



FAQs  
Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Why does our community need a Grow Northwest Initiative?*

Northwest Harris County is an unincorporated area of the county without the benefit of a mayor or town council. And yet this community has a burgeoning population the size of Denver, Colorado. Many typical functions of government are beyond the scope of county government to perform. This leaves gaps in services that should be filled in some way. In some communities, management districts assess a commercial property tax to fund community improvement, but our community has not chosen to establish a management district. Grow Northwest is the only vehicle our community has to support community and economic development.

2. *Who decided what the Grow Northwest projects would be?*

Through the course of four community workshops held in 2013 and a draft plan validated in meetings with about 75 stakeholders and companies in 2014, three priorities emerged that have been fully vetted by this community.

3. *What would Grow Northwest fund specifically?*

The three strategic priority areas to be funded by Grow Northwest are:

- 1) Safety & Security
- 2) Economic Development
- 3) Community Image & Branding

Grow Northwest project implementation extends over a four-year period. Each of these project areas has several specific projects that will be launched at a level and on a timeline that will be determined by the level of funding achieved. Details and ongoing plans can be found at [www.GrowHoustonNW.com](http://www.GrowHoustonNW.com) The Houston Northwest Chamber Board will be the decision-making body to determine the actions and timelines of project implementation.

4. *What happens if not enough money is raised? What if too much money is raised?*

We will raise what we can and implement what is possible based on funding levels. If we raise more than the established goal, it will be banked until a new set of Grow Northwest objectives is determined for 2018.

5. *Who decides how the money is spent?*

The Houston Northwest Chamber Board will function as the Grow Northwest Board, determining what projects will be implemented and on what timeline. All funds received by

Grow Northwest are segregated from the Chamber operating funds and deposited in a separate bank account.

6. *How will we be able to monitor Grow Northwest spending?*

The legislation that allows for the collection of funds through water bill check-off programs requires that the non-profit program operate under the Open Records Act. Therefore, financial reports and project progress will be posted quarterly on the Grow Northwest webpage, [www.GrowHoustonNW.com](http://www.GrowHoustonNW.com).

7. *Has the corporate community contributed to Grow Northwest?*

Starting in September 2014, a capital campaign was launched that has raised about \$330,000 in pledges to date primarily from local companies. Houston Northwest Medical Center and the Lanier Law Firm have each given in excess of \$100,000 pledges.

8. *What is the geography covered by "Cypress Creek Community"?*

The Cypress Creek Community is a loosely defined area in the northwest quadrant of Harris County and will be ultimately determined by the area's residents. If an area does not relate to the brand, they will not be forced to use it. However currently, it has been embraced by areas from Willowbrook to I-45, from Cypress Creek Parkway north to Louetta and beyond.

9. *Are administrative costs from Grow Northwest paid to the Chamber?*

During this first four-year cycle, administrative costs to administer Grow Northwest are not paid to the Chamber. Starting in 2016, the Chamber will charge Grow Northwest for in-house printing used. In the future, if managing Grow Northwest becomes too taxing for the Houston Northwest Chamber, administrative costs may be charged. These charges will be fully reported in the online financial reports and will be more fiscally responsible than creating another non-profit entity and the resulting duplication of costs.

10. *Could Grow Northwest funds go toward other community improvements like sidewalks, street lighting, upgraded bus stops or landscaping for example?*

Grow Northwest funds are presently designated for the three priority projects defined by this community through the four-year cycle ending in 2018. After that time, the Chamber will gather input from the community again and determine a plan for implementation point forward. The collective community will voice their needs and any of the above-named projects could be identified.

11. *Are donations to Grow Northwest tax-deductible?*

If donations for Grow Northwest are specifically designated for the Houston Northwest Chamber Foundation, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit corporation and a partner in Grow Northwest, these gifts by individuals can be tax-deductible. As always, it is best to consult one's tax advisor before counting a deduction.