

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



APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY FLOWERS

It's the time of year for spring planting – and even for some buds to start blooming! Our Parks, Recreation and Culture team do an amazing job planting flowers and maintaining landscaping in City parks throughout the community.

Planning your own spring planting? Be sure to check out the City Compost Facility to pick up some supplies you may need.



City of Lawrence launches cemetery website

The new website makes it easier for staff and community members to locate specific burial sites – whether you're looking for a burial space to purchase or you want to find the space of a loved one or a famous Lawrencian.

In March, the City of Lawrence launched a new cemetery website featuring a searchable database of burial records for Oak Hill, Memorial Park and Maple Grove cemeteries. You can find the new site at: lawrenceks.org/lprd/parks/cemeteries.

The website launch is the culmination of a years-long project – led by City staff in Information Technology and Parks, Recreation and Culture.

"We started this project for two reasons," said Mitch Young, Parks, Recreation and Culture. "From a practical side, the previous hardware was so old it was obsolete. We wanted to create a new system before the cemetery application became inaccessible. We also wanted to make it easier for our community members to locate their loved ones."

The City began using computerized cemetery applications in 1986. Before that, interment

and burial lot purchases were recorded on paper logs and index cards. Transferring the written records to a digital system took years of work from City staff. Thanks to these efforts, more than 1,000 Oak Hill Potter's Field burials are viewable and searchable for the first time.

"Interested community members are now able to search more than 64,000 burial records dating from present day all the way back to the founding of Lawrence," said Jane Cotitta, Information Technology. "This application makes it easier for our local history lovers to find burial places for historical figures, like James Naismith, Forrest 'Phog' Allen, George 'Nash' Walker and Charles and Sarah Robinson. It even includes walking instructions to the area you plan to visit."

The new site also makes it easier for City staff to search available spaces for purchase.

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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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Lawrence Transit announces six Poets Laureate for 2025

Lawrence Transit has selected six Poets Laureate for their program in 2025. The selected poems will be featured on Lawrence Transit's electric buses for the duration of 2025.

The 2025 Transit Poets Laureate are:

- Alejandro Sabillón - Route 5
- Emily Rems - Route 4
- Jim McCrary - Route 1
- Miguel A. Castro - Route 10
- Wyatt Townley - Route 7
- ZOya Nebesniak - Route 12

To read their poems, please visit our website: <https://assets.lawrenceks.org/transit/2025Poems.pdf>

Poem selection was led by poet and professor Megan Kaminski.

"These poems capture the everyday moments of beauty and wonder that sometimes go without notice as we travel from one place to another in our busy lives," said Kaminski. "I am excited that they will keep transit riders company and inspire both connection with and appreciation of the richness of our particular place and the many people who inhabit it."

Inspired to ride and don't know where to start? Try the free Lawrence Transit Travel Training program! Sign up with an email to the transit team: info@lawrencetransit.org

To get help planning a trip on the bus or for more information, visit lawrencetransit.org or call (785) 864-4644.

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simplifying the process for those looking to purchase a site for themselves or a loved one. Purchase receipts, interment wishes, and obituary information can all be stored within the application for future reference.

Future burials will be added to the site in real time with individual memorial pages available for each burial. On these pages, family members and friends may upload photographs and obituaries to honor their loved ones.

With more than 64,000 burial records, City staff have been working hard to ensure the accuracy of the burial information. While they have spent years working on this transition, the team is counting on community members to ask questions and provide feedback if they notice discrepancies. If you have questions or concerns, you can reach the team at cemeteries@lawrenceks.org or (785) 832-3451.

Meet the Team (pictured on front; left to right)

Mitch Young is a Park District Supervisor with the City of Lawrence. He came to Lawrence in 1997 to fill the role of Cemetery Supervisor. He is a licensed funeral director and embalmer with the state of Kansas.

Kylee Beauchamp joined the City in 2024 as an Administrative Professional for the cemeteries office. She has been actively involved with the new website since starting her position here.

Chris Demby started working at Oak Hill Cemetery at age 24. He is the second generation in his family to work at Lawrence cemeteries, and he has been a Lawrence cemetery enthusiast since childhood.

Jane Cotitta started at the City in 2019 in the Information Technology department. She takes a personal interest in our City's cemetery history and has worked tirelessly with the Cemetery staff on this transition.



From left to right: Megan Kaminski, Jim McCrary, Emily Rems, Alejandro Sabillón, Grace Townley-Lott (standing in for her mother, Wyatt Townley), ZOya Nebesniak.

Lawrence named Bicycle-Friendly Community (again!)

The City of Lawrence has once again been recognized as a Bronze-Level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists! This designation reflects the ongoing commitment to making biking safer, more accessible, and a key part of our city's transportation network.

With more than 460 Bicycle Friendly Communities across the country, Lawrence is among the cities leading the way in creating infrastructure and policies that support cyclists of all kinds. From investments in bike lanes and shared-use paths to programs that promote bike safety and sustainability, our work in prioritizing

active transportation continues to make Lawrence a more connected, accessible, and environmentally friendly city.

The Bicycle Friendly Community designation recognizes cities that actively promote bicycling through infrastructure, education, and policies that enhance safety and accessibility. In Lawrence, this means:

- Expanding our network of bike lanes and shared-use paths to make riding safer and more convenient.
- Partnering with local advocacy groups and city departments to promote bike safety and awareness.
- Encouraging bicycling as a sustainable mode of transportation

that reduces traffic congestion and emissions.

- Integrating biking into our long-term transportation and sustainability plans.

"City staff and the Lawrence community have worked diligently over the last 20 plus years to create the cycling culture and network that we have today," says Dave Cronin, City Engineer. "We appreciate this recognition from the League that celebrates the progress that has been made and highlights where improvements can be made in the future."

For more information on biking in Lawrence, visit: lawrenceks.org/mpo/bicycle_planning.