



# THE COLUMNS

A Publication for the Residents of Mission Hills

**March 2023**

Visit us at  
[www.missionhillssks.gov](http://www.missionhillssks.gov)



## **BULKY ITEM PICKUP**

April 1, 2023

Items must be placed  
at the curb no later  
than 7:00am

## **Contents**

Letter from the Mayor  
Con't / Upcoming Events  
p. 2

Out on a Limb p.3

Capital Investments -  
Several Detours Ahead  
p.5

Prairie Village Police  
Department Reminder  
p.6

## A Letter from Mayor Dickey

*Fellow Residents:*

Walking in our City in March always makes me smile. Throughout our City, thousands upon thousands of bulbs are breaking through the ground. The first buds on trees are making their appearance. In just a few weeks' time, our public and private spaces will burst with color. We are fortunate to have a City with such beauty.

Crime and safety continue to be our top priority. You should have received a dedicated letter in early March summarizing 2022, as well as discussing some of the focus areas for 2023 and providing reminders of how you can continue to help. If you did not receive it, a copy is posted on the City's website.

In summary, please lock your cars, complete the 9pm routine every day, and call the non-emergency police line at 913-642-5151 if you see something suspicious (and 911 if it is an emergency!). As I said in the letter, deterring crime is an "infinite game."

With the beginning of Spring, our capital projects are also gearing up. A big thank you for renewing the dedicated infrastructure sales tax in November that helps immensely in keeping our streets, sidewalks and parks in great shape!

We do not have any single, huge capital project in 2023 like Tomahawk last year, but we will have crews throughout the City in places like 70th Terrace, 66th Street and elsewhere. Additionally, Water One, Kansas Gas and various broadband providers continue to do work across the City. If you ever have questions or concerns about any project, please do not hesitate to submit a See-Click-Fix ticket on our website, or call City Hall.

Another wonderful capital project that we hope to complete this summer is an upgrade to our playground at City Hall. This fun amenity is well-used by our residents, and we want to update and improve it.



# Letter from the Mayor

(continued)

Also on the capital front, our neighbors in Prairie Village are planning an immense flood control project on Mission Road from Tomahawk to 66th Street. This project will raise Mission Road several feet to remove it from flooding. The Council, out of an abundance of caution, hired Burns & McDonnell to do an independent evaluation of this project to ensure it would not have any negative downstream water impacts on Mission Hills. I am pleased to say that B&M concluded that it would not. Nonetheless, this project will be disruptive to those of you who travel to the Prairie Village shops. More to come on the exact timing of this project.

The last capital item to update you on is the low water crossing at Mission Drive and Belinder that leads into Fairway. The Council will be assessing several options this year to upgrade and/or change this crossing, and will conduct public meetings to ensure all resident feedback and concerns are heard.

Spring also brings a new year of events from our Community Engagement Committee. These events have been a fantastic addition to our City and an excellent use of our public spaces. Look for the full schedule later in this newsletter.

As always, a huge thank you to all our Boards and Committees. These residents tackle issues large and small that continue to make our City an exceptional place to live.

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@missionhillsks.gov](mailto:info@missionhillsks.gov). You are always welcome to email me directly at [mayor@missionhillsks.gov](mailto:mayor@missionhillsks.gov). Enjoy the colors of spring and we hope to see you at many of the community events this year!

## Upcoming Events

**Beverages with Byron**  
 Mon, April 24  
 5:15-6:30 p.m  
 City Hall

**Concert in the Park**  
 Sat, May 20  
 5:30-8 p.m  
 City Hall Park

**Keim Street Fair**  
 Sat, June 3  
 4:30-9:30 p.m  
 Belinder Circle

**Food Truck Thursdays**  
 June 8  
 June 22  
 5:30-8 p.m  
 Sunken Garden

# Out on a Limb; Tree Talk

Jesse Kirk, *City Arborist*



Stress on perennial plants is cumulative. In other words, declining trees are likely the result of multiple stressors. It's my opinion that many of our tree issues begin as abiotic (environmental rather than insect) issues. Construction, improper site selection, drought or excessive irrigation, and extreme temperature swings weaken the tree allowing insects or disease to move in and finish it off. Some of these we have no control over but by minimizing the stress we can we make the plant material more resilient to additional biotic and abiotic stressors. Start by making sure plants are sited correctly, some smaller understory trees won't do well in full sun or windy sites. Spruces in particular, need to be sited in sunny areas with good air circulation to minimize foliar diseases like needlecast. If you want your trees to thrive rather than slowly languish til death after a construction project, ensure that they are adequately protected. For substantial construction we require a tree protection plan, but I can't be on site every day and once the damage is done or the soil is compacted, options are limited. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Make sure your contractor knows how much you value the trees in your landscape.

