

# THE COLUMNS

A Publication for the Residents of Mission Hills

July 2021

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[www.missionhillssks.gov](http://www.missionhillssks.gov)

**SAVE THE DATE**



**FOOD TRUCK POP-UPS**

JULY 8 + JULY 29

At Sunken Garden

5pm-8:00pm

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## A Letter from Mayor Dickey

*Fellow Residents:*

“What a Long, Strange Trip It's Been.”

– Grateful Dead



What a difference a year makes! While the pandemic is not over, the change from last June is simply fantastic. I hope the vast majority of you have been vaccinated, and encourage those of you (of age) who can be vaccinated to do so!

The first Saturday in June was our first community event in almost 18 months. I want to thank the Community Engagement Committee and all attendees. The evening was beautiful, the band was great, and it was simply wonderful to walk the lawn at City Hall and see so many residents (and kids!) in attendance. The City recently mailed a postcard with the full 2021 event calendar or you can also find it on our website, [www.missionhills.gov](http://www.missionhills.gov), and I hope to see everyone at many of the upcoming events.

I have always said that public safety is our number one priority. I am honored to let you know that Safewise ranked Mission Hills the #1 safest city in Johnson County and #5 in all of Kansas. Thanks to you, our police and our staff because it takes that full partnership to be successful. That said, we all need to maintain vigilance please. Lock your cars. Close your garage doors. Don't leave your keys in your car or valuables in plain view.

Last month I had the opportunity to attend the Police Department's Fallen Officer Memorial at Prairie Village City Hall. We are fortunate to have women and men who put on the uniform every day to keep us safe. It was a very moving ceremony.

Changing gears, the Council made final decisions on the Tomahawk Road project at the April Council Meeting. We will be re-doing Tomahawk from Mission Road to State Line in 2022. Over the last twelve months, the Council has heard the feedback from residents and we will be making three changes:

1. Re-configuring the intersection at Mission Drive and Tomahawk to add a true crosswalk for families headed to our playground and City Hall park, as well as adding additional greenspace to our City.
2. Adding more visible crosswalks (including illumination and striping) at several locations on Tomahawk to enhance pedestrian safety.
3. Changing the speed limit to 25mph (which has already been implemented).

For more information, visit [www.missionhillssks.gov](http://www.missionhillssks.gov)

# Letter from the Mayor (continued)

## **A few more quick notes:**

1. The Council and Staff had our annual budget retreat last month and we are financially sound. Our bond rating remains AAA and we anticipate no increase in the mil levy for 2022 (which is almost two decades of a flat mil levy).
2. The Park Board is working on enhancing the protections for our tree canopy. Prairie Village recently passed a tree ordinance that has a host of great ideas. More to come on this topic later this year.
3. The Council, with great work from the Planning Commission, adopted the Comprehensive Stormwater Document this spring. This document is the compendium of our ordinances and guidelines regarding stormwater.
4. With the progress on the pandemic, all Board and Council meetings will resume in-person starting in July.

Thank you all again for your feedback throughout the past year and a half. Have a wonderful and safe 4th of July and summer.

As always, please continue to provide us feedback on how and where we can do better. You are welcome to call City Hall at 913-362-9620 or email [info@missionhillssks.gov](mailto:info@missionhillssks.gov). You are always welcome to email me directly at [mayor@missionhillssks.gov](mailto:mayor@missionhillssks.gov).

## **CRIME PREVENTION**

As we move into nicer weather this summer, remember the #9PM Routine. We all stay out later and enjoy the outdoors. Make sure to close your garage doors, secure you vehicles, and remove valuables from your cars. Thieves are looking for easy targets and following the #9PM Routine is one way to keep your valuables protected and your families safe!

### **#9PMRoutine**

- ⚠️ Remove valuables from vehicles
- ⚠️ Lock vehicle doors
- ⚠️ Close the garage door
- ⚠️ Close & lock all exterior doors
- ⚠️ Turn on exterior light
- ✅ #9PMRoutine complete



# Planning for a Better Tomorrow

Bryce Morgan, *Planner*



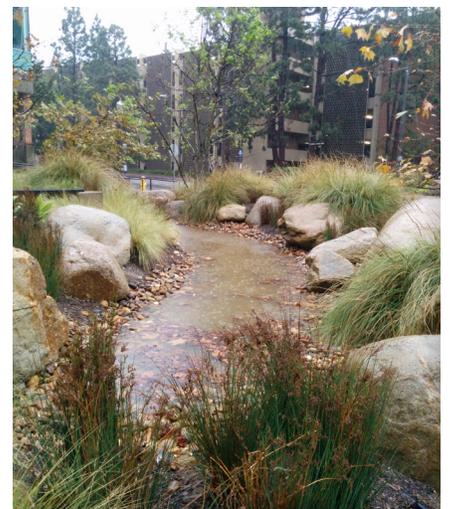
## Highlights from the Comprehensive Water Policy Update

Recently approved, the Comprehensive Water Policy Update is a one-stop-shop document for all water-related policies. Specifically, it references all locations in the City Code where water is addressed along with brief descriptions. This comprehensive list is similar to the Quality of Life ordinance, which has worked wonderfully to put all of the active construction related ordinances into one place, for the neighbors and contractors benefit.

