

G INSIDE GARDNER

SUMMER 2021

MAYOR SHUTE DELIVERS STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS ON CITY'S NEW ANNUAL REPORT WEBSITE

Last month, Mayor Steve Shute presented the 2021 State of the City Address virtually via the city's new Annual Report website located at www.gardnerannualreport.com. During his address, themed "On the Move," Mayor Shute, accompanied by leadership staff, discussed the tremendous progress in growth and development efforts of 2020. In his message, he highlighted the accomplishments surrounding the city's four strategic goals: Infrastructure, Quality of Life, Economic Development and Fiscal Stewardship.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mayor Shute sat down with Public Works Director Kellen Headless to discuss the city's efforts to maintain Gardner's aging infrastructure. They shared that despite the pandemic, the city kept moving forward on its annual pavement management program and tackled several much-needed improvement projects to improve traffic access and enhance safety. Some of the completed projects spotlighted during this discussion include the Santa Fe Reconstruction Project, the first phase of the I-35 and Gardner Road interchange project, Plaza South Benefit District off 188th Street, the Waverly Plaza Benefit District at Washington and Laurel streets, and the pedestrian crossing at 183rd and Mulberry Street. In addition, Headlee and Mayor Shute announced the summer start of the US-56/Main Street improvement project, which extends from Sycamore Street to Old 56. Mayor Shute also met with utility experts Gonzalo Garcia, utility department director, and Amy Foster, utility billing manager. Garcia provided an update on the expansion of the Hillsdale Water Treatment Plant slated to open this summer, producing 2M additional gallons of water for the city, helping to avoid water emergencies as in the past. Foster shared the progress on the Smart Meter Installation Project with 11,000+ smart meters being installed in 2020 and the positive feedback on how this real-time metering system has helped customers manage their usage, costs and bills.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Mayor Shute was joined by Police Chief Jay Belcher, Parks and Recreation Director Jason Bruce, and Deputy City Administrator Amy Nasta. During this conversation, Chief Belcher gave an update on the new Community Policing Officer's efforts to enhance relations between Gardner police officers and their stakeholders. Bruce announced the return of events that were canceled last year due to the pandemic. The city will hold the Smoke on the Trails BBQ competition on Sept. 10 and 11 and the Grand Slam Craft Beer, Wine & Spirits Fest on Oct. 1. Nasta shared the efforts of the newly created task force charged with providing insight and direction to update the Parks Master Plan, which will offer guidance on sustaining and ultimately enhancing quality of life elements for residents.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mayor Shute and Community Development Director Dave Knopick held a detailed discussion about business attraction. Accomplishments included securing over \$58 million in private investments, the opening of 10+ new businesses, approving residential projects totaling 1,082 new single-family housing lots and 1,176 multi-family units, and annexing more than 800 acres to protect future growth areas. Knopick also gave an update on the Prairie Trace project - a 262-acre mixed-use development currently underway on the southeast corner of 175th St. and I-35.

FISCAL STEWARDSHIP

Mayor Shute recognized Finance Director Matt Wolff and his team for their great stewardship efforts that helped make many of the city's 2020 successes possible, including securing \$2.3M in grant funding, completing three debt issuances in 2020 to support infrastructure investment, refunding Series 10 A-Bonds to achieve over \$180,000 in future cost savings for taxpayers, coordinating the development of the city's five-year Capital Improvement Program, managing the Coronavirus Relief Fund and CARES Act Grant reimbursements, and refunding a month of electricity for residents and partial refund for businesses.

Watch the mayor's address in its entirety and learn about the positive activity occurring in Gardner at gardnerannualreport.com.





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A message from

MAYOR STEVE SHUTE

It's indeed a festive season in Gardner! We are finally getting back to "normal" in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Folks who have been working from home are returning to workplaces (including City Hall), masks are coming off as more and more people are getting vaccinated, and people are getting out and eating, shopping, and attending sporting events and concerts. You might say that we are declaring our "independence" from the virus.

