



“We Have Tomorrow – Bright Before Us, Like A Flame.”

Langston Hughes



City of Lawrence

The Flame | January 2023

Lawrence Transit is Fare Free in 2023!

Lawrence Transit has initiated a pilot program to go fare free for all services in 2023, including fixed route, T Lift, Night Line, and planned Sunday microtransit. This means anyone can use any of the Lawrence Transit services for free throughout all of 2023.

Going fare free has numerous benefits for Lawrence Transit riders – and an especially positive impact on people in our community who have less income. Eliminating bus fares can also inject money back into the local economy as riders can invest money they would have used on bus fare into their family, homes, food, retail and more.

Lawrence Transit ridership has not fully recovered from pandemic impacts, and

it is a hope that the fare free pilot can help increase the amount of riders. Fare free programs in other communities have resulted in ridership increases of 20% to 60%.

If you have not used Lawrence Transit before but are interested in learning how, consider signing up for Travel Training. Participants will gain the necessary skills to travel independently through hands-on experience with one of our Lawrence Transit experts. If you or your organization are interested in learning more about the Travel Training program, please email Lawrence Transit at info@lawrencetransit.org.

The 2023 Fare Free Pilot Program is financially supported by increased



Buses are free in 2023!



lawrencetransit.org

federal transit funding. The program will be re-evaluated in Fall 2023 to determine the feasibility of extending the pilot.

More information is on the Lawrence Transit website: lawrencetransit.org

Donations and Volunteers needed for Winter Emergency Shelter

The 2022-2023 Winter Emergency Shelter (WES) is scheduled to be open from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. every day from December 1, 2022, through March 12, 2023. The shelter provides a free, safe, secure and warm environment when the weather is life threatening to people who would otherwise have to spend the night on the streets. The WES is located at the Community Building, 115 E 11th St. It has a capacity of 75 people per night.

The City is once again providing the facility and some staff support for the shelter, but we need active volunteers from the community to keep it operating on a nightly basis. There are three

volunteer shifts per night: from 7-11 p.m., 11 p.m. – 5 a.m., and 5 – 8 a.m.

In addition to volunteers, the City is in need of donations for those staying at the shelter. For food, we need individually-packaged snacks to make snack bags for those staying the night. This can include Chex-Mix, protein bars, candy, fruit snacks, lunchables, smart popcorn, beef jerky and more.

We also need practical necessities, including individual Kleenex packs, water, gloves, baby wipes, underwear, hand/toe warmers, foot powder, bath towels, winter hats, knitted wool socks,

and supplies for hygiene kits (liquid soap preferred).

The Winter Emergency Shelter is one offering in the City's approach to supporting those who are unsheltered in our community. The City is working to identify a long-term plan and has committed to beginning the process of moving into a long-term support location by March 12, 2023, which is the end date for the Winter Emergency Shelter.

More WES information, including an updated list of donations and a volunteer sign-up, is on our website: lawrenceks.org/winter-emergency-shelter.

The header picture features our 2023 Lawrence City Commissioners (left to right): Brad Finkeldei; Bart Littlejohn, Vice Mayor; Lisa Larsen, Mayor; Courtney Shipley; Amber Sellers

City information is available at lawrenceks.org and on cable Channel 25. The Flame is published by the City Manager's Office, 785-832-3400.



City updating utility rates in 2023

Rates increasing for water, sewer, stormwater and solid waste

The City of Lawrence is continuing its commitment to improving upon our utility infrastructure as part of our effort to ensure the reliability and sustainability of utility operations. To sustain and support these improvements, the City is updating utility rates for 2023, which includes rates for water, sewer, stormwater and solid waste services. More information on what each of these rates will be in 2023 is included in the following.

Water Rates

In November 2022, the Lawrence City Commission established a three-year rate plan for water services from 2023-2025. This plan will provide rate certainty for Lawrence customers, and it furthers the City's efforts to improve aging infrastructure.

