



City of Topeka

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From the City Manager's Desk

April 22nd, 2019

Sumatran Tiger Injures Keeper at the Topeka Zoo and Conservation Center

At about 9:15 Saturday morning, a Zoo Keeper found herself in the same outdoor space with a seven year old Sumatran tiger. The Keeper sustained injuries and has been treated at a local hospital where she remains in stable condition.

Zoo personnel responded immediately. In less than ten minutes, the tiger was called into an adjoining indoor holding space. The tiger was never out of its enclosure.



While the zoo briefly closed during the time of the incident, it reopened shortly after.

"The male Sumatran tiger, Sanjiv, simply reacted the way that is normal for a tiger to do," said Zoo Director Brendan Wiley. "There is absolutely no consideration of euthanizing the tiger."

Over the next several days, a complete investigation will be conducted that will also review all policies and procedures around tiger management at the zoo. "If we need to make updates to our current procedures, we will most certainly do that," said Wiley.

The zoo staff is highly trained and experienced in working with tigers. Safety is always in the forefront. The entire zoo team routinely trains for emergency situations like this.

The Topeka Zoo considers its Sumatran Tiger Program to be one of its best well rounded animal programs. "For this critically endangered species we have an active breeding program, we make regular contributions to the science of caring for this species and our community financially supports a ranger on the ground in Sumatra," said Wiley. "Right now, our focus is on our injured team member. Our thoughts and prayers are with her and her family."



Road Construction

The City of Topeka Public Works Department is kicking off



construction season. Each week, the weekly report will have updates on the road construction projects in Topeka.

You can check out the City of Topeka's [pavement condition index](#) (PCI) and [street maintenance program](#) to see how the Public Works Department fixes our streets.

Construction highlights:

- Work proceeding on SE Adams (33rd to 37th)
- Work proceeding and concrete being placed on SW Gage (25th to 29th)
- Work proceeding on Chesney Park.
- Work proceeding on Arvonía and Winding Road.
- Work proceeding on permanent pavement repair on SW Fairlawn at 25th.
- Signals installed at 29th and Fairlawn.





Bio-retention Cells Controlled Burn

Fire has been a part of the Kansas prairies' ecosystems for centuries. Without it, undesirable woody plants and invasive weeds would eventually take over the landscape. Maintaining the health, vigor and diversity of native plants can be accomplished by using this efficient and economical management tool.

Jackson Street Bioretention Area, 5th to 8th Street, underwent a controlled burn to improve the health of its native plant communities. Native plants have been incorporated into the design and function of several bioretention cells, which capture and filter out pollutants collected by stormwater runoff.

John Renyer, WPC Horticulturist, is shown igniting accumulated leaf litter and dead vegetation during the controlled burn. Fire not only reduces



dead vegetation, it stimulates new growth, helps control weeds and recycles nutrients back into the ground.

Switchgrass is a native warm-season grass found on the tallgrass prairie and displays large flames when burned. As a source of seeds for a variety of wildlife, it has adapted to the Kansas climate through its extensive root system. Growing 11' into the soil, seldom reached water is found during dry summers.

Several species of pollinators also benefit from a diverse plant community. One such pollinator is the monarch butterfly. As they continue with their annual migration, nectar-rich plants supply much-needed food, while milkweed provides females a place to lay their eggs.

Ash Street Force Main and Pump Station Project



The City of Topeka Utilities Department started construction on the Ash Street Force Main project on April 15th and is scheduled to be completed in April of 2020. The original station was constructed in 1928 with an expansion occurring in 1972. The project consists of construction and installation of a new 48"



diameter force main as well as upgrades to the Ash Street Pump Station's existing pumps, gates, instrumentation and controls. There have been two failures in the existing force main, therefore this is a mandated rehabilitation project as part of the Consent Agreement with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

Citizens in the area of the Ash Street Pump Station were notified of the construction by mail this spring. An open house and informational presentation was held on January 24th. The site of construction will have several pieces of large equipment working in the area. The City of Topeka asks that citizens be cautious around the construction work zone. Please follow all temporary construction work zone traffic control which will include detours for vehicular and pedestrian traffic. For more information please contact City Wastewater Engineer Michelle Neiswender at 368-4251.



Sound the Alarm

On April 27th the Topeka Fire Department and the American Red Cross needs your help to install 100,000 free smoke alarms and raise funds for lifesaving services during *Sound the Alarm* home fire safety and smoke alarm installation events in the Oakland and North Topeka neighborhoods.

Every day, seven people die in home fires, the Topeka Fire Department and the Red Cross want to do everything possible to prevent these needless tragedies. Volunteers work alongside fire departments and other local groups, canvassing at-risk neighborhoods to install free smoke alarms, replace batteries in existing alarms, educate families about fire prevention and safety for this lifesaving mission.

You can sign up to volunteer to help install smoke alarms during the Sound the Alarm event [here](#).



Our Wildlife Heroes: Rachael...



AZA Hero's

We need animal conservation heroes more than ever as the world is losing wildlife thousands of times faster than the natural extinction rate. A new public service announcement unveiled today by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) features four professionals who embody what it means to be a champion for wildlife and wild places including Topeka Zoo and Conservation Center's Rachael Rost. The winners of the AZA Find Our Wildlife Heroes contest, who star in the ad, share the unique paths they've pursued to help save endangered species. The full PSA and vignettes featuring each of the heroes may be viewed on [AZA's YouTube channel](#).

