

SPRING + SUMMER 2019

KCMO.GOV

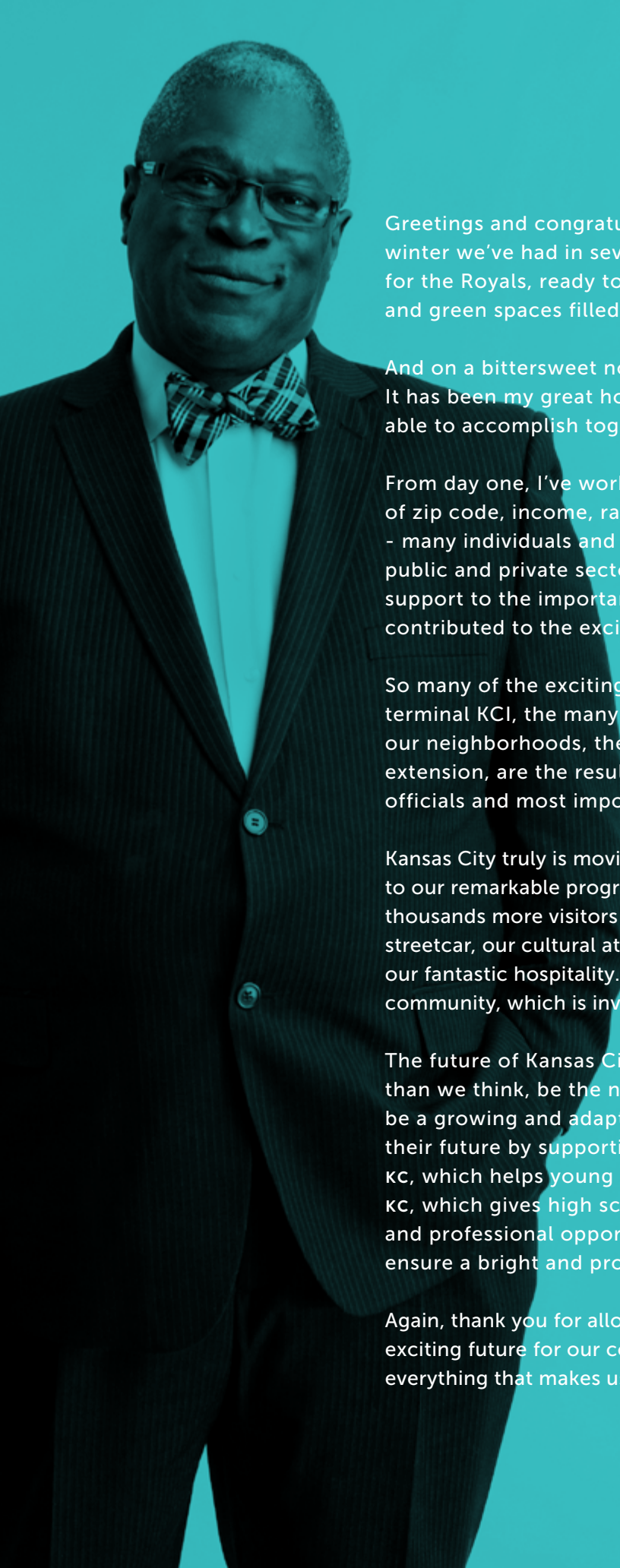
# KCMore

CITY OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT MAGAZINE



MORE INNOVATION. MORE TECHNOLOGY. MORE ARTS. MORE CULTURE. MORE DATA.  
MORE TRANSPARENCY. MORE GREEN. MORE ENGAGEMENT.





GREETINGS FROM  
Mayor James

Greetings and congratulations on making it through what felt like the longest winter we’ve had in several years. I’m ready for spring in Kansas City - ready for the Royals, ready to see the fountains flowing, and ready to see our parks and green spaces filled with our residents enjoying the outdoors.

And on a bittersweet note, I’m ready for my time as mayor to come to a close. It has been my great honor to serve you, and I’m proud of what we’ve been able to accomplish together over the past eight years.

From day one, I’ve worked to make Kansas City better for all of us, regardless of zip code, income, race or gender. And I certainly wasn’t working alone - many individuals and organizations across our City’s neighborhoods, and public and private sectors have dedicated their time, resources and financial support to the important efforts that have strengthened our City and contributed to the exciting momentum we currently enjoy.

So many of the exciting projects now underway, such as the new single terminal KCI, the many infrastructure repairs and improvements throughout our neighborhoods, the new convention hotel, and soon, the streetcar extension, are the result of years of work by dedicated civic leaders, elected officials and most importantly, voters.

Kansas City truly is moving forward, and the country is taking notice. Thanks to our remarkable progress and excellent work of VISITKC, we’re welcoming thousands more visitors - and new residents - every year. Visitors love our streetcar, our cultural attractions, sporting venues, food, shopping and of course, our fantastic hospitality. This is a testament to you and your support of our community, which is invaluable and an essential ingredient to our City’s success.

The future of Kansas City is in the hands of our children, who will, sooner than we think, be the next generation of leaders and part of what needs to be a growing and adaptable skilled workforce. We must continue to invest in their future by supporting our local schools and programs like TURN THE PAGE KC, which helps young students read proficiently by the third grade, and HIRE KC, which gives high school and college-age students access to internships and professional opportunities. There’s no greater investment we can make to ensure a bright and prosperous future for Kansas City.

Again, thank you for allowing me to serve as your Mayor. I look forward to an exciting future for our community, and I hope you continue to support and enjoy everything that makes us the best city in this country. That’s how we do KC!

  
MAYOR SYLVESTER “SLY” JAMES

Table of Contents

To view this and past issues of KCMOre online, visit [KCMO.GOV/KCMORE](https://www.kcmo.gov/kcmore)

FROM LAND BANK  
TO AQUAPONICS  
Page 02

NEW PARKS &  
REC DIRECTOR  
Page 06

NEXT UP  
KC  
Page 07

NO BUSINESS LIKE  
SNOW BUSINESS  
Page 10

NTDF  
NEWS  
Page 11

NEW DIGS AT  
NEIGHBORHOODS  
Page 13

2018 BIKE KC  
MASTER PLAN  
Page 16

GO KC  
PROJECTS  
Page 18

CAPITAL PROJECTS  
UPDATE  
Page 19

FEDERAL FLOOD  
PROTECTION  
Page 21

KC STAT  
DASHBOARD  
Page 22

TOW  
REFUNDS  
Page 23

HELPFUL  
RESOURCES  
Page 27



**ON THE COVER:** From a once vacant Land Bank property to a now thriving farm, our Peace in the Valley cover story explores Nile Valley Aquaponics and its impact on our community.