Other easy ways to minimize the stress to your trees are:

- Establish the appropriate root flare, over time grass clippings and mulch can build up and degrade changing the grade of the tree. We want to see a "flare" where the trunk meets the soil. If your tree looks like a telephone pole it was planted too deep or over time the grade has been changed.
- Check and cut any girdling or circling roots. Over time as the trunk and root grows in circumference the vascular system of the tree can become choked. This often results in die back or decline above the affected portion of the trunk. I typically use a chisel and small sledge to cut these. A flat side on your tree is indicative of a girdling root, often beneath the soil or mulch.
- Proper mulching is an easy way to reduce moisture evaporation from the soil, buffer soil temperature, reduce turf competition and increase the organic matter, improving your soil and available nutrients to the tree. Mulch should be kept approximately 2"-3" deep and should not be in contact with the trunk.
- When we're experiencing a dry spell water your trees. Deep infrequent waterings are best, essentially the opposite of how you water turf during the growing season. Approximately an inch a week, trickled in, throughout the dripline of your tree is an easy way to ensure your tree has the necessary vitality to fend off secondary stresses. Watering evergreens during winter is especially important as they continue to transpire since they retain their foliage through the winter.

For 2023, We are pruning Mission Hills Homes Company in its entirety as well as the red maples along Belinder Ave. between 63rd St. and Tomahawk Rd. By the time this is published pruning will likely be complete. We strive to prune one homes association each year. In January of 2024, We will begin pruning Indian Hills Homes Association. Cyclical pruning during the dormant season is a cost-effective way to approach pruning as it reduces storm damage and miscellaneous pruning costs throughout the rest of the year.

## Contain the Rain

---

Green infrastructure is an important component in managing storm water runoff. The City partners with Johnson County to administer a cost share program to reduce storm water runoff. Residents are eligible for up to 50% of the costs (within program limits) to plant buffers or swales, install native tree species, or add cisterns, pervious pavement or rain collection barrels.

Installations for the program typically run from April 1 - October 31, but applications will be accepted year round. For additional program information or to submit an application please visit [www.missionhillsks.gov/354/Contain-the-Rain](http://www.missionhillsks.gov/354/Contain-the-Rain)

---



# BEVERAGES

with  
*Byron*

On Monday, April 24, Police Chief Byron Roberson and officers from the Prairie Village Police Department and residents can come together in an informal, neutral space to discuss community issues, build relationships, and enjoy a free beverage courtesy of the City. All residents are invited to attend. The event is from 5:15pm-6:30pm. at City Hall.

# Capital Investments – Several Detours Ahead

---

The City dedicates about 35% of its annual budget to capital projects and capital maintenance. This work is partially funded by the 0.25% sales tax that was recently renewed by Mission Hills' voters. The 0.25% sales tax generates about \$250,000 annually. Capital projects include large scale street and stormwater improvements, and capital maintenance includes projects smaller in scope such as sealing new concrete, spot concrete replacement of sidewalk panels, curbs and drive approaches, and crack sealing.



Our 2023 capital improvement project program includes the streets below. Our standard projects include replacing all the curb on the street, installing under curb drain, replacement of standard driveway approaches that are in disrepair, upgrading the stormwater system, and milling/overlaying the roadway with new asphalt. The City will communicate additional details to the residents who live adjacent to these projects. Several utilities, namely Kansas Gas and WaterOne, are planning improvements to their infrastructure along these stretches as well – their work has already begun in several locations.

- 70th Street (State Line Road to Overhill)
- 66th Street (Belinder to Tomahawk Road)
- Indian Lane (66th Street to Tomahawk Road) – this project includes significant stormwater work.
- 70th Terrace (State Line Road to Overhill) – this project includes rebuilding the road base, which will involve more time than a typical project.

Capital maintenance projects scheduled for this year include crack sealing streets as needed, applying a protective sealant to all new concrete, spot concrete replacement identified during our annual review process and milling and overlaying a section of Mission Drive (from approximately 56th Street south to the Verona Columns Park intersection).

Thank you for your patience as we make these important investments in our infrastructure.

---

## Ground Cover

In nature as well as the urban environments where we live, trees and turf have an antagonistic relationship. Both thrive in the absence of the other. We receive calls every year from residents struggling to grow thick turf due to surface roots or shade from nearby trees. Generally, our heaviest sun comes from the south and southwest. These areas with thinner grass are often shaded due to growth from adjacent properties and there's little pruning that can be done to change the light to the turf. In these instances, a quality shade tolerant ground cover is a good alternative. English ivy, euonymous or vinca work well in these shady spots, but there are other alternatives. Kansas State University has put together a publication regarding ground cover options that is available at: [www.missionhillssks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8097/Ground-Covers](http://www.missionhillssks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8097/Ground-Covers)



# MISSION HILLS

K A N S A S

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

**City of Mission Hills**

**Ph: 913-362-9620**

[info@missionhillsks.gov](mailto:info@missionhillsks.gov)

Presorted Std.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 619  
Kansas City, MO



## ***A REMINDER FROM PRAIRIE VILLAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT***

The number of police reports involving identity theft and scams rise every year near tax season. The Crime Prevention Unit would like to remind residents of a few Identity Theft Prevention Tips:

- Shred all documents with sensitive information and go “paperless” if possible
- When purchasing online, verify the website is secure
- Review debit card/bank account activity frequently
- Use a credit monitoring service
- Pay inside at gas stations to avoid possible skimmers at the gas pump
- If you receive a telephone call, never give out any personal information over the phone