2025 Year End Review

We hope that you have had a great 2025 and enjoyed time with family and friends over the Christmas and New Year Holiday!

The City Council and staff wanted to share a look back on 2025 and also share upcoming activities for 2026 and beyond. In the absence of a local newspaper we hope that this is helpful. We will also be posting this and other updates to our city website (www.cityofmountvernontexas.com) and our Facebook page. Below is a view by department.

Public Works

We have invested a great deal of time and engineering expense over the past several years preparing the city to seek funding options for the upgrading of our water and wastewater systems as these have become dilapidated and badly in need of replacement and or repair. We are excited to share that the city has been notified that because of our planning and being "shovel ready" we will receive over **$15.2 million in loan forgiveness (grants) from the Texas Water Development Board**. The city will fund $1.185 million towards this work.

The scope of this work:

- Replace the 50-year-old Transite raw water pipeline from Lake Cypress Springs with a larger and safer pipeline that will position the city to meet current needs and handle anticipated growth over the next 50 years. This is $6.7 million of the project.
- Replace many of the water distribution lines throughout the city. This is $2.1 million of the project.
- Replace many of the wastewater collection lines throughout our city. This is $2.9 million of the project.
- Expansion of our wastewater treatment plant. Our plant was evaluated and determined to be undersized by engineering reports over 10 years ago. In recent years, the plant has had numerous issues due to its capacity constraints and systems that needed to be repaired or replaced. These upgrades will expand the current plant as well as bring it into full compliance as required by Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. This is $4.4 million of the project.

We continue to replace water and wastewater collections lines through our public works team. In prior years we would have contracted this out. Increasingly, we are bringing this work in house, saving the city a great deal of money.

In 2025 our Public Works team was very busy and as a council we decided to budget more aggressively for a number of projects that we deemed critically necessary especially after the major power outage of the area experienced and managed through in 2024. We felt the strain of our aged system badly during that event.

Here's a few key accomplishments by the team:

- Upgrades and operational improvements at the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Upgrades and operational improvements at the Water Treatment Plant
- Replacement of the raw water intake pumps at Lake Cypress Springs
- Replaced the aged non-functional generator at the lake to ensure delivery of raw water
- Replacement of aged generator at the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Replacement of water and wastewater service lines on Carthel and Arrington streets
- Resurfacing of Carthel, Arrington and East Elmwood streets

Fire Department

As the city and county grow, it has become increasingly necessary to look at ways to improve fire protection services. Over the years, we have been blessed to have been protected by many volunteer firemen and women and will continue to need their dedicated and selfless service county wide. I'm excited to share effective November 2025, that the City and County entered into an interlocal agreement that provides funding for **full time fire protection 24 hours a day 365 day of the year!** We will have 2 full-time fire fighters on staff at all times helping to reduce response time throughout the county. Along with the many volunteers, we have recently been able to respond rapidly enough to save 4 homes. I would like to give a special thank you to Fire Chief Blake Sheffield for his leadership and guiding us through the process to this milestone!

Mount Vernon & Franklin County Animal Shelter

Effective April 2025 the City of Mount Vernon, Franklin County, and PAWS of Franklin County entered into an interlocal agreement to provide animal control services throughout the county. The shelter is located on the South I-30 access road east of Mount Vernon and was previously home to our local vet clinic. The program is unique and getting off to a very successful start. PAWS is made up of many local volunteers and donors. Thank you PAWS!
Please stop in and visit the many pets in need of homes at our shelter!

Parks & Recreation

The City has received a $750,000 Texas Parks & Wildlife grant for renovation and upgrades at Little Creek Park. We are excited to share that after TP&W reviewed our plans with the funds, they asked us to apply for a second round of grant funding. We have submitted and are eager to hear results and looking forward to updating and sprucing up the park!

Financial Review

In October, the council approved contracting a municipal finance consultant to review the city's financial processes, systems, and expertise necessary to meet the demands of the city's current and projected growth. Through that process, we recognized opportunities and needs for improvement and have begun to implement them. We have initiated necessary changes to our organization and will continue to elevate our competencies throughout our city team.

Sales tax collections have grown 3.52% year over year. Property tax collections are higher even though the City Council did not increase the tax rate. This is due to increased valuations and new properties on the tax rolls such as Starbucks, Frito Lay, and Love's expansion and renovation.

We hope that this 2025 review is helpful and the council is excited with the great progress the city staff, is making in elevating our professionalism and fostering a "can do" atmosphere at City Hall. Please reach out with any questions or concerns as we are continually looking to improve where feasible.

On behalf of City Council and our staff, we wish you a Happy New Year!



Mayor Brad Hyman

Craig Lindholm, City Administrator
Rebecca Bailey, Council Member
Mary Keys, Council Member
Mark Huddleston, Mayor Pro-Tem
Harold Cason, Council Member
Martin Carrascosa, Council Member