



October/November 2024

## THE ROELAND PARKER

Official Newsletter of the City of Roeland Park

# City Council Approves Tree Protection Policy

After nearly three years of consideration and public engagement, the City Council approved a policy that aims to protect and replenish the City's tree canopy on September 16. Ordinance No. 1062, which is set to go into effect on December 16, 2024, establishes rules and procedures for protecting mature trees in city right of way, parkland, greenspace, city-owned properties and the front yards of private lots throughout the City. Protected trees are those with trunks that measure 12 inches or larger in diameter at 4.5 feet above the ground. The ordinance states that protected trees cannot be removed or destroyed without first obtaining authorization from the City Arborist.

Generally, if tree removal is granted, a new tree must be planted by the property owner. If it is unfeasible for the tree to be replaced, the property owner can instead contribute to the newly established Tree Fund to help cover the cost of tree replacement in other parts of the City. The fund may also help cover the cost of tree trimming and removal for those who meet income guidelines to be established in the Tree Fund policy. However, if the City Arborist finds a tree to be diseased, dead or dying, the property owner can remove it without contributing to the Tree Fund or replacing the tree.

The Governing Body also established a Task Group, per city ordinance, to research and review other practices as they relate to the use of and qualifying criteria for Tree Fund distributions. The Task Group will report its findings to the Governing Body for discussion at a Workshop this fall. The report will include recommendations on the Tree Fund distribution guidelines and an appropriate Mitigation Fee.

For more information on this policy including the full ordinance, please visit [www.roelandpark.org](http://www.roelandpark.org).



ROELAND PARKER

### Citywide Leaf Collection Update



It's that time of year once more! The leaves are beginning to change color, signaling the arrival of fall. Roeland Park Public Works is ready to assist with leaf collection! Starting November 4, 2024, citywide leaf collection will commence on the west side of Roe Blvd. Our staff is currently finalizing the leaf collection map and schedule, which will be shared soon on [www.roelandpark.org](http://www.roelandpark.org) and across social media platforms. Please stay tuned for more updates, and keep these important tips in mind:

- Rake leaves into a long pile behind the curb or at the front of the sidewalk, not in the street!
- Ensure there is a three-foot passable space on sidewalks.
- Keep leaf piles clear of branches and debris.
- Avoid parking vehicles in front of leaf piles on collection days!

# Letter From Mayor Poppa

Hey RP,

Welcome to the October/November 2024 issue of The Roeland Parker. As always, I am honored to serve as your mayor and grateful for the opportunity to connect with you through this newsletter. In addition to the front page article on the tree protection policy and fall leaf pickup, the following pages are filled with exciting updates and ways for you to stay involved in shaping the future of our community.

In this issue, we are featuring a local small business that has made significant contributions to our community. Get to know the owners, learn about their products and services, and discover why they chose Roeland Park as their home.

We also have an insightful article from the Sustainability Committee that explores ways to reduce our carbon footprint and create a more sustainable future for our city—while “cutting out” a major chore. Learn about simple changes we can all make to positively impact the environment.

Meet our new team members in Public Safety and Public Works who are dedicated to serving and protecting our community. Get to know a little bit about them and about their backgrounds and how they plan to contribute to Roeland Park.



Don't miss the upcoming calendar of events, including Walk, Bike & Roll to School Day in Roeland Park on October 2. And be sure to check out our DEI Spotlight to learn more about local organizations and cultural events.

Please enjoy this issue of The Roeland Parker, and don't hesitate to reach out to us at City Hall if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas on how we can keep Roeland Park moving forward.

All the best,

*Mayor Michael Poppa*

## Dog Pool Pawty Recap

Thank you to everyone who came to our Roeland Park Dog Pool Pawty, marking an end of the Roeland Park Aquatics Center's season with this fun bunch of pups! By the looks of these wet pooches, we think they left dog tired.



## Annual RP Artist Invitational

Resident artists, creatives and makers of Roeland Park are invited to submit one to three works to be exhibited in the George R Schlegel Gallery in Roeland Park City Hall, October 26, 2024 - January 4, 2025.

If you are interested in participating, please send the following to Lynda Leonard at [RPgallerydirector@roelandpark.org](mailto:RPgallerydirector@roelandpark.org) by October 15, 2024:

- Artist name
- Phone number
- Address
- Website/social media information

A reception and sales event will be held in December.