**STAFF** **Chris Hernandez**, City Communications Director  
**Rod Richardson**, City Editor  
**Karen Lim**, Graphic Designer + Photographer  
**Jose Gonzalez**, Graphic Designer + Photographer

A PUBLICATION of the  
**City Communications Office**  
City of Kansas City, Missouri





## Peace in the Valley

WRITTEN BY: *Tamela Handie*, PHOTOS BY: *Karen Lim*

Dre Taylor is committed to raising awareness about aquaponics and he knows his noble quest starts with helping people understand the concept. Taylor describes aquaponics as raising fish and vegetables, using fish waste to provide nutrients to plants, in a self-sustaining system. Inspired by the Nile River, which is historically considered the primary source for cultivating vegetables and fish, Nile Valley Aquaponics (NVA) is Taylor's passion.

NVA isn't simply a massive greenhouse at the Northwest corner of 29<sup>th</sup> & Wabash. No, this operation spans five lots, three of which are former Land Bank properties, and offers hope and opportunity for many in a part of town long seen as under-served.

NVA opened a little more than three years ago, and it is one of five commercial aquaponics operations in the country. Funding for NVA comes from grants, partnerships

and sales revenue from fresh produce at the greenhouse.

Taylor's interest in aquaponics was spawned in 2011 after meeting Will Allen, voted one of Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World, at an aquaponics workshop at East High School in Kansas City. Taylor was fascinated by Allen's ability to grow a million pounds of food on less than three acres of land.

Three full-time employees assist



Taylor with growing plants, harvesting, feeding the fish and water testing. The employees also help to sell local, fresh, pesticide and herbicide-free food, reducing the environmental footprint. Seasonal food offerings include tomatoes, peppers, collard greens, kale, lettuce, arugula, microgreens, wheatgrass, carrots and tilapia.

Taylor’s vision for NVA is, “to provide access to healthy food, community and economic development, health education, and also prevent crime. My overall goal is to implement a system that can be duplicated in other cities.”

Community and economic development has been accomplished by hiring neighborhood residents and kids to work at the facility. According to Taylor, NVA brings neighbors together like a family at the facility and they help look after the property. “We took vacant lots, once riddled by prostitution and drug use, and created a useable and peaceful urban oasis where crime once took place.” Taylor said.

The friendly goats that Taylor uses to help maintain the property also serve as a main attraction for the students who tour NVA every couple of weeks. Approximately 1,500 to 2,000 people visit every year, and more than 40 countries have been represented at the facility.

Social media is Taylor’s go-to source of marketing and is helping NVA

to capture attention from curious onlookers across the globe. Thus far, Taylor has traveled to China, Washington D.C., Oklahoma, Iowa and Wisconsin to tell the NVA story. Additionally, he’s frequently invited to speak around town and participate on various panels.

.....

“We took vacant lots, once riddled by prostitution and drug use, and created a useable and peaceful urban oasis where crime once took place.”

/ DRE TAYLOR

.....

“Nile Valley Aquaponics and owner Dre Taylor are proving to be a tremendous community asset,” said Terry Rynard, KCMO Parks and Recreation Director. “Our mission at KC Parks has three pillars -health and wellness, social equity and conservation. We find Nile Valley is in perfect alignment with our mission.”

Another facet of NVA is “Males to Men,” a mentoring program Taylor founded in 2013 to teach boys everything from manners (how to treat young ladies), changing tires and fluids in a car, to dancing. The

boys also learn aquaponics, how to breed insects and how to help maintain the garden. They also get to experience aviation in Kansas City on private planes flown by black pilots.

Taylor also founded KC Urban Farm Co-op. Last year, he partnered with the City’s Park and Recreation Department and Give and Grow to plant 200 fruit trees (300-ft rows of raspberries, blackberries and fig trees) in Swope Park as part of Phase One. Phase Two is underway and is expected to wrap up this year. It will bring a new greenhouse with tropical trees growing inside behind the dog park in Swope Park.

Missouri’s recent approval of medical marijuana motivated Taylor to get educated on the subject and explore possibilities. Any potential dispensary would be established elsewhere, completely separate from the NVA. Taylor says he would use the proceeds to create an incubator program to help cultivate skill sets for teens.

As for what’s on the horizon, Taylor’s dream is to create an urban NVA model that can be franchised and he’s “looking forward to partnering and working with the new Kansas City Mayor and City Council once they are elected.”

To learn more about all of the great things happening at 29<sup>th</sup> & Wabash, visit [nilevalleyaquaponics.com](http://nilevalleyaquaponics.com).





# The Natural

WRITTEN BY: Rod Richardson

PHOTO BY: Karen Lim

If you know even a little bit about Terry Rynard, then you know she's a natural fit as Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Kansas City, Missouri.

As a child blessed with an abundance of energy and curiosity, she often walked through Buckeye Greenway Park on her way to Chouteau Elementary. At Buckeye, she was inspired by Parks and Recreation leaders who stayed after school to teach sports or do arts and crafts projects. These adults provided the leadership and structure to help kids stay out of trouble. They also proved to be role models who inspired Rynard to pursue much bigger things in the world of recreation.

Just being outside and going to the park every day in the summer for organized activities became staples for Rynard. At 16, she found a job as a seasonal worker whipping weeds for Parks and Recreation. It only took a few summers before she graduated to a riding mower, where she and two other girls proved to be more than a match for the boys doing the same work. If one of the boys could mow a park in an hour, Karen, Terry or Susan would mow

I was, and still am very competitive. I wanted to make sure *no one* could ever say "*the girls*" aren't able to do this work."

/ TERRY RYNARD

it in 45 minutes. If the guys were carrying a roll of sod, the girls would try to carry two rolls each. And, so it went for six summers while she finished high school and college.

"I was, and still am very competitive," Rynard said. "I wanted to make sure no one could ever say 'the girls' aren't able to do this work."