As we celebrate our independence and those who made it possible, our Hidden Gem this time is our local American Legion, Leroy Hill Post 19, one of the most active posts in the entire region. You can read about them and what they do every day to support our veterans and their families below. We have our Independence Day Festival at Celebration Park, featuring country superstar Dylan Scott and an impressive fireworks display. And, on top of all that, the Kansas City Air

Show featuring the world-renowned US Navy Blue Angels will be paying a visit to New Century AirCenter, right next door. All in all, this summer promises to be one to remember for our community, and I am glad to be a part of it!

Lastly, as all of us are traveling, barbecuing, setting off fireworks, and otherwise celebrating our independence, please be safe while doing so, and look out for one another along the way. Courtesy, service, grace, and patience are hallmarks of the #GardnerStrong culture, and above all, we strive to treat each other the way we want to be treated. We've done this throughout the pandemic, and my challenge to everyone (myself included) is to continue and even expand on that culture.

As always, it is my honor to serve as your Mayor,

GARDNER'S HIDDEN GEMS

AMERICAN LEGION LEROY HILL POST 19

As America celebrates its independence, we thought it fitting to recognize the American Legion LeRoy Hill Post 19, comprised of members who dedicated their lives to protecting our freedoms. While most individuals are familiar with the Legion based on their community involvement, some are unaware of the group's primary purpose behind those events and continuous commitment to our country even after completing their military duty.

The American Legion was initially formed to support veterans and service members returning home and as a means for them to continue their comradery. But, according to Post 19 officers, today, the group also provides livelihood assistance to veterans, active duty service members and their families. Help comes in the form of personal assistance, cash grants, donated goods, disaster relief, labor, networking, volunteerism and advocacy.

The American Legion LeRoy Hill Post 19 was established on May 31, 1921. The post was named in honor of Gardner's first resident killed in World War 1. This nearly 600-member group consists of Legionnaires, a service member who honorably served a minimum of one day of active duty; an Auxiliary, a spouse (male or female), daughter or granddaughter of a service member who qualifies to be a Legionnaire; Sons of the American Legion, a son or grandson of a service member who qualifies to be a Legionnaire; and an American Legion Rider who must be a Legionnaire, Auxiliary member, or Sons of the American Legion. Together, they host community functions and activities to raise funds to assist veterans and their families and award scholarships for graduating students. Their Post Honor Guard also helps with funeral services, the Presentation of the Colors at major city events, and the Spencer C. Duncan Make it Count 5K at New Century.

Another mission of the American Legion leadership is to stand before Congress and advocate for veteran rights. In fact, Kansas Veteran Harry W. Colmery, Legionnaire and former America Legion National Commander, drafted the first GI Bill submitted to Congress.

"We are proud of the work we've accomplished as an American Legion and as a post here in Gardner," said Post 19 officers. "We look forward to continuing our efforts to ensure our military members and their families remain a priority."

Stay informed with the American Legion's events and activities via their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/GardnerPost19>.



SUMMER SAFETY TIPS



Johnson County Fire District No. 1 offers the following tips as you and your family enjoy summer fun, including camping, family reunions, picnics and more.

- Build campfires at least 25 feet away from tents, shrubs and anything that can burn.
- Use propane, charcoal and wood pellet barbecue grills outdoors only. Place your grill well away from siding and deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches. Do not store or use a grill on a porch or balcony.
- Keep outdoor fireplaces and fire pits at least 10 feet away from your home or anything that can burn.
- Keep the pool and deck clear of floats, balls and toys after you get out of the pool.
- Always swim with a buddy to help watch out for one another.
- Always wear a bike helmet and bright clothes when cycling so people can see you. Put reflectors on your bike.
- Ride with both hands on the handlebars. Ride in single file with traffic. Stop at all stop signs and obey traffic lights.



