

"We Have Tomorrow – Bright Before Us, Like A Flame." *Langston Hughes*



BEWARE OF THE FOG THIS THANKSGIVING

This holiday season, avoid a clogged drain or sewer line in your home by following these tips for Fat, Oil and Grease (FOG) disposal:

- Never put food scraps (solid or liquid) down the drain, into the toilet, or in the garbage disposal.
- Use a mesh drain strainer in your sink to catch solid food scraps that you can dispose of in a trash can.
- Pour sauces, gravy, pan drippings and other liquid food scraps into a sealed container and place the container in the trash.

For more information on how to properly handle FOG, visit lawrenceks.org/mso/fog. We hope you enjoy a FOG-free holiday season!



Plans continue for Lawrence Transit downtown station

At an October meeting, the Lawrence City Commission selected two potential options for a downtown transit station. The next step is developing concept site plans for both locations.

At their early October meeting, City Commissioners narrowed down the options for a downtown transit station from five sites to two. At this time, the sites are not in ranked order. The sites are as follows:

- City parking lot #9 (on the west side of the 900 block of Vermont St.)
- Current bus transfer area and City parking lot #14 (at the northeast corner of 8th & Vermont streets, in the 700 block of Vermont St.)

Later in October, the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) is assisting in concept site plans and an updated cost analysis for both locations. This information will be presented to the Lawrence City Commission during a work session during one of their November meetings. The goal of this work session is for City Commissioners to provide direction on their preferred site.

Following this meeting, KDOT will assist Lawrence Transit in completing a federal planning worksheet. Transit will then return to City Commission in December for a vote on

the final site. The design and construction of a new downtown transit station is expected to begin in 2025 and wrap up sometime in 2026.

Of the 20 bus routes in Lawrence, five routes will continue to serve Downtown Lawrence. The goal of a new downtown station is to improve comfort and convenience for bus riders, in order to encourage more transit ridership today and in the future. The main elements that have been identified to include in the site design for Downtown Station are:

- Driver restrooms
- Individual bus bays
- Seating and wind protection
- Next departure signs
- Weather protection canopies

As part of the 2026 Transit Department operational budget, we plan to staff downtown station with security personnel from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

OUR MISSION
We create a community where all enjoy life and feel at home.

City information is available at lawrenceks.org and on cable Channel 25.

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Keep Our Stormwater System Clean: Manage Your Leaves This Fall!

As the leaves are turning vibrant shades of red, yellow and orange, it's time to enjoy the beauty of fall. But with all those gorgeous fall leaves comes an important responsibility for all of us – keeping them out of our stormwater system!

Stormwater is the water that flows over the ground after it rains, snows, or sleets. As this water runs over hard surfaces like streets and sidewalks, it picks up whatever is in its path—including leaves.

When leaves are left along the curb, they can easily enter storm drains, increasing the risk of localized flooding and adding pollutants to our streams and rivers. That's why it's crucial to manage your leaves properly and keep them from becoming a problem for our stormwater system.

LEAVES AND STORMWATER DON'T MIX

Unlike wastewater, stormwater is not treated before it reaches our rivers and streams. This means that any debris that ends up in the storm drains is carried directly into our local waterways. Leaves that make their way into storm drains can block the flow of water, leading to backups and localized flooding during heavy rains.

Even more concerning, as the leaves decompose, they release nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus. While these nutrients are great for plants in a garden, they can cause major problems in our rivers and streams, leading to water pollution, algal

blooms, and depleted oxygen levels that can harm aquatic life. That's why it's important to keep them out of our stormwater system altogether.

TIPS FOR LAWRENCE RESIDENTS

Thankfully, keeping leaves out of our stormwater system is easy if everyone pitches in! Here are a few simple tips to help you manage your leaves this fall:

- 1. Mulch Mow Your Leaves:** Instead of raking all your leaves to the curb, consider mulch mowing them directly into your lawn. Mulch mowing is a simple and eco-friendly way to dispose of leaves. By using a mower to chop leaves into tiny pieces, you can add valuable organic matter to your lawn, providing it with nutrients for the upcoming growing season.
- 2. Bag Your Leaves and Take Them to the Compost Facility:** For those who prefer to rake their leaves, the City of Lawrence offers a compost facility where you can drop off bagged leaves and yard waste. The facility is open on Saturdays to Lawrence residents only. By taking your leaves to the compost facility, you're helping to create nutrient-rich compost that can be used in gardens and landscapes throughout the community. Learn more about the Compost Facility and its hours of operation by visiting lawrenceks.org/mso/stormwater.

- 3. Create Your Own Home Compost Pile:** If you have a bit of space in your yard, consider starting your own compost pile. Composting is a great way to recycle organic material like leaves, grass clippings, and kitchen scraps, turning them into a valuable soil amendment for your garden. A well-maintained compost pile can break down leaves quickly and provide you with nutrient-rich compost for your plants, all while keeping those leaves out of the storm drains.
- 4. Utilize Weekly Curbside Yard Waste Collection:** Don't forget that the City offers weekly curbside yard waste collection as part of your regular trash service. Make sure to place your leaves and yard waste in one of the City's brown yard waste carts or compostable paper yard waste bags. Keep in mind that no yard waste should extend more than a foot outside the container. Remember, do NOT use plastic bags for yard waste—plastic is not compostable and will not be collected!
- 5. Report Illicit Discharges on the City of Lawrence App:** Help keep Lawrence clean and safe by using the City of Lawrence App! If you notice any leaves blocking storm drains or suspect any illicit discharges into our stormwater system, let us know through the app. Your report can help prevent flooding, protect our waterways, and keep our neighborhoods looking great. Go to the Apple App or Google Play store and download the "See Click Fix" app to get started.

PROTECTING OUR WATERWAYS

Every small action counts when it comes to protecting our environment. By keeping leaves out of our stormwater system, you're not only helping to prevent localized flooding but also ensuring that our rivers and streams remain clean and healthy for all to enjoy. Polluted stormwater can disrupt our waterways and cause harm to aquatic life, wildlife, and even humans. Let's work together to keep our stormwater system clear and our city beautiful.

Embrace fall responsibly and keep those leaves where they belong – out of our stormwater drains!

Visit lawrenceks.org/mso/stormwater to learn more and stay informed about the ways you can contribute to a cleaner, safer Lawrence this season.