Learn more about the Gallery at [roelandpark.net/227/Arts-Advisory-Committee](http://roelandpark.net/227/Arts-Advisory-Committee)



# ROELAND PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

## Upcoming Program Highlights: 50 Plus

**Small Group Computer or Cell Phone Tutoring**  
Oct 15, 10 am, 1 - 2 hr. class  
\$25 / \$27 nonresidents

This small group technology course gives the opportunity to work and practice with your device while having our instructor available to answer questions and provide guidance. Class capped at 5 participants to ensure individual focus.

**Mah Jongg Halloween Party**  
Oct 31, 9:30 am, 1 - 5 hr. event  
\$17 / \$19 nonresidents

Have a ghoulish good time at this marathon of Mah Jongg. Meet new players, enter to win prizes, and enjoy a catered lunch. Bring your own Mah Jongg card. Please register before 10/25.

- **Program Registration and Front Desk:**  
(913) 826-3160
- **Sports Dome:** (913) 362-8700  
Please call for open gym and court rental availability.

### Community Center Office and Fitness Room Hours

Monday - Thursday: 7am - 8pm  
Friday: 7am - 5pm  
Saturday 8am - 1pm  
Sunday: CLOSED

**Finding and Preserving Your Family Roots**  
Oct 21, 10 am, 1 - 1 hr. class  
Free

The Johnson County Genealogical Society will present an overview of free genealogy resources and services. Presentation will describe online databases, forms, and information to assist you no matter where you are in your ancestral journey. Find out about the Memory Lab, where you can digitize old photos, slides, movies, VHS tapes and more. One-on-one help available.

**Call for donations!**  
Our charity knitting group needs yarn donations! Call Nikki at 913-826-3161 to donate!

## Youth Program Highlights

### Mrs. Goetsch's Fall Fun

**Day Camp**  
Oct 14, 9 am, 1 - 7 hr. session  
\$75 / \$82 nonresidents

Enjoy fall-themed activities with pumpkins, apples, and a bit of Halloween on your child's day off from school. Dress to mess!

### Grand Family Fun Event

Nov 1, 1:30 pm, 1 -1.5 hr. event  
\$20 / \$22 nonresidents; per child  
\$8 / \$9 nonresidents; per adult

Bond with your grandchild over a fun-filled afternoon of activities, creating a cozy plush together, and light refreshments. Ages 5 & older with adult.

Visit us at [JCPRD.COM/ACTIVITIES](http://JCPRD.COM/ACTIVITIES) to register.

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ROELANDPARKCOMMUNITYCENTER](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ROELANDPARKCOMMUNITYCENTER)

## 50 Plus Program Weekly Schedule

Programs held at 4850 Rosewood Dr., Roeland Park KS

50 Plus programs with an \* must register in advance

Monday  
BOARD GAME BONANZA  
1pm  
HATHA YOGA\* 4pm

Tuesday  
KNITTING GROUP  
1pm

Wednesday  
TAI CHI\* 10am  
DROP IN PAINT GROUP  
12:30pm

Thursday  
MAH JONGG 12pm  
HATHA YOGA \* 4pm  
TAI CHI \* 5pm

Friday  
HOBBY GROUP  
1pm

# How to Shrink Your Lawn and Create a Native Plant Garden

By Melissa Castillo, Sustainability Committee

L awns in the United States cover an estimated area larger than New York State, which makes them the most irrigated crop in the country. Additionally, each year we use about 2.4 million metric tons of fertilizer to maintain them. Excess nitrogen fertilizer is washed into our water supply by irrigation systems and rain, becoming one of the most harmful sources of water pollution. Lawnmowers contribute to soil compaction, carbon emissions, and noise pollution. Lawns, buildings, and impermeable surfaces all reduce habitat for native plants and animals.

One way to counter the harmful effects of our lawns is to reduce their size by creating native plant gardens or prairies. Native plants require less water, no fertilization, and no pesticides. Once installed, they require far less maintenance. They also attract beautiful birds and butterflies to your yard. You can be reimbursed up to 50% of the cost of your native garden, including installation costs, through Johnson County's Contain the Rain Program. See [www.containtherainjoco.com](http://www.containtherainjoco.com).