CITY RELEASES 2021 WATER QUALITY REPORT ONLINE

The City of Gardner's 2021 Consumer Confidence Report on water quality is now available at gardnerkansas.gov/waterqualityreport2021. Results show that the city continues to meet standards for water quality in accordance with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and Environmental Protection Agency guidelines. The city offers this annual report for review to assure residents that the public water system provides safe, clean and dependable water according to state and federal regulations. The report covers the previous calendar year and includes water quality data, such as water sources and sample testing results. Citizens can request a hard copy of the report by contacting the Utility Department at (913) 856-0980.

GARDNER GRIND ADVENTURE RACE

Spend the morning with family and friends running, climbing, diving and jumping through the Gardner Grind obstacle course. You are sure to have a great time – and get muddy! Watch for details at gardnerparks.com. We hope to see you there!

- Saturday, August 21
- 3 heats going off at 8:00am, 9:00am and 10:00am
- \$10 per participant
- Age: 7- Adult
- Celebration Park, 32501 W. 159th St. Gardner, KS 66030
- Registration: Opens July 6 Registration Deadline: August 19



GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS

Messages for the Governing Body can be left at (913) 856-0939 or with the following info.



TODD WINTERS
Council President
(913) 271-3587
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MARK BALDWIN
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**UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL
MEETINGS** (MONDAYS AT 7PM)

July 6 July 19 Aug. 2 Aug. 16 Sept. 7



View more City Council meeting dates at **GARDNERKANSAS.GOV**

POSTAL PATRON GARDNER, KS 66030



www.GardnerKansas.gov



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PARKS AND REC EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Additional program information can be found at GARDNERPARKS.COM. 

YOUTH PROGRAMS

	DATE	REGISTRATION DEADLINE	AGE	COSTS
Challenger International Soccer Camp	July 26-30	July 16	3 - 16 yrs	Varies
Youth Soccer	September 12	August 6	4 yrs - 8th Grade	\$75
Micro Soccer	September 18	September 10	2 - 4 yrs	\$70
Soccer Player Development	September 17	September 3	6 - 13 yrs	\$70
Youth Volleyball	Early Sept.	August 6	3rd-6th Grade	\$65
Youth Flag Football	Early Sept.	August 20	1st-6th Grade	\$70
Middle School Volleyball	Mid Sept.	TBA	7th-8th Grade	TBA

ADULT / FAMILY PROGRAMS

	DATE	REG. DEADLINE	AGE	COSTS
Independence Day Festival	July 4	N/A	All	Free
Movie in the Park <i>The Lego Movie 2</i>	July 16	N/A	All	Free
Movie in the Park <i>Tom & Jerry</i>	August 6	N/A	All	Free
Gardner Grind Adventure Race	August 21	August 19	7 & Up	\$10
Smoke on the Trails BBQ Event	September 10 & 11	N/A	All ages	Free

Competitors: Register by August 31. (\$185 no-power space; \$200 20 amp space; \$215 30 amp space; \$235 50 amp space)

Women's Indoor Volleyball	September 13	August 27	18+	\$200
Walk & Read	Sept. 24 - Oct. 3	N/A	All ages!	Free
Grand Slam Beer & Wine Fest	October 1	until sold out	21+	TBD

SMOKE ON THE TRAILS BBQ COMPETITION

The City of Gardner, along with the Kansas City Barbeque Society, will once again be hosting a Master Series BBQ Contest this fall where teams will be competing for final points before the American Royal World Series of Barbeque. On Friday night, teams will be selling amazing barbecue and sides to the public using BBQ Bucks. More details to come, so save the date and watch our website and Facebook page for updates! **Location:** Celebration Park, 32501 W. 159th St.

- PUBLIC EVENT:**
- Friday, September 10 6 p.m.
 - Free to public to attend (BBQ Bucks can be used to purchase food/drink.)

- COMPETITION EVENT:**
- Team check in: starts Friday at 9 a.m. (first turn in is at noon on Saturday)
 - Register your team for a chance at the \$10,500 purse at www.smokeonthetrails.com.
 - **Fees:** No Power = \$185 20amp = \$200 30 amp = \$215 50 amp = \$235