Rynard graduated in 1986 with a degree in History and Education and was so certain all she wanted to do was teach and coach, she never considered Parks and Recreation as a career. As a seasonal equipment operator in 1987, she got an opportunity to become a full-time equipment operator until she found a teaching job. Thirty-one years later she's still working for Parks and Recreation, but no longer looking for a teaching job.

Her career with KCMO Parks is expansive. From her humble start as a seasonal worker to equipment operator, to municipal management trainee, to general supervisor, to area superintendent at facility maintenance and the south district, to assistant park superintendent, to deputy director and, ultimately, director, she's pretty much done it all. This experience, she says, is worth far more than any degree.

"Although I worked at Parks and Recreation all through high school and college, it never dawned on me that it could be a career," she said. "However, those education classes have come in quite handy over the years. Getting my MPA from the

Bloch school at UMKC also prepared me well for this role"

When it comes to naming the people most responsible for her success, Rynard isn't shy about giving credit where credit is due. She says she had a lot of good teachers, coaches and mentors along the way. She feels blessed that her parents adopted her as a 3-week old baby and have always supported her crazy dreams. She's been married to Matt for 32 years, and he's had to pull extra duty with their three children so she could put in the hours needed to do a demanding job. The kids have been supportive as well, even when mom was asking them to pick up trash in a park, or help clean a shelter house on Easter Sunday because someone forgot to show up for work.

It's this type of inspired dedication that clearly demonstrates that Rynard is up to the formidable challenge she has not only just doing this massive job, but also the challenge of following Mark McHenry, who directed the department for 15 years but was with KC Parks for 44 years before retiring at the end of 2018. It helps that she and McHenry shared values regarding the environment, social equity and park development.

"It is a tremendous honor to be appointed to this position," Rynard said. "We have a great team at Parks and Recreation and I am counting all of them to help keep KC Parks as one of the premier parks departments in the country."



# KCMO Preparing to Restock its Roster of Leaders

WRITTEN BY: *Alyssa Dinberg*

PHOTOS BY: *Karen Lim*

Did you know that about 10,000 people turn 65 every day in the United States? And according to the Pew Research Center, millennials outnumber baby boomers in the workplace 76 million to 75 million. While millennials will make up 75 percent of the national workforce 10 years from now, the number of working Kansas City residents 34 years old and under is already about 55 percent.

So how does this impact the future of leadership in the City of Kansas City, Missouri? Today, 39 percent of the City's directors and deputy directors are eligible for retirement. In five years that number jumps to 62 percent.

With a rapidly aging workforce, the City can expect an emigration of highly experienced staff that will leave the organization with fewer candidates prepared to assume leadership roles. Foreseeing this obstacle, City Manager Troy Schulte challenged his staff to find innovative ways to solve the problem and thus Next Up KC was born. This employee-driven initiative

is dedicated to attracting and developing the next generation of City leadership.

"With Next Up KC we can start imagining how different the work place will be when we're leading the City," Assistant City Attorney Emalea Black said. "Putting us in a room together helps to visualize and discuss the different needs and expectations we have of our future workplace."

With 19 departments and over 4,500 employees spread across 319 square miles, communication is challenging. To help address these challenges, Next Up KC is managed by a working group of liaisons appointed by each department. These individuals represent their department at the leadership level by insuring programs and events are not only communicated to their employees but serve the needs and wants of those individuals.

"Working in the Fire Department, I don't have as many chances to meet other City departments but because of Next Up KC, I have met and developed strong friendships with people across the organization," said Nicole Murray, KCFD paramedic. "Opening up the lines of communication between departments below the management level helps us see the common problems and come up with common solutions."

The goal of Next Up KC is to move the City from reactive planning to succession planning. Liaisons are divided into teams focusing on professional development, workplace culture and employee

recognition. The goal of each team is to, piece by piece, advance the City's workplace into a high-performance organization where employees develop and thrive.

Through professional development, Next Up KC aims to provide opportunities for staff at all levels to advance their skills and knowledge. The first professional development training enlisted Chris Hernandez, Director of City Communications and Amy Jordan Wooden, the City's crisis communications expert, to offer an informative media training session. Additionally, Next Up KC is partnering with the Kansas City Public Library to offer a quarterly book club that will provide an opportunity to learn from experts and discuss with fellow employees how the best practices can be applied daily.

We all know employee recognition is an effective tool used to retain the best and the brightest. However, internal recognition of public sector employees remains a struggle. Some departments are developing strategies that champion their employees through individual and group celebrations and Next Up KC hopes to advance the organization as a whole through recognition.

In addition to enhancing internal recognition, Next Up KC plans to develop a platform for local government recognition at the City level. Research has shown the fewer college graduates are considering local government as a potential career path and by highlighting the amazing things City staff is doing, we hope that the profession is more attractive to the future workforce.







**Dr. Kia Turner Ed.D.**  
@fredup\_teacher


Follow

When I see them I want to hand hot chocolate and high fives! I appreciate the work they are doing! 😊




**Kansas City, MO** @KCMO  
Our Public Works crews continue to work to fill potholes around the City. Last week, 2,120 potholes were filled. More work being done today. When you see crews, please give them room to work.

1:37 PM · 26 Feb 2019




**Kansas City, MO** @KCMO · Feb 22

We understand the frustrations that many of you have been feeling in regards to potholes in the area. Crews continue to work on filling and repairing potholes around the City. If you see a pothole on a City road, please contact @KCMO311 or call them at 513-1313.



0:45 | 7,632 views



**Clinton deMontel**  
@clintonde

Follow

Replying to @KCMO @KCMO311

I actually have been really impressed with how quickly potholes have been filled this season. Great work!

8:22 PM · 22 Feb 2019



**Kansas City, MO** @KCMO · Feb 22

We understand the frustrations that many of you have been feeling in regards to potholes in the area. Crews continue to work on filling and repairing potholes around the City. If you see a pothole on a City road, please contact @KCMO311 or call them at 513-1313.



2:06 | 7,637 views



**Lauren Aiello**  
@laur\_aiello

Follow

Replying to @KCMO @KCMO311

It's a huge task - we appreciate you!

8:18 AM · 23 Feb 2019



**Courtney Lewis**  
@TinaLikesBooks

Follow

The process part is fascinating. Thank you @KCMO for doing this video. And holy cow the crews are SO CLOSE to drivers! Everyone get off your phones so you don't hit these guys while you're driving!



