

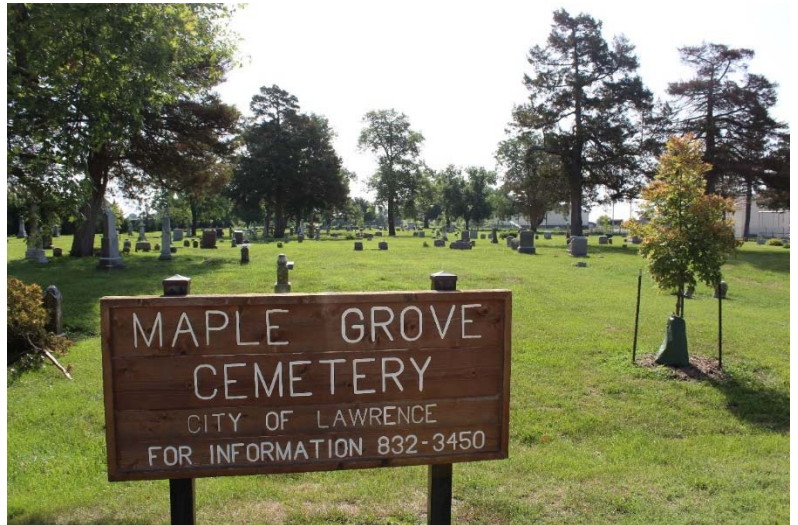
Public Process Underway to Review Decoration of Lots and Burial Spaces at Public Cemeteries

The City of Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department has begun public engagement with the community to get feedback on lot and burial space decorations in Lawrence's three public cemeteries – Maple Grove Cemetery, Oak Hill Cemetery and Memorial Park Cemetery.

Community members had voiced concerns about current rules not being enforced regarding decorations on graves. The department gave notice it would begin enforcement of the rules, providing a 30-day window for compliance.

Once notice was given, others in the community with plots at the cemeteries contacted the department with their own concerns about becoming compliant with the current rules, seeking changes to the

rules to not effect the status of their grave space(s). Department staff then began looking at providing a forum for community members to provide feedback on the rules to see if changes to the community standards for public cemeteries were needed.



The first public meeting was held in early-September to get input from the community on the topic and to review current rules, as well as feedback on a new draft proposal, modifying the current set to better fit what the public desires.

The draft looked at all acceptable forms of flowers and decorations allowed on gravesites, as well as providing the length of time they may remain before being removed by Parks and Recreation staff. The rules also provide a listing of items that are not acceptable for gravesites and

provides where acceptable decorations are to be placed next to monuments. At the public meeting community members also voiced concerns of the state of the grounds at the cemeteries, especially the

lack of vegetation in sections of the grounds, as well as around headstones and markers. The department is addressing the bare spots this fall by changing its maintenance approach. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board also were provided the draft of the proposed rules at its September meeting.

A second meeting was held on Monday, Oct. 1, to further discuss the proposal and changes made after the first public meeting. The LPRD Advisory Board will also discuss the proposal at its October meeting.



Feedback taken at the public meetings, as well as emails and comments provided to the department can be found at: <https://lawrenceks.org/lprd/parks/cemeteries>. The draft proposal, current rules, as well as an online feedback form can be found at the webpage too.

It is the department's hope to have a new set of rules set to go into effect at the first of the year.