

## Willow Park Fire-Rescue Facebook Post

Tuesday, 11 October, 2022

### A MESSAGE FROM THE WILLOW PARK FIRE DEPARTMENT

On November 8, 2022, the citizens of Willow Park will have the opportunity to decide about the future of their fire services. Parker County Emergency Services District 1, which already covers the largest portion of our surrounding areas, has called an election on annexing our fire department into their agency.

Emergency Services Districts (ESDs) are political subdivisions of the State of Texas, created by voters in a local area to fund fire protection and emergency services. ESDs are a practical way to adequately support emergency services in many Texas municipalities as well as suburban and rural areas of the state, and through consolidation across a regional area, often provide a more efficient resource allocation response model that better protects the lives and property of citizens, while being a more cost-effective funding model for taxpayers.

Currently, Willow Park Fire-Rescue engages in regional response with surrounding areas. We frequently assist ESD1 on their calls, and they often assist us on our calls. The current funding model, however, has created challenges for the growth of our department within Willow Park.

Your Willow Park Fire-Rescue department currently employs 11 full-time employees, including administration. Should the election pass, the leadership of ESD1 has assured our firefighters they will all have a job with the new agency. In addition to lateral transfers, there are also improved benefits, competitive pay, and more opportunities for advancement with the ESD1. The staff – and consequently the City of Willow Park – will also have access to the greater resources and training opportunities that are provided by the ESD1.

ESD1 has assured us they are committed to maintaining the same level of response, professionalism, and service that Willow Park citizens have come to know and expect. The ladder truck and other apparatus that have been paid for by Willow Park taxpayers will remain stationed in Willow Park, as well as the current staff. The administrative staff of WPFR would

be retained by the city to continue their role in fire prevention and fire marshal services.

We know community outreach is valuable to our citizens and it is equally important to ESD1. Just as we visit schools and other organizations to teach fire safety and other educational programs, so does the ESD. Outreach and educational programming would continue in Willow Park.

Should the voters decide to make this change, we can assure you that Willow Park will continue to be a safe community passionately protected by a professional fire service. Should the voters decide NOT to make this change, you will still be passionately protected by a professional fire department.

We urge the voters to seek out accurate information from reliable sources and share it with their friends and neighbors, and on November 8, please take the time to make your voice heard and vote in this election.