2:17

**Kansas City, MO** @KCMO  
We understand the frustrations that many of you have been feeling in regards to potholes in the area. Crews continue to work on filling and repairing potholes around the City. If you see a pothole on a City road, please contact @KCMO311 or call them at 513-1313.

2:08 AM · 23 Feb 2019

# Winter Weather Woes

WRITTEN BY: Rod Richardson

Sunday, Nov. 25, started pleasantly enough but then the snow began to fall. The flakes fell fast with a fury that baffled even some of the most veteran forecasters. When it ended, 5.8 inches of snow covered our city – the largest one day snowfall since 7.5 inches fell on Feb. 2, 2014. We now know this was an ominous prelude to a winter we won't forget.

The blizzard that interrupted an otherwise peaceful, fall weekend sent City of KCMO into full snow operations mode. Nearly 200 trucks were assigned to plow while the snow was falling. Crews from multiple departments worked 12-hour shifts overnight and through daytime hours to clear snow and ice. This would be a drill we'd get to replicate several times over the next several weeks.

Treating and plowing streets during snow storms is familiar territory for Midwest municipalities. Still, the goal is to find innovative ways to minimize these hassles that impact your lives. That means working overtime to keep salting and plowing streets until all roads are safe to travel.

So how do we decide which streets get plowed first? Well, it's a pretty straightforward process. We prioritize based on traffic volume. Primary streets handle the most traffic so they get plowed first and more frequently. These streets get cleared curb to curb, with around-the-clock monitoring to make sure they stay that way. Secondary and neighborhood streets handle less traffic so they are plowed less frequently (between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.), with crews focused on clearing a path that allows vehicles to make it out of the neighborhood to connect to a primary street.

Understandably, this isn't always the approach some of you want us to take, but we're making strategic decisions that allow us to get the best results out of our limited resources. You also should know that we appreciate the help you give us during snowy weather by either parking in your garages or by parking on one side of the street but not blocking emergency snow routes.

In addition to the extra man hours dedicated to plowing snow, we also had to ramp up our salt supply by 10,000 tons. During milder winters, 13,000 tons of salt will suffice, but that wasn't the case this year. You'd think a blizzard that dumps more than 5 inches of snow would be the lowlight of our winter. Unfortunately, the mid-January snow event left tons of debris, tree limbs and branches scattered over yards throughout KCMO. This calamity resulted in City Manager

Troy Schulte enacting a plan for special curbside collection that we knew would take several weeks to complete.

And, lest we forget, this winter also will be noted by those pesky potholes. Days with full staffing for pothole duty will see 8-10 crews out on our streets. Remember, these guys have to alternate between snow plowing and patching potholes and they almost always know that they can't move fast enough to satisfy all the needs.

A few other KCMO facts that might help you appreciate the daunting task we faced:

- More than 3,000 tons of storm debris was collected. About half of that has been collected by city crews doing special curbside pickups. The rest is from KCMO residents taking branches to leaf and brush drop off centers.
- For the first six weeks of 2019, 1,407 potholes reported. That is five times as many potholes this year compared to last year, when the 256 potholes were reported in the first six weeks of 2018.
- 11,444 potholes filled between December 18th and January 19th.
- Crews plow and treat 6,400 lane miles during each storm. That's like driving from Boston to San Diego and back.
- KCMO has budgeted \$2.75 million for snow removal this year.



# Setting Goals and Achieving Them

WRITTEN BY: *Consuelo Cruz*

What do season three of *Queer Eye*, a bright pink tree in Swope Park, Festa Italiana and the growth of a local ceramics business all have in common? They were all made possible through programs managed or started by the Office of Culture and Creative Services (OCCS). Established in 2015 to lead cultural development efforts for the City, the office is a direct outcome of Mayor Sly James’ Task Force on the Arts and the convening of arts, civic and business leadership and residents involved in visioning processes that resulted in a community cultural plan. KCMO Arts Convergence Plan, endorsed by the Mayor and City Council in late 2013, serves as Kansas City’s comprehensive cultural master plan that outlines the community’s vision for arts and culture development. It includes 10 goals that require City and community working in tandem to fulfill the community’s vision.

Since the OCCS was established, new programs and initiatives have been implemented, in partnership with organizations in the arts and non-arts sectors, meeting several of the goals outlined in the KCMO Arts Convergence Plan. Here’s a snapshot:

**MICRO-LOANS FOR ARTISTS**  
**CONVERGENCE PLAN GOALS**  
**MET:** 1, 5, 9

Two microloan programs were started in partnership with two nonprofit lending organizations: Justine Peterson and AltCap. The success of the Justine Peterson microloan program pilot resulted in a loan pool of \$400,000 for artists. The AltCap microloan program, “ArtCap,” is one of its fastest growing loan funds, with over \$166,000 in loans to 13 artists/creatives, since 2016.

**FILM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**  
**CONVERGENCE PLAN GOALS MET:**  
1, 4, 5, 9

The Film Development Program is a joint economic and workforce development effort with the Kansas City Film Office. Since its 2016 inception, the program has attracted nine productions including feature films, national commercials and TV episodes, creating over 350 jobs and over \$500,000 in local wages. A total investment of \$130,000 returned over \$1 million in direct spending in the city, and has attracted productions such as *American Ninja Warrior*, *All Creatures Here Below*, and *Queer Eye* to film in Kansas City. For more information, visit [kcfilmoffice.com](http://kcfilmoffice.com).

**OPEN SPACES 2018**  
**CONVERGENCE PLAN GOALS**  
**MET:** 4, 5, 6, 8

Open Spaces, a public/private partnership initiative, was an unprecedented art festival that highlighted Kansas City’s arts, culture and creativity. Art experiences included visual art and performances by local, national and international artists. The two-month (August 25-October

28) arts event featured public art installations in open spaces across the city (including Dylan Mortimer’s bright pink tree in Swope Park), showcasing the city’s famed parks and boulevards, urban spaces, as well as existing arts and cultural venues. For more information, visit [openspaceskc.com](http://openspaceskc.com).

**NEIGHBORHOOD TOURIST**  
**DEVELOPMENT FUND**  
**CONVERGENCE PLAN GOALS**  
**MET:** 4, 5, 9, 10

The Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund (NTDF) is derived from the hotel tax to support events and activities in the promotion of Kansas City’s distinct and diverse neighborhoods while promoting the City as a premier convention, visitor and tourist center. While the NTDF has been in place since 1985, the management of the program was transferred to the OCCS in 2015. Since then, the NTDF application process has gone online, applicant evaluation has been streamlined and shared publicly, and organizations are provided free promotional opportunities to promote NTDF-supported programs to residents and tourists.

