



Oct. 21, 2015

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Engaging local youth a top priority for the City of Weatherford**

WEATHERFORD (CITY OF WEATHERFORD), Texas — Engaging, communicating and learning from local youth is underway for the City of Weatherford. The initiative is a top priority for Weatherford City Council and city manager Sharon Hayes who want to learn more about the needs, wants and concerns of local youth in Weatherford.

As Weatherford continues to experience positive growth, the overall plan is to develop and implement youth programs that groom future leaders for the Weatherford community. By partnering with local public and private schools, the goal is to develop stronger relationships with school administrators who can connect students with City of Weatherford elected officials and staff.

The City recently launched one of its youth programs by offering tours of city hall to third grade students. Approximately 900 students visited city hall and learned about each department within the City of Weatherford. Tours began at the council chamber in city hall where Mayor Dennis Hooks spoke about city operations and the purpose of city council meetings. Students then attended individual sessions with the Fire Department at Fire Station 1 and heard from all city departments at Cherry Park.

“The goal is to teach our local youth the importance of being civic minded,” said Mayor Dennis Hooks. “Partnering with our local schools is a major priority for the City and we hope to continue more collaboration in the future to learn about the needs of our youth.”

In conjunction, a Youth Advisory Council (YAC) was developed and adopted by City Council in September to engage high school students. The purpose of the YAC is to provide participation by local youth in municipal government and to routinely report to the Weatherford City Council. The YAC will be consultative in nature and charged with evaluating issues relevant to youth. It is established for the purpose of working, in its advisory capacity, within the community to promote healthy decisions, leadership skills and community involvement among the youth in the community. The program is scheduled to begin in November and is devoted to sophomores, juniors and seniors who reside within the city limits of Weatherford.



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“The City is moving forward with programs that correlate with statewide initiatives set by the Texas Municipal League,” said City Manager Sharon Hayes. “The third grade tours were a great way for the city to engage elementary students and our commitment to adopting a Youth Advisory Council is one way that we are trying to gain feedback from local youth at the high school level. Youth Advisory Councils are a state initiative and we look forward to seeing that program grow alongside the third grade tour program.”

To learn more about the Youth Advisory Council, please visit [www.weatherfordtx.gov/yac](http://www.weatherfordtx.gov/yac). For questions regarding youth engagement, please contact public relations manager Blake Rexroat at 817-598-4209 or [brexroat@weatherfordtx.gov](mailto:brexroat@weatherfordtx.gov).

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More information on the City of Weatherford: [www.weatherfordtx.gov](http://www.weatherfordtx.gov)

More information on the City of Weatherford Youth Advisory Council: [www.weatherfordtx.gov/yac](http://www.weatherfordtx.gov/yac)

**\*\*City of Weatherford\*\***

*Weatherford, Texas is a service oriented, yet still “small town” community that upgrades its infrastructure, celebrates and shares its rich history, and fosters quality economic growth – in a fiscally-responsible, even revenue-generating fashion.*