You can overhaul your entire lawn or one small section at a time. There are native plants for every environment—be it full sun or full shade, dry or wet soil, clay or loam, and everything in between.

The first step is getting rid of the existing grass. There are multiple ways to do that.

One way is to place cardboard over the area, and then top it with 4-6 inches of mulch. You can get free mulch through [www.chipdrop.com](http://www.chipdrop.com). You can also buy bulk mulch. This method is relatively cheap and easy. A drawback is that you can't plant seeds on top of

mulch. Leave the cardboard and mulch for one season, and then plant plugs (as opposed to seed) the following Spring or Fall. Avoid planting in the heat of summer. Place plugs about 12 inches apart. Some plants will end up larger than that, but planting for maturity will leave too much bare space in the meantime for weeds to infiltrate. Better that the native plants compete for light and resources than to compete with weeds. Native plantings do not consist entirely of wildflowers, but also include native grasses, sedges, shrubs, and trees. For the first couple years, you will need to water your plants to get them established, particularly during hot, dry periods. Until your plants fill in, you may need to pull weeds, but they'll be minimal due to the cardboard and mulch.

The second way to kill the lawn is to spray it with glyphosate. This will kill all existing vegetation. If you hire someone to do this,



make sure they are a licensed pesticide applicator. If you do it yourself, read the label carefully and follow the instructions exactly. Applying pesticide contrary to the label is a violation of federal law. Never spray on a windy day or near water. This is a good method if you have a very large area to plant. It may take multiple applications. You can sow seeds afterwards, whereas methods that employ mulch do not allow seeds to contact the soil for germination.

A quick word on what *not* to do. Do not simply stop mowing your lawn and let it "go wild." Non-native grasses and weeds will grow there, and once they get over 8-inches tall, you will likely hear from code enforcement. One way to send the message that your plantings are purposeful is to maintain a neat strip of mowed grass along the edges of your plantings. Tasteful signs denoting that your garden is a native habitat may also be appropriate.

## Roeland Park Community Garden

S eeds that Feed the Need garden is looking for a volunteer coordinator for next year. We are a donation garden providing fresh produce to neighborhood food pantries. We are sponsored by the city of Roeland Park and maintained by volunteer gardeners. Volunteer duties include scheduling, planning, ordering plants and seeds from KC Community Gardens, packing and delivering the produce. No experience needed!

The garden consists of 14 beds of vegetables consisting of several varieties of veggies with each season! Harvested produce is weighed, packaged and delivered to neighboring food pantries. Our volunteers work Monday and Thursday mornings March thru October and occasional Saturdays, weeding and harvesting the garden. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer please contact Judy Parker at [parker-j@att.net](mailto:parker-j@att.net).



We're excited to share our first RP Business Spotlight: **Robeks Fresh Juices & Smoothies!** Read below to learn more about this tasty business including their mission and what it means to them to serve their fresh juices and smoothies to the Roeland Park community!

📍 4984 Roe Blvd, Roeland Park, KS 66205

**What is your mission?** To provide delicious, nutritious food and smoothies made from high-quality, natural ingredients that nourish the body and energize the spirit.

**Why do you like doing business in Roeland Park?**

Roeland Park has a strong sense of community and local support for businesses. Being local, it is important for us to have good presence in the community and build relationships with customers.

**What do you want people to know about your business?**

Beyond serving delicious food and smoothies, we are actively involved in our community through partnerships with local parks, educational facilities and local school teams. We believe in giving back and fostering a sense of connection and well-being in our neighborhood.

Learn more about the Roeland Park Robeks at <https://order.robeks.com/menu/roeland-park>

**Submit to have your Roeland Park business featured in The Roeland Parker by scanning the QR code to fill out the form or go online to Roelandpark.net and search "Business Feature For The Roeland Parker"**



ROELAND PARKER

# Meet our New Staff

## Police Department

### How did you become interested in law enforcement?

I became interested in law enforcement at a young age as I had family friends who were police officers. As I grew up, I faced several challenging situations which prepared me for my career in law enforcement. As an officer, I strive to lend a hand to those in need and protect those who cannot protect themselves.