Festa Italiana, Santa’s Wonderland, performances by the Kansas City Ballet and the Kansas City Symphony are just some examples of what has been supported by the NTDF.

More information about the NTDF can be found at [kcmo.gov/ntdf](http://kcmo.gov/ntdf). To view the 10 goals of the Arts Convergence Plan, progress updates and more information about OCCS programs and studies, visit [kcmo.gov/culturalarts](http://kcmo.gov/culturalarts).

## ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT of NTDF | FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017-18

190  
EVENTS (FESTIVALS, CULTURAL EVENTS  
AND SPORTS TOURNAMENTS) BY 127  
NON-PROFITS WERE SUPPORTED

\$1,885,728 NTDF INVESTMENT  
LEVERAGED:

\$42  
MILLION  
IN SPENDING BY  
AUDIENCES

866  
FULL-TIME  
EQUIVALENT JOBS

\$27.7  
MILLION  
IN ORGANIZATION  
EXPENDITURES

\$27,734,562  
IN RESIDENT  
HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$727,039 IN LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT REVENUE

\$1,141,186 IN STATE REVENUE  
WAS GENERATED



ARTCAP BORROWER EMILY REINHARDT OF THE  
OBJECT ENTHUSIAST, 2017, IMAGE COURTESY  
ALTCAP. PHOTOGRAPHER MICHAEL FORESTER



AMERICAN NINJA WARRIOR SEASON 9, IMAGE  
COURTESY OF KANSAS CITY FILM OFFICE



OPEN SPACES: TREE, BROKEN TREE BY DYLAN  
MORTIMER, IMAGE COURTESY OF OCCS



QUEER EYE, IMAGE COURTESY OF NETFLIX



# Neighborhoods and Housing Services Department Moves to New Location

WRITTEN BY: *John Baccala*  
PHOTOS BY: *Karen Lim*

The City’s Neighborhoods and Housing Services Department (NHSD) has a new home in a new neighborhood! In January, the department’s housing, neighborhood preservation and dangerous buildings division and the Land Bank moved to the former H & R Block Call Center facility at 4400 Blue Parkway. Why the move? Part convenience, but mostly necessity.

“The primary impetus behind our move was to remove Land Bank, neighborhood preservation and the dangerous building staff from the 4900 Swope Parkway building (their previous location),” said John A. Wood, assistant city manager and the NHSD director. “That structure had really become problematic for staff and visitors.” Water line breaks twice in the last four years flooded the first floor and outside vandalism was an ongoing eyesore. Problems inside and out were bad enough, but when getting up and down in the building

became an issue, Wood said enough was enough. “The elevators were constantly breaking down,” he said. “It became a huge problem and a major safety concern for employees and visitors alike.”

Luckily for Wood and the NHSD, a much more suitable alternative was just down the street. The old H & R Block Call Center facility had sat virtually empty - except for a small

.....  
“We wanted to create  
a synergy between the  
divisions and so far, it’s  
working.”

/ JOHN A WOOD

.....  
H & R Block staff - since the Kansas City-based tax preparer moved to its downtown headquarters. The city signed a five-year lease with Block with an option to buy from Swope Community Builders, which owns the building. While many questioned the city’s need to lease space in a privately-owned building, staying at 4900 Swope Parkway was no longer an alternative. Conservative repair estimates were in the \$5 million to \$7 million range, so that wasn’t a cost effective option.

“It (the call center) was a newer, underutilized property,” Wood said. “Plus, it gave us (the NHSD)

the opportunity to move our housing staff from the fourth floor of City Hall as well. It really made sense to have our housing staff, our codes staff and Land Bank together because they all address neighborhood and property issues. We wanted to create a synergy between the divisions and so far, it’s working.”

The building sits along Brush Creek, behind the Wallace S. Hartsfield Post Office and across the street from the Shops on Blue Parkway. Its red stoned exterior is window-filled with beautiful views of the creek and the walking trail alongside. The 70,000-square-foot space is open, airy and offers a welcome change, particularly for those who worked in the Swope Parkway building.

“The move to 4400 is, literally, a breath of fresh air,” said Dalena Taylor, neighborhood preservation division manager. “Staff is very appreciative to be in a fresh, clean, open space where they can have actual sunlight.”

NHSD staffers spent several weeks packing their files and belongings and movers began transporting the items to 4400 on Jan. 14. It isn’t quite home yet, but it is starting to feel like it.

“Everyone is settling in very well,” Taylor said. “We are still working through some systematic things, but we are very excited about our new ‘digs!’”







# Bike KC Master Plan

WRITTEN BY: *Joseph Blankenship*

PHOTO BY: *Karen Lim*

With warmer weather in the air, it's time to get that bike out again and #BikeKC! Over the past two years, the City Planning and Development department has worked tirelessly to create Bike KC Master Plan, a comprehensive bicycle master plan for the City. This master plan will help guide future investments in bicycle infrastructure, programs and policies to support active transportation and lifestyles in Kansas City.

In 2016, the City Auditor's Office released results of an audit which found the original Bike KC (adopted in 2002) did not provide enough guidance to help city staff and elected leaders meet stated city goals, such as becoming more a more bicycle friendly community. Immediately after the report was released, the City Planning Department began working to craft a modern plan.

More than 2,000 people provided formal input on the Bike KC Master Plan. Like all long-range plans at the City, the Bike KC Master Plan started with the formation of a

steering committee comprised of community representatives. Neighborhood leaders, technical experts, local advocates, partner agencies, and elected officials all helped to guide the project. To add to the committee's perspective, 14 public meetings, four mobile bike meetings, student focus groups, in-person and online interactive mapping, staff participation at special events, media interviews, temporary demonstration events, and more, helped ensure robust public engagement.

"The Bike KC Master Plan will help our City grow as a place where all modes of transportation – walking, bicycling, driving, taking the bus, and more – are planned, valued, safe and easily accessible," said Councilman Dan Fowler, himself an avid cyclist. "Even if you don't bicycle, this plan will benefit your experience in Kansas City."