Last fall, AZA invited members of its 233-accredited facilities to submit personal stories of their passion for animal care and conservation. Over 100 entries were received, highlighting the



diverse work of professionals at AZA-accredited facilities and the love they have for their jobs.

After deliberation from a panel of judges, as well as a public voting period, four members from AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums were chosen as Our Wildlife Heroes. These four heroes represent professionals at AZA facilities who play a hands-on role in the care and conservation of animals. Rachel Rost was one of four winners. Rachael is an educator who directly connects with thousands of students per year, engaging them in citizen science and inspiring conservation in the classroom.



Topeka in Two: Performance Portal



Performance Portal

Check out the performance portal on the City of Topeka website! The performance portal takes data from six categories that includes street maintenance, public safety and property maintenance. Check out more here: <http://performance-topeka.opendata.arcgis.com/>

Recent Updates

- There have been 19 broken [water mains](#) in April with 141 breaks year to date. At this time last year there were 159 water main breaks.



- The Street Department has filled 2,148 [potholes](#); 21,091 so far this year.
- The 2020-2029 Capital Improvement Plan was amended and adopted by the Governing Body at the April 16 City Council meeting. The adopted book can be viewed at <https://www.topeka.org/finance/capital-improvement-projects/>.
- The Topeka Police Department graduated 15 new officers this week and the Topeka Fire Department graduated 5 new firefighters.



Fire Station #3 Renovation

The renovation of Fire Station #3 is underway. The fire station is being expanded and remodeled.



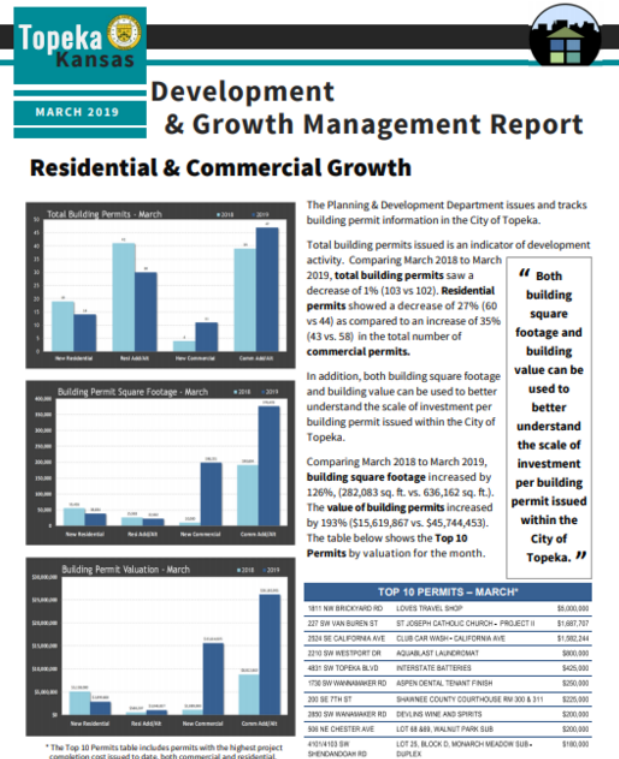
Development and Growth Management Report

Planning released the March, 2019 Development and Growth Management (DGM) Report which can be found at

www.topeka.org/planning

Highlights for the 1st quarter of 2019 include:

- Total building permits are at the same level as this time last year, but commercial permits are up 35%.
- Total building permit values increased 193% compared to this time last year
- Total building permit square footage increased 126% compared to this time last year.
- New residential units (38) increased 77% from this time



last year.



**TEAM UP
to
CLEAN UP
TOPEKA**

EAST END NEIGHBORS

We are celebrating the East End Neighborhood by bringing Team Up to Clean Up to you. You are one of two neighborhoods chosen this year and we are excited to partner with you for full concentration on your neighborhood.

- Brent Trout, City Manager

During the months of March and April City of Topeka staff will be in the neighborhood assessing the needs. Opportunities for residents will include personalized DIY classes from Habitat for Humanity, Resource Guides, Fire alarm installations and much more.

RESOURCE FAIR | NIA MEETING
APRIL 11, 2019 - 6:30PM
RICE COMMUNITY CENTER




Look for us in the neighborhood and come say hi! We are here to help and see what we can do for you in the community.

Team Up to Clean Up: East End

Team Up to Clean Up is coming to the East End neighborhood in March and April.

Check out how Team Up to Clean Up has helped other neighborhoods on the City of Topeka [performance portal](#).

This week's updates include:

- Fire Department Crews from Station 2 have been walking the Eastgate neighborhood and talking to residents



about smoke detectors and fire safety. TFD is installing reflective address numbers provided by Kansas Gas to help provide for a better emergency response.

Coming Up

- City Council Meeting, May 7th at 6 p.m.
 - East End NIA Pancake Feed & Walk-n-Talk, Saturday, April 27th
 - Safe Streets meeting at the Great Overland Station on 5/1/2019.
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Brent Trout

This weekly report is presented to you from the office of City Manager Brent Trout.

[For other weekly reports, visit the City's website](#)

This report was produced through our open data portal. We have several other open data portals to help connect you with the work we do, including portals that let you:

- [Visualize Topeka's \\$270M budget](#)
- [See Topeka's expenses, one check at a time](#)
- [Navigate our major infrastructure projects](#)
- [Track departments' progress toward our goals](#)





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