child crimes which have involved the chatroom programs utilized in apps used by children. Numerous times the predator has made contact with the child during game play and presented themselves as another child. Teens are generally more at risk for predators as they are curious and want to be accepted. Because they are curious, they may



chatrooms or through instant messaging. As someone who grew up with the first dial up internet, we as parents too often assume that a chatroom is just the old AOL chatroom that we first discovered. The reality is that technology constantly evolves and if you are thinking your child has never used a chatroom,

talk to a predator willingly, sometimes even knowing it is dangerous. They often find themselves inadvertently providing the predator with information about their lives and location. Teens are also often deceived into believing they are in love with the person they are communicating with and are more



likely to agree to a face-to-face meeting. How can someone battle these issues while continuing to live in a world that is operating by technology?

**Below is a list of guidelines you can tell your kids to help them stay safe from predators.**

- If someone is flattering you online, you should be wary.
- Don't talk to anyone who wants to get personal.
- Keep in mind that people are not always who they say they are.
- Never make a decision to meet with someone you met online.
- Tell a parent or trusted adult if you encounter any problem.

Detective Shane Durham  
Oak Ridge North Police Department

# Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines

## From Public Works

The City of Oak Ridge North cares about the people we serve, so we have prepared this hurricane guide. “Are you ready for the Hurricane Season?” It will provide valuable information when a hurricane threatens or in the aftermath of the storm. Oak Ridge North is urging customers to have a personal emergency plan in place in case the water goes out. We will communicate with customers through the city website, Facebook, and Constant Contact.

### **Hurricane Preparedness: Are you ready for the Hurricane Season?**

During and after a hurricane, the water supply to your home can become contaminated and unfit to drink. To ensure your household has a safe and adequate water supply after natural disasters, take these precautions:

- Store enough drinking water for each family member and pet.
- Store water in clean, noncorrosive, tightly covered containers.
- Store containers in a cool, dark location.
- Collect water in bathtubs for non-drinking uses.

As soon as landfall is imminent or evacuation notices are issued during a hurricane warning, you can further protect the water supply going into your home and minimize property damage by following the guidelines shown below.

#### **To protect your hot water heater:**

- Turn off your water on the side of the home.
- Switch off the electrical circuit breakers.

#### **To have water for non-potable uses:**

- Fill up the bathtub.
- Use the water in the hot water heater.

#### **How to purify water:**

A “Boil Water” notice may be issued after a storm because the water has become unsafe to drink due to pipes breaking. If this occurs, you’ll want to have a safe and adequate drinking water supply in your home until service can be restored.

To purify the water bring it to a boil and boil vigorously for 3 to 5 minutes; let cool. You can add a pinch of salt, or pour back and forth between two containers to improve the taste.



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27202 Robinson Road

# Yard Maintenance 101

## From the Building Department

Let's go outside in the heat and mow the yard! Said no one who lives in Texas during the summer! Sad to say it is one of those jobs we all do not want to do, so we cut some corners. We put off yard maintenance. "I will do it this weekend or I will call to get a quote from a company to cut the yard, maybe I can get Jr. to do it (Yeah Right!). So the yard gets out of control. I myself have done this more times than I wish to admit. We all love a nice clean & trimmed yard, I know I do, and you might have a neighbor who might be out of town for an extended period of time, elderly or just not feeling well for whatever reason, help them out. While doing your yard, ask them if you can do theirs? It doesn't take that much more time or effort and it will give you the best feeling knowing you did a nice thing for someone who just might need a little help.

Be aware that high weeds or grass (normally 12-inches or more) is a code violation. This will get you a "Note" from the city asking you to resolve this issue. So what to do? Here are some tips or ideas you can try.

First, (my favorite) call a lawn service, especially if you are a busy family and your weekdays are full of work and your weekends are full of just going places with the family, Church, Baseball/Softball games, maybe a round of golf



or that occasional visit to your parents/grandparents to see how they are doing.

Or if you are one of those people (like me) that enjoys doing yard work, make a plan. Set aside "X" amount of hours to accomplish the project, mow your yard in the morning or late evening. Try to do this possibly the day before trash comes on Monday. Do not forget you will need pink trash tags (\$2.00 ea. tag) to go on each trash bag that you place



out on the curb otherwise they will be there forever! Place your mower height setting to high during the hot summer this will help your grass not burn and turn brown, also this helps with less grass trimmings, less grass trimmings equals less bags, then maybe you can place your grass trimmings in your trash can and not have to use any pink tags, can you say SAVINGS?

Please keep in mind while doing your yard work do not sweep, blow or shovel grass trimmings into the storm water drains. Yes this might be the easiest way to get rid of the mess but it is the best way to clog up the storm water drains and then we have a HUGE problem!

Did you know you can be fined for doing this? Yeah, let's not go there, but we do ask that if you see this happening please report it to this office, we will go by and visit with the homeowner and remind them of this rule. The city tries very hard to keep water draining during high rain events but if the storm drains are clogged by yard trimmings and trash it makes this a very difficult job. That's the HUGE problem I mentioned early. If you hire a yard service ask them "How do you get rid of the grass trimmings?" make sure the company understands they are not allowed to place trimmings in the storm drains.

Now once the yard is mowed, trimmed, equipment put away and clippings are placed in bags (don't forget your pink tags!) or trash cans you can sit back and admire your hard work with a tall glass of iced tea. Maybe even plan a backyard BBQ; please call when the burgers are ready.

# Upcoming Events & Thank You to Our Sponsors



**Oak Ridge North  
Annual  
Fall  
Festival**

Train Rides | Face Painting  
Food Trucks | Vendors  
Pumpkin Patch & more

**Free  
Entry**

October  
**21**  
2023

**Marilyn Edgar Park**  
26531 Hillside Dr Oak Ridge North  
Parking at 26620 I45 or  
Spring Pines Drive

For more information contact Christy,  
cmiller@oakridgenorth.com or 832-381-3215



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promise of cooler weather and  
great holidays are on the horizon.

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# Now Hiring

## City Contact Information



### Deputy Court Clerk

Now accepting applications for a Deputy Court Clerk. The clerk performs a variety of clerical and bookkeeping functions in support of the Municipal Court. A full job description is available at [www.oakridgenorth.com](http://www.oakridgenorth.com).

Contact City Secretary, Elizabeth Harrell at [eharrell@oakridgenorth.com](mailto:eharrell@oakridgenorth.com) or (281) 292-4648



## OAK RIDGE NORTH LIFEGUARDS



*We Appreciate you!*

### City of Oak Ridge North Monthly Meeting Schedule

City Council  
2nd & 4th Mondays 7:00 p.m.

Planning and Zoning  
1st Monday 7:00 p.m.

Economic Development Corporation  
3rd Monday 7:00 p.m.

Community Affairs Committee  
4th Tuesday 6:30 p.m.

For complete schedules and agendas visit:  
[oakridgenorth.com](http://oakridgenorth.com)

The public is ALWAYS welcome!

Mayor: Paul Bond  
Mayor Pro Tem: Alex Jones

#### Council Members:

Place 1: Rick Moffatt

Place 2: Clint McClaren

Place 4: Heather Smoot

Place 5: Frances Planchard

Heather Neeley, City Manager

Elizabeth Harrell, City Secretary

Tom Libby, Chief of Police

Jordan Buras, Director of Economic  
Development

Eva McCain, Director of Finance

John Beisert, Director of Community  
Development

James Corn, Director of Public Works



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