Water rates for 2023 will go into effect on January 1, 2023. The water volume charges for residential customers in 2023 are shown below:

Customer Class	Inside City	Outside City
Residential Block 1	\$8.20/1k gal	\$9.02/1K gal
Residential Block 2	\$9.02/1k gal	\$9.93/1K gal
Residential Block 3	\$9.43/1k gal	\$10.38/1k gal

Residential rates are calculated through a range of water use that is based on the Winter Quarter Average (WQA). The Winter Quarter Average is a calculation of each customer's average water usage per month in December, January and February. For the following year, that WQA is used to determine each customer's residential block rate.

The "Residential Block 1" rate is applied to all water usage up to and including 125% of the WQA. The "Residential Block 2" rate is applied to all usage above 125% up to and including 200% of the WQA. The "Residential Block 3" rate is applied to all usage above 200% of the WQA.

To learn more about residential blocks, visit: lawrenceks.org/utility-billing/rates.

The monthly service charge per meter will also increase in 2023. The following shows rates for the meter sizes most

common to residential customers.

Meter Size (inches)	Inside City	Outside City
5/8 & 3/4	\$4.90	\$5.40
1	\$5.85	\$6.45
1.5	\$6.75	\$7.40
2	\$9.25	\$10.20

Sewer Rates

In November 2022, the Lawrence City Commission also established a three-year plan for sewer rates, which will go into effect on January 1, 2023. The three-year plan provides rate certainty for our customers and allows us to address aging infrastructure by providing the utility with a solid understanding of its ability to fund necessary projects.

The sewer volume charges for all customers in 2023 are shown below:

Monthly Water Use	Inside City	Outside City
Volume Charge	\$10.00/1k gal	\$13.00/1k gal

The monthly service charge per meter will also increase in 2023. It will be \$16.40 inside the city and \$18.05 outside the city, regardless of meter size.

Stormwater Rates

Stormwater rates are being presented to Lawrence City Commission on Tuesday, Dec. 20, which is after the print date of this issue of The Flame. The staff recommendation for the stormwater proposal sets the Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) rate at \$7.38 per month in 2023.

Updated stormwater rates will be available on the City's website at lawrenceks.org/utility-billing/rates by January 1, 2023. Updated stormwater rates for 2023 will not go into effect until February 1, 2023.

Solid Waste Rates

In 2023, there will be increases to solid waste rates for all City of Lawrence customers. Those increases are shown below.

Average Monthly Service Fees	
Single-Dwelling Residential	3% increase (\$0.60)
Multi-Dwelling Residential	3% increase (\$0.48)
Roll-Off	6% increase (\$5.68)
Commercial Front & Rear-Load	5% increase (varies)
Commercial Cart	5% increase (\$1.37)
Downtown	10% increase (\$10.92)
Recycling: School	3% increase (\$1.20)

Additionally, there will be several changes to the City's recycling program in 2023 as they City has entered a new, five-year agreement with HAMM materials handling facility. Learn more about Lawrence's recycling program at lawrenceks.org/swm/recycling.

Utility rate updates are part of the City's ongoing effort to build a Connected City with well-maintained, functional and efficient services. For more information on utility rate increases, visit our website: lawrenceks.org/utility-billing/rates.

Have you heard about our Utility Assistance Program?

The City created the Utility Assistance Program as a resource for households that are experiencing financial hardship and are behind on City utility payments. The program is completely community funded. For more information, please visit our website: lawrenceks.org/utility-billing/assistance-program.

The Utility Assistance Program is administered through a partnership between the City and Catholic Charities. City utility customers with an outstanding balance will need to demonstrate financial need to qualify for the program. The assistance eligibility requirements are: 1) Households must have an income at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level, 2) Assistance must guarantee at least 30 days of utility service or service restoration, 3) Customers will need the following documentation: A disconnect notice or budget billing/pay arrangement due within 10 days, a photo ID for the person listed on the bill, and income verification (for the last 30 days) for all members of the household over 18 years of age.