Placing fences, walls, berms, or swales to move the natural flow of water or prohibit water from soaking into the ground violates City Code. Holding water onto a neighbor's property or directing water away from the owner's property onto another property, including the City's Right of Way (ROW), is also a violation. For creek adjacent residents, any debris creating a blockage in the creek channel should be removed as quickly as possible.

**More than 95% of the creeks in Mission Hills are privately owned.**

Property owners are often trying to deal with the natural flow of water across their own property. If you would like more information on this topic, please go to our website, <https://www.missionhillsks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7028/Comprehensive-Water-Policy>, or brochures are available at City Hall.



Example of swale used for water management

# Planning for a Better Tomorrow

## Riparian Corridor and the Health of your Creek Wall

A riparian buffer zone consists of appropriate native vegetation along the banks that would:

- Enhance the habitat function of the riparian corridor
- Improve bank stability
- Filter pollutants & improve water quality



The City has adopted an Open Channel Master Plan. Stream buffers were identified and evaluated on both banks along each of the channel reaches. The existing stream buffers are classified into four categories (see photo above).

**The most common stream buffer condition identified was "None".** Increasing your stream buffer has the benefit of possibly increasing the longevity of your section of channel walls.



**An example of no stream buffer**

By capturing rain water where it lands and infiltrating or slowing down the stormwater through environmental improvements the pollutants and sediment have a chance to settle out rather than create adverse affects in the waterways within the City. These facilities can help promote water quality of our streams and creeks, ultimately helping to improve the water quality downstream. The City of Mission Hills participates in Johnson County's Contain the Rain reimbursement program for residents who install sustainable landscape solutions that benefit stormwater.



**An example of a healthy stream buffer**

This program is an innovative approach to controlling stormwater thus improving water quality and aiding in reducing erosion. This grant includes up to a 50% match up to \$1000 of native plantings and a 50% match on native trees up to \$150 each (limit of 2 trees).

If you are interested in learning more please contact city hall or visit <https://www.missionhillsks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6110/Stormwater-Environmental-Grant-Program-Description-and-Requirements-2021>.

# Out on a Limb; Tree Talk

Jesse Kirk, City Arborist

As I write this in the beginning of June, it looks like we'll finally be getting a little break from the wet weather. The National Weather Service recorded 6.15" of rain for Johnson County through the month of May, just over  $\frac{3}{4}$ " above average. Most plants are probably happy with the mild wet weather but certain species or plants sited near down spouts or in heavy clay soils may show signs of decline. Lots of tree species, sycamore especially, are suffering from anthracnose, a foliar fungus. This cool wet weather favors fungal infections so if you have susceptible species such as spruce or crabapple you should be aware. A series of fungicide applications early in the spring can keep your plants healthy and attractive.

Prairie Village recently adopted new tree protection ordinances. We're exploring updating ours as well to mirror some of their language. They're also seeing significant numbers of tear downs and rebuilds with many builders conducting projects in both Cities. If we can simplify our ordinance language and utilize some of the same parameters, hopefully it will be easier for Contractors to understand what is expected of them and ultimately create a better result that we all want, healthier trees! As we move forward with our tree protection ordinance update, we are going to be focusing on:

- *Educating builders and homeowners to the City's policies and the value of mature landscaping prior to being issued a permit.*
- *Verifying protective fencing is present and in good condition on ALL trees within the construction area not indicated for removal.*
- *Changing penalties for trees damaged during construction outside of the City's right of way to match those of street trees.*
- *Explore options to close the the loop hole that limits tree retention and protection guidelines to times when there is an open permit.*
- *Right of way tree planting protocols for homeowners.*

Almost weekly, a resident tells me that our tree canopy was one of the reasons they moved here. Studies of real estate transactions have shown that healthy mature trees can increase homes resale values by 6%-18%. In 2020, the mean appraised value of a home in Mission Hills was \$1,310,959 which means your trees and their protection during construction are a \$79k-\$236k investment in your property.

On top of adding to a property's resale value, well placed trees lower utility bills, increase pavement life span, minimize urban heat island effects, improve aesthetics, help manage storm water, store carbon, and reduce air borne pollutants. Although the cost to plant and establish a new tree is significant, it's an investment that pays dividends in the future.

*-A man has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade trees under which he knows full well he will never sit. - D. Elton Trueblood*

**The City will observe Arbor Day on August 9th at 6:15 pm prior to the City Council meeting. Please join us as we plant a tree on the City Hall grounds. 2021 will be the 29th year for Mission Hills to be certified as a "Tree City USA" by the National Arbor Day Foundation.**



# MISSION HILLS

KANSAS

6300 State Line Road  
Mission Hills, KS 66208

*The Columns* is published three times a year for the residents of Mission Hills.

**Mayor:**  
David W. Dickey

**City Council:**  
Bill Bruning  
Barbara Nelson  
Braden Perry  
Eden Thorne  
Andy Weed

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# Mission Hills

## Trash & Recycling Schedule

 **Monday**

\* City wide pick up of yard waste

 **Tuesday**

 **Wednesday**

 **Thursday**

 **Friday**

\* Trash and Recycling pick up will occur on the same day

### Holidays

Trash and recycling will not be picked up on the following holidays:  
**New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day**

Should one of these holidays fall on or before your normal pickup day, your solid waste, recyclables and yard waste will be collected the following day