So, what's in the plan? The Bike KC Master Plan includes:

- A clear vision statement for bicycling in Kansas City, along with goals, objectives, and strategies that will help the City work toward its vision of Kansas City as a bicycle-friendly community.
- Background information on bicycling's place in the City – including types of infrastructure and programs that exist now and what other policies in the City say about bicycling.

- An updated Bike KC network – 658 miles – with a recommendation on what type of bicycle facility is appropriate on each roadway. In many cases, a "major separated" route it recommended – something that provides physical separation between moving vehicles and bicyclists.

- The Bike KC Master Plan functions as a long-term vision for bicycling in Kansas City. A five-year implementation priority network will guide how the City approaches project development over the next five years.

- Implementation roles and responsibilities as well as funding and maintenance strategies. To ensure the network is built and maintained, strategies are outlined in the Bike KC Master Plan to help make implementation feasible and cost-effective.

- Parking recommendations, educational and encouragement programs, and other relevant policy updates.
- Metrics to measure the success of the City's bicycle program over the coming years.

As the Bike KC Master Plan rolls out over the spring, remember to get out and #BikeKC!



# GO KC Projects Picking Up Steam Across the City

WRITTEN BY: *Rod Richardson*

PHOTO BY: *Karen Lim*

The plan to invest \$800 million to improve the City's aging streets, sidewalks bridges and buildings over a 20-year period is nothing if not ambitious. The decades and decades of infrastructure erosion won't be rebuilt overnight, but the sights and sounds of progress being made are inspiring.

The second year of the GO KC Program is pumping more than \$48 million into major road repairs, sidewalks and bridges. One of the premier projects slated to receive major work is The Paseo Gateway – a \$14 million makeover that will improve traffic safety, enhance pedestrian and bicycle access at The Paseo and Independence Boulevard intersection.

So far, about \$4 million has been allocated for this project that will also support revitalization of The

Paseo Gateway community and accommodate potential streetcar expansion along Independence. Roadway construction should begin this year.

Kansas City voters approved the bond proposal in April 2017 to fund a capital improvements program for streets, sidewalks, flood control and other infrastructure needs over the next 20 years. Capital improvement projects may include new construction or renovation of city buildings, reconstruction of streets, repairing or constructing sidewalks as well as making public areas ADA compliant.

But refurbishing our great City isn't just a matter of street repair – we also have to restore some of the fountains that are part of the landscape that makes Kansas City unique. The Delbert J. Haff Fountain, located at the entrance of Swope Park, is one of those. The more than \$600,000 in GO KC funds will help fund a \$1.4 million renovation that includes fixing major leaks in the basin, installing new water jets, updating the pump system and relocating the electrical service.

The new basin will reduce the depth of the pool, thus lowering the amount of water it holds by 50 percent while increasing the spray nozzles from three to seven. LED lighting will inject color and an ADA entrance on the east side will also be added. Vibrant landscaping will spruce up the fountain and a

bust of Delbert Haff, who was an outstanding attorney hired by the City's first park board. He was largely responsible for solving the financial and legal problems facing that board at the turn of the 20th Century.

Aging infrastructure isn't confined to leaky pipes, bumpy streets or cracked sidewalks. It was also time to bring City Hall elevators into the 21st Century. About \$700,000 in GO KC money was set aside to bring the elevators into compliance with ADA standards while installing a destination-based system that generates a smoother and faster ride.

The system, which came online in mid-January, optimizes elevator assignments by grouping people going to common destinations to reduce stops and provide faster service. Customers with disabilities press a special button so that they can be provided visual and audible prompts to follow. People with disabilities will also have additional time to reach and enter their assigned elevators.

Touchscreen kiosks are located on every floor. Passengers enter their destination floors and are directed to a specific elevator assigned for them. The grouping system reduces wait and travel times, possibly resulting in an energy savings as well.

For more information, visit [kcmo.gov/gokc](http://kcmo.gov/gokc).





# Capital Projects Update

## KC WATER

### Data-Driven Analysis Drives Water Main Replacement in KC

WRITTEN BY: *Michael Grimaldi*  
PHOTO BY: *Karen Lim*

Laced beneath the streets and boulevards of Kansas City are more than 2,800 miles of water mains that bring clean, high-quality water to homes and businesses citywide. But some of those pipes have been in use since the late 1800s.

KC Water is working every day on a comprehensive water main replacement program, installing new mains and switching water supply away from the most break-prone pipes.

The program is not a random, piecemeal approach. Rather, KC Water reviewed thousands of records



and divided the entire system into 70,000 individual segments to identify which segments are most likely to break.

Combined with an analysis of which mains are most important (for example, a main near a hospital is a high priority), the list is prioritized using a combination of consequence of failure and possibility of failure. The most vulnerable pipes are then scheduled for replacement. The goal is to upgrade 1 percent of the system annually, or about 28 miles of pipe each year.

In most cases, crews are disconnecting customers from post-World War II pipe and reconnecting them to more durable ductile-iron pipe with a significantly longer projected lifespan. The improvements are designed to provide fewer water main breaks, reduce service disruption and enhance neighborhood fire protection.

At any time, about a dozen water main replacement projects are underway. A few examples:

- A project begun this winter is

replacing about 10,565 feet of water mains at eight locations bounded by College Avenue to James A. Reed Road and E. 71st Street to E. 80th Terrace in southeast Kansas City.

- Another project underway this year replaces about 4,700 feet of pipeline at five locations on the West Side, Midtown, and Downtown.
- About 10,500 feet of water mains at five locations in the area bounded by Winchester Avenue to Hardy Avenue and E. Truman Road to E. 40th Terrace on the east side are being replaced.

Parts of the City developed more recently, such as the Northland, tend to have newer mains. Investments there include not only replacing water mains but also installing new transmission mains for future growth. One such project is a 1.25-mile extension of a 36-inch water transmission main from North Brighton Avenue to Searcy Creek Parkway that is scheduled for completion later this year. Water mains are designed and replaced by private consultants and



contractors under the guidance of KC Water engineers. Investments are paid with voter-approved low-interest bonds repaid by customers via KC Water bills.

KC Water is a leader in its approach. Only one out of five utilities surveyed recently by the American Water Works Association use data mining to improve the operation and maintenance of water and sewer systems.

A summary of these and other water main replacement projects, plus an overview of all KC Water capital improvements, can be found at [kcwaterservices.org/projects](http://kcwaterservices.org/projects).