Officer Brandon Lewis

### What were you doing before you joined the RPPD?

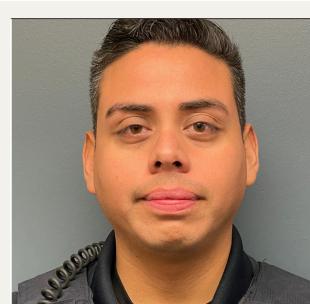
Before joining RPPD I was at the Linn County Sheriff's Office for six years initially as a corrections officer and then was promoted to a deputy sheriff.

### What's your favorite thing about Roeland Park or the RPPD so far?

My favorite thing about RPPD is my coworkers, I feel that we all have different skills and work efficiently as team.

### What do you like to do you in your free time?

In my free time I like to exercise, work on guns, and spend time with my wife and family.



Officer Juan Rozasatti

### How did you become interested in law enforcement?

Ever since I was kid, I had a desire to work as a Police Officer. After graduating high school, I joined the military and studied criminal justice. After returning to Kansas City, I decided that I wanted to serve the community and pursue a career in law enforcement.

### What were you doing before you joined the RPPD?

Before joining RPPD I worked at a college campus as a Police Officer. I also am currently serving in the Kansas Army National Guard.

### What's your favorite thing about Roeland Park or the RPPD so far?

The trees! I grew up just a few minutes away from Roeland Park and always enjoyed driving over to get groceries and seeing the different homes in the neighborhood.

### What do you like to do you in your free time?

I enjoy skydiving, flying, playing the piano, guitar and drums. I also enjoy being around friends and traveling.

## City Events & Holidays



- **Bike, Walk & Roll to School Day** - Wednesday, Oct. 2, 7:30a @ City Hall. Walk to Roesland Elementary.
- **Indigenous People's Day** - Monday, Oct. 14, *City offices closed*
- **Trunk or Treat** - Saturday, Oct. 26, 10a - 12p, Roeland Park Community Center
- **Veteran's Day** - Monday, Nov. 11, *City offices closed*
- **Thanksgiving Holiday** - Nov. 28 - 29, *City offices closed*
- **Mayor's Tree Lighting** - Wed. Dec. 4, 6p-7:30p, Roeland Park Community Center

## Welcome Roesland Elementary's new Crossing Guards!



We're excited to welcome Cecilia Hurlburt (pictured) and Joe Oropeza to the Roeland Park staff as Roesland Elementary's newest crossing guards! You'll see Joe in the mornings and Cecilia in the afternoons. Say hello and let them know they are appreciated for keeping everyone safe walking to and from school!

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ROELAND PARK

TRUNK -OR- TREAT

OCTOBER 26, 2024

Saturday 10 AM - 12 PM

TRUNK PARTICIPANTS  
NEEDED!

WE HAVE LOTS OF  
PARKING SPOTS  
AVAILABLE FOR  
VOLUNTEERS

COMMUNITY CENTER  
4850 ROSEWOOD DR. ROELAND PARK, KS

Email Anthony Marshall at  
[amarshall@roelandpark.org](mailto:amarshall@roelandpark.org)  
to sign up

Best Car  
Contest!

Spooky  
Fashion Show!

## Meet our New Staff

Continued from pg. 6

### Public Works



Denzel Plater

Why did you want to work for public works?

The environment seemed very welcoming and I enjoy serving a community.

What were you doing before you joined us?

I was an Environmental Driller, which is where I would take soil samples to test for contamination.

What's your favorite thing about Roeland Park or the RPPW so far?

Everyone is really down to earth and approachable.

What do you like to do in your free time?

Cycling has been a new hobby of mine. Besides that, fishing, camping, really anything that takes me outdoors is what I enjoy.

Tell us something about yourself that may surprise folks.

I learned how to play the piano when I was nine years old. I still play to this day. I also just got married this September!

# DEI Spotlight

## Hispanic Heritage Month: Sept 15-Oct 15

Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrated from September 15 to October 15, is a time to honor Hispanic and Latinx communities' rich histories, cultures, and contributions. This month offers an opportunity to recognize the diverse cultural tapestry that these communities bring to our city. We encourage all residents to join in the celebration by exploring local Hispanic-owned businesses, attending cultural events and festivals, reading books by Hispanic authors, and learning about the history and traditions of Hispanic cultures.

