



Tiffany D. Thomas
Houston City Council Member, District F

June 12, 2026

FY27 Budget Passes 15–1

While I was not present for Wednesday’s FY27 budget vote, I would have voted **no** based on a few concerns with both the process and implementation of the Solid Waste restructuring.

The decision to move the Solid Waste Department into the Combined Utility System should not have been embedded within the budget without committee discussion, Council deliberation, and meaningful community engagement.

Houstonians who rely on garbage collection, heavy trash pickup, and recycling services deserved to be part of that conversation from the beginning—not after the decision was made.

Residents will now absorb a new administrative fee that will gradually increase to **\$25 per month by 2032**.

This debate reminded me of the 2021 Consent Decree. At the time, a fee was implemented to address long-standing wastewater infrastructure needs, and I voted in support because the investment was necessary.

Yet every April 1, my office still hears from residents struggling with higher water bills. That experience has stayed with me and reinforces my belief that when the government asks more of its residents, it is better to communicate on the front end rather than the back end.

I’m not opposed to paying for the level of service we expect. We must have an honest conversation about what it takes to provide reliable solid waste services and other core city functions.

This budget is not without merit. It funds essential personnel, infrastructure, and services that keep our city operating, including critical investments in drainage and our water system. I also appreciate my colleagues’ successful amendments to make city government more transparent and effective.

A few budget items worth highlighting:

- **Police and Fire Overtime:** An adopted amendment now requires quarterly reporting to Council committee, providing greater transparency into one of the city’s largest and fastest-growing expenditures. Police and fire overtime currently account for approximately 60% of the City’s overtime budget.
- **Water Fund Evaluation:** The City will evaluate the creation of a Water Fund to help households needing financial assistance with the new administrative fee.
- **Code Enforcement:** While the proposed amendment was ultimately withdrawn, Houston Public Works committed to dedicating additional labor resources as staffing levels increase.



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- **Illegal Dumping:** The adopted \$3 million investment will strengthen our Hot Spot Team's ability to address chronic illegal dumping across Houston.

If you'd like to learn more about the outstanding work of the District F Hot Spot Team and the impact they've made in our community, I encourage you to read our [2025 Annual Report](#).

Thank you to everyone who completed the budget survey and participated in community meetings across Houston and online. Your voices matter, and your engagement makes better government possible.

C. O. Bradford, former HPD Chief and At-Large Council Member, once shared sage advice that I often remind myself of: public service is difficult, and it is supposed to be, because it forces us to be deliberate in providing solutions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tiffany D. Thomas".

Tiffany D. Thomas
Council Member, City of Houston
Chair, Housing & Affordability Committee