## PARKS & RECREATION

WRITTEN BY: *Heidi Markle*

The second phase of improvements to Penguin Park is underway. These upgrades to the part a NE Vivion Road and Norton Avenue will consist of new play equipment and safety surfacing in the south area for 2-5 year olds; new picnic tables and trash receptacles; new ornamental fencing; new light fixtures; and onsite and in the shelter LED lights;



new drinking fountains and repairs to the fiberglass animals.

Phase I improvements were completed in 2018, with the installation of new play equipment and safety surfacing in the middle and north areas. The total cost of the project is \$575,000.

### Urban Orchard

Kansas City's largest urban orchard located in Kansas City's largest park officially opened on Sept. 28 with a ribbon cutting ceremony among the fruit trees. KC Parks Director Terry Rynard welcomed the crowd and introduced the featured speakers who included 5th District City Councilwoman Alissia Canady, 5th District City Councilman Lee Barnes Jr., Darrian Davis and Jamilla Johnson with the Kansas City Urban Farm Co-op and The Giving Grove Executive Director Robert Reiman.

Last spring, the organizations teamed up to plant 200 fruit trees – a self-proclaimed “fruit forest” in the heart of the city. The main orchard, located adjacent to the Off-Leash Dog Park, is just over an acre in size and includes fencing for deer

protection, waterline with four frost-free hydrants, and a drip irrigation system.

Plantings in the main orchard include:

- 12 Peach trees
- 26 European Pear trees
- 26 Asian Pear trees
- 66 Semi-Dwarf Apple trees
- 19 Bush Cherries
- 14 Fig trees
- 108’ of blackberries
- 110’ of raspberries

The site also includes an 8,000 square foot public grazing orchard with the following plantings:

- 2 Bush Cherries
- 4 Semi-Dwarf Apple trees
- 4 Asian Pear trees
- 4 European Pear trees
- 3 Peach trees
- 2 Jujube trees

Once all phases are complete, the Swope Park Orchard will be one of the largest urban orchards in the country yielding more than 1 million pounds of fresh fruit over the next 20 years.



# Federal flood protection grant saves KCMO millions

WRITTEN BY: Michael Grimaldi

Kansas City will save more than \$30 million for West Bottoms flood control thanks to a recent decision by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Corps’ decision means millions of dollars in levee improvements along the Missouri and Kansas rivers will be funded by federal dollars, rather than a previously required 35 percent local match.

“This federal funding keeps millions of dollars here in our local economy to support other needed improvements It puts into motion construction on critical flood protection projects along Kansas City’s levee system, which is the

third-largest urban levee system in the country,” said Terry Leeds, KC Water Director.

The Corps divides the confluence of the Missouri and Kaw rivers in the Kansas City area into seven levee districts. The current action will cover ongoing construction of the Central Industrial District Levee protecting the West Bottoms; and the nearby Argentine and Armourdale levees in Kansas City, Kansas.

The three levees protect more than seven square miles of industrial properties valued at more than \$7 billion; thousands of jobs, and one

of the largest rail centers in the country.

The Corps determined after the Missouri and Kansas River Flood of 1993 that the seven Kansas City area levees were at risk of overtopping. Previously completed work since 1993 improved levees protecting the Northeast Industrial District (East Bottoms), Birmingham, North Kansas City, and Fairfax.

# KCStat Dashboard Offers Peek Behind City Curtains

WRITTEN BY: Julie Steenson, DataKC

The City has 19 departments, 7 strategic goals, and hundreds of programs and services. With all of this complexity, how can a resident make sense of where the City is going? Well, the KCStat Dashboard is here to help. The dashboard is one easy location where residents can dig into the City’s goals at their own pace and according to their own priorities.

KCStat is the City’s system for reporting progress on the Citywide Business Plan, the City’s four-year strategic planning document. The Business Plan has seven goals. On the first Tuesday of the month from 9-11:30 am, the Mayor, City

Manager and members of Council moderate a KCStat meeting on one of the goal areas, during which City staff present data and information demonstrating the status of the objectives and strategies under each goal.

The public is always welcome to attend KCStat, follow the Twitter stream, watch it on Channel 2, stream it on YouTube, or download the related presentation. But what if you are only interested in one topic under a goal? Or what if you’re not sure about what you’re interested in and want to browse? Recently, the DataKC team in the City Manager’s Office launched a website where

residents can clearly see how the city is measuring success, what steps are being taken toward goals, and what residents can do to engage in these issues. The site provides an “at-a-glance” view of the goals for newcomers to these topics, as well as access to more detailed materials for those who want to dig deep into an issue.

Questions? Suggestions? Email [data@kcmo.org](mailto:data@kcmo.org) or send us a message on Twitter @data\_kcmo.



SIGN UP AT:  
[KCMO.GOV/ALERTKC](https://www.kcmo.gov/alertkc)

## SIGN UP FOR NOTIFICATIONS from the CITY OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

AlertKC provides an efficient and secure way to send neighborhood-level information to residents who subscribe to the system.

Sign up for alerts for severe weather, police and fire activity, boil orders, health pandemics, water main breaks in your area, major road closures, scheduled trash delays and more!

## HAVE YOU PAID YOUR EARNINGS TAX YET?

FILE ONLINE AT [KCMO.GOV/TAX](https://www.kcmo.gov/tax) BY APRIL 15, 2019

Sometimes called the “e-tax, ” this is a 1 percent tax on your individual earned income as well as the net profits of businesses. The revenue generated by this tax helps fund basic services such as public safety, street repairs, and weekly trash collection.

BE SURE TO CHECK BOXES 18-20 ON YOUR W-2 TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE PAID YOUR EARNINGS TAX

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO PAY, VISIT [KCMO.GOV/TAX](https://www.kcmo.gov/tax)



# Yes, You Can Fight City Hall

WRITTEN BY: Rod Richardson

If the City tows your car and you think they messed up, then please keep reading. As part of a lawsuit that ended in a friendly settlement, the City now has a way for you to recover tow and storage fees if you believe your vehicle was towed in error.

Last May, the ACLU sued the City and the Kansas City Board of Police Commissioners for failing to provide a sufficient recourse for citizens who believe their vehicles were improperly towed.

The City Council in December approved an ordinance allowing people to seek a refund of tow and storage fees that fall under this umbrella.

The City developed an application and launched a web page where people can download a form to apply for refund and get a description of the process.