### Local Hispanic Cultural Events:

- **10/2**- Johnson County Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration at the Johnson County Arts & Heritage Center, visit [jcprd.org/1566/Hispanic-Heritage-Month-Celebration](http://jcprd.org/1566/Hispanic-Heritage-Month-Celebration).
- **10/12**- Rumba Latina at Johnson County Square Park, visit [www.aajc.org/events](http://www.aajc.org/events).
- **11/2** - 2024 Day of the Dead Celebration, 1120 Central Ave, Kansas City, KS, noon - 9 p.m.

## National Native American Heritage Month: November

National Native American Heritage Month, observed each November, celebrates the rich cultures, histories, and contributions of Native American people. It's a time to honor their heritage, learn about indigenous traditions, and recognize the ongoing impact Native Americans have on society. Celebrate by supporting Native artists and businesses, learning about tribal history, or attending cultural events and discussions.

### Local Organizations Spotlight:

- El Centro- Education, community health, economic empowerment, and advocacy for the Kansas City Latino community
- Guadalupe Centers- Education, family support, older adults program, substance use treatment, youth programs, and workforce development/adult education for the Kansas City Latino community
- Mattie Rhodes- Community development organization dedicated to individual and family well-being through social services, behavioral health counseling, and the arts.
- Cafe Corazon- A Roeland Parker-owned business celebrating Latinx heritage. Check out their delicious coffee at their Westport or Crossroads locations.
- Kansas City Indian Center - A great organization for both support services and cultural/educational events for Native American Heritage Month.



## City Contacts



Search

City Administrator - Keith Moody  
[kmoody@roelandpark.org](mailto:kmoody@roelandpark.org)

Finance Director/Asst. City Administrator -  
Jennifer Jones-Lacy  
[jjones-lacy@roelandpark.org](mailto:jjones-lacy@roelandpark.org)

City Clerk- Kelley Nielsen  
[kn Nielsen@roelandpark.org](mailto:kn Nielsen@roelandpark.org)

Chief of Police- John Morris  
[emorris@roelandpark.org](mailto:emorris@roelandpark.org)

Director of Public Works - Donnie Scharff  
[dscharff@roelandpark.org](mailto:dscharff@roelandpark.org)

Mayor - Michael Poppa  
[mpoppa@roelandpark.org](mailto:mpoppa@roelandpark.org)  
(913) 722-2600

Ward 1 - Jan Faidley  
[jfaidley@roelandpark.org](mailto:jfaidley@roelandpark.org)  
(913) 709-6812

Ward 1 - Tom Madigan  
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Ward 2 - Jen Hill  
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(913) 722-2600



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Ward 3 - Emily Hage  
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Ward 3 - Kate Raglow  
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(913) 722-2600

Ward 4 - Jeff Stocks  
[jstocks@roelandpark.org](mailto:jstocks@roelandpark.org)  
(913) 722-2600

Ward 4 - Matt Lero  
[mlero@roelandpark.org](mailto:mlero@roelandpark.org)  
(913) 722-2600



## Holiday Family Adoption

The City of Roeland Park is collaborating with Roesland Elementary and the City of Mission to provide holiday meals and gifts for local families in need. We kindly ask for your assistance in making this holiday season joyous and memorable for our community.

We are seeking support with meals and gifts for these families. If you're interested in contributing, please reach out to Kelley Nielsen at [knielsen@roelandpark.org](mailto:knielsen@roelandpark.org) or call 913-722-2600 to join our email list. She will contact you in early November with a list of necessities, where you can sign up to help.

Thank you for your generosity in supporting your neighbors during this holiday season!

## Community Center Phase 2 Renovations Kick off in 2025!



The design for Phase 2 of the RPCC renovations are well underway. The project will kick off in January 2025 with improvements to the fitness room, Child Development Center, administration offices, programming office and kitchen. This is anticipated to take up to six months to complete. During construction, the fitness room will be closed to the public and fitness memberships will be paused. The fitness room will be one of the first areas completed during this phase and once finished, will reopen to the public. The Child Development Center will continue to operate but will be relocated to the Multi-Purpose room during construction.

The interior is expected to wrap up in June 2025. Exterior improvements are also planned for the courtyard and include new plantings, moving mechanical units to the rooftop, and turf improvements.

We're excited for you to experience our fully updated RPCC in 2025!