"I'm glad that Kansas City drivers are now able to keep their hard-earned money when law enforcement makes a mistake in towing their car," said Dyanna Black, plaintiff in the ACLU case.

Black parked her car on a public street in February 2016. When she returned, her car had been towed. After paying the fee, she decided to apply for a refund because she believed her car was improperly towed. That's when she learned that the city did not have a formal process addressing tow

refunds. She contacted the ACLU, which then filed the lawsuit.

"We're pleased the city was so willing to work with us and has passed an ordinance that now provides due process for citizens to seek refunds of tow and storage fees," said Gillian Wilcox, staff attorney, ACLU of Missouri.

You can learn more about the refund process on [kcmo.gov](http://kcmo.gov), the City's website.

Each year more than 21,000 vehicles are towed to the city's tow lot. Almost half were either abandoned, involved in police activity or in an accident. The facility on Front Street, just east of I-435 is LEED Gold certified.

# Your City Resources



**ONLINE at KCMO.GOV**  
Type your topic in the search bar or visit:

**KCMO.GOV/NEWS**  
Recent City news releases

**KCMO.GOV/SUBSCRIBE**  
All City newsletters

**KCMO.GOV/SOCIAL**  
Twitter, Facebook and Youtube

**KCMO.GOV/ALERTKC**  
Free community messages on your mobile phone or email

**KCMO.GOV/CAREERS**  
Job openings in City government

**KCMO.GOV/BIZCARE**  
How to start up a business and obtain licenses and permits

**KCMO.GOV/KCMORE**  
Past issues of this magazine

**KCMO.GOV/COMPASSKC**  
The City's permitting system



**311 CALL CENTER**  
Call 311 or 816-513-1313 or visit [kcmo.gov/311](http://kcmo.gov/311) for general questions and service requests



**ANIMAL SHELTER**  
Call 311 or 816-513-9821



**CHANNEL 2**  
See [kcmo.gov/channel2](http://kcmo.gov/channel2) for live coverage of City Council, weekly City news and special events



**MUNICIPAL COURT TICKETS**  
See [kcmo.gov/court](http://kcmo.gov/court) to learn about the many ways you can look up a case or call 816-513-2700



**TOW LOT**  
Search for a towed vehicle at [autoreturn.com](http://autoreturn.com) or call 816-513-0670



**RECYCLING AND TRASH**  
Call 311 or visit [kcmo.gov/trash](http://kcmo.gov/trash)



**KC WATER**  
Call 311 or 816-513-0567 or email [water.customerservice@kcmo.org](mailto:customerservice@kcmo.org)

## IMPROPERLY TOWED?

You may be able to get a refund for your tow fee and up to 14 days of storage fees.

### HOW TO APPLY

1. Refund applications are found at:

**NEIGHBORHOODS & HOUSING SERVICES**  
4400 Blue Parkway, Kansas City, MO 64130

**ONLINE**  
[kcmo.gov/neighborhoods/towrefund](http://kcmo.gov/neighborhoods/towrefund)

**TOW LOT**  
7750 E Front Street, Kansas City, MO 64120

2. Share your evidence with us.

3. Submit application online, in person, or by mail.

4. Your application will be reviewed in person, by telephone, or in writing.



You have 60 days from the date you were towed to apply for a refund.

If your case is dismissed or you are found not guilty, you may be able to apply for a refund.

For more information, call 816-513-0688 or go online to [KCMO.GOV/NEIGHBORHOODS/TOWREFUND](http://KCMO.GOV/NEIGHBORHOODS/TOWREFUND)





City of Kansas City, Missouri  
414 E 12th St  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

PRSRT Standard  
US Postage Paid  
Kansas City, MO  
Permit No. 1055

\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSSSEDDM\*\*\*\*\*

Postal Customer

# LEAF AND BRUSH

## Set-out Date

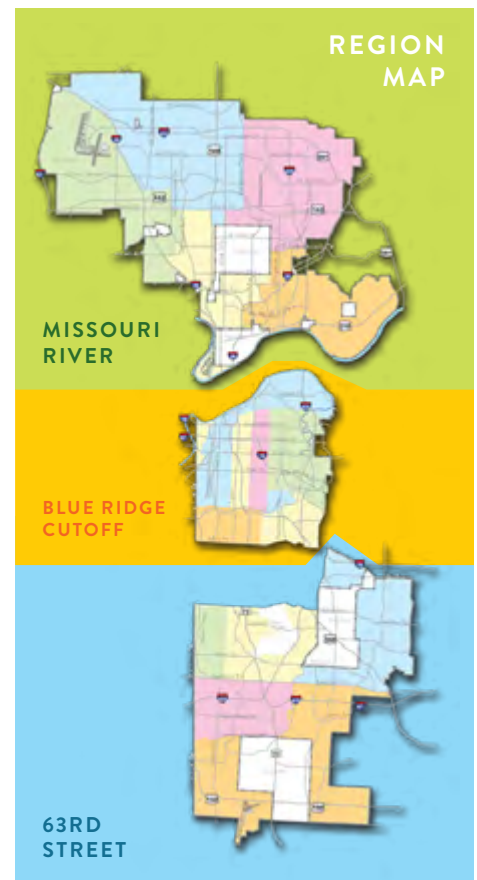
SET OUT ALL SACKS AND BUNDLES BY 7 A.M.

Trash day	NORTH REGION	CENTRAL REGION	SOUTH REGION
MONDAY	Monday, April 22	Monday, April 15	Monday, April 8
TUESDAY	Tuesday, April 23	Tuesday, April 16	Tuesday, April 9
WEDNESDAY	Wednesday, April 24	Wednesday, April 17	Wednesday, April 10
THURSDAY	Thursday, April 25	Thursday, April 18	Thursday, April 11
FRIDAY	Friday, April 26	Friday, April 19	Friday, April 12

### CURBSIDE COLLECTION

- ▶ Same day as trash/recycling collection
- ▶ Curbside by 7 a.m.
- ▶ Limit of 20 sacks and/or bundles
- ▶ Paper sacks only.
- ▶ Brush bundled 4' x 2' with twine only
- ▶ No duct tape
- ▶ No trash
- ▶ Call 311 within 24 hours to report a miss.

### SPRING 2019



[KCWATERSERVICES.ORG/LEAF-BRUSH](http://KCWATERSERVICES.ORG/LEAF-BRUSH)