

## Curbside recycling pilots begin

Beginning in January, the City of Broken Arrow will be conducting a recycling pilot program to test the viability of adding curbside recycling to its refuse service. Curbside recycling is a service not currently offered by the City but recommended by residents in a 2016 customer survey.

Two areas of the City have been selected to study curbside recycling. Residents in each area will collect recyclables in a blue cart, while regular trash will be picked up in a different way in each pilot program. Residents in the first program will place trash out as they do currently, with bags

placed at the curb. The second program will include a black cart for trash, in addition to the recycling cart.

Both pilot programs include approximately 500 households each and will have both trash and recyclables picked up on the same day once per week.

The programs will test “Single Stream Recycling,” which means no sorting of recyclables is required.

All program recyclable materials, including paper, cardboard, glass, metals and plastics, may be placed

together in the blue cart. Recyclables are picked up and transported to a materials recovery facility where they are sorted, processed and marketed for reuse.

The pilot period begins in January and runs until late May.

Once the programs are complete, the City Council will determine the possible direction for future refuse and recycling service in Broken Arrow.

Implementation of either plan is not expected to increase trash rates for Broken Arrow residents.



## Rose District receives honors

The efforts that led to the revitalization of Broken Arrow’s Main Street, known as the Rose District, have earned another honor – finalist for the Route Fifty Navigator Awards.

Now in its third year, the Route Fifty’s Navigator Awards “celebrate the best of government” by honoring people or teams who work for or with state, county or municipal governments. Route Fifty names 50 finalists across five categories.

Broken Arrow was nominated under “The Electeds” category, which

recognizes the leaders in a state or local government who drive change in the communities they serve. Mayor Craig Thurmond was nominated for his work championing the Main Street renaissance.

“This nomination may carry my name on it, but the renewal in the Rose District was a collaborative effort by many different entities,” Thurmond said. “I don’t consider this recognition a personal victory but rather a deserving recognition of what Broken Arrow has achieved through the cooperation of the City, Broken Arrow

Public Schools, the Broken Arrow Chamber, private investors and of course the residents of the City. The Rose District would not be what it is today without everyone working together.”

The two category winners were Anissa Essaibi-George, City Councilor At-Large in Boston, for a program that reduces homelessness and improves education outcomes for families in Boston and Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins, Alaska District 35 State Representative for a rural economic development program.

## Construction resumes on 37th Street

Work on a new section of 37th Street (209th East Avenue) between Omaha (51st) and Albany (61st) Streets resumed in early November.

The project began in 2017 but faced a lengthy delay due to a utility line that required the purchase of additional right of way. ONG completed the utility line relocation this fall, allowing the City to reengage its contractor.

With construction now underway, this new stretch of 37th Street is scheduled to be completed in late summer of 2019, weather permitting.

The 37th Street project was funded by the voter-approved 2014 General Obligation Bond and is expected to cost about \$4.2 million.

# Take green waste to Tulsa’s Mulch Site

With fall leaves piling up in yards and bare tree limbs begging to be trimmed, many Broken Arrow residents may wonder how to get rid of it all.

In summer 2017, the City of Broken Arrow entered an agreement with the City of Tulsa to allow Broken Arrow residents use of Tulsa’s Mulch Site free of charge. Simply present a recent utility bill or drivers license showing your Broken Arrow address.

The Mulch Site, located at 2100 N. 145th E. Ave., accepts tree limbs, grass clippings and leaves. Visitors can also pick up firewood. A cutting area is available but you must bring your own saws.

Items not accepted are root balls or trees



with foreign materials (such as fencing or concrete), rock, pipe, lumber or treated wood, trash, dirt or building materials.

The Mulch Site is open seven days per week, excluding City of Tulsa observed holidays. Hours are 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m.



## New city attorney selected

This fall, Trevor Dennis was selected as the new City Attorney for the City of Broken Arrow. Dennis has been with the City since 2010 and has been Deputy City Attorney since 2015.

Dennis worked in private practice as a trial lawyer for seven years before coming to work for the City of Broken Arrow. He has successfully represented the City of Broken Arrow in litigation in both state and federal court and is a graduate of the 2017 class of Leadership Broken Arrow.

He holds a Bachelor’s degree from Kansas State University and completed law school at the University of Tulsa in 2003.

Dennis and his wife, Krissy, have two daughters.

### New Utilities director

Also this past fall, the City hired Charles Vokes as the new Director of the Utilities Department.

Find out more about Vokes in this month’s FOCUS on the Utilities Department.

# Mayor attends White House housing discussion

Broken Arrow Mayor Craig Thurmond was invited to the White House for the fourth time in 2018. Thurmond attended the White House Roundtable on Housing Affordability on Friday, Nov. 16.

The purpose of the housing roundtable was to gather input from local government leaders and discuss the unique challenges faced by municipalities. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson, as well as other key officials, spoke during the event.

“Once again, I am honored to receive an invitation to an important White House meeting to discuss matters of great importance to the country,” Thurmond said. “It was a great opportunity to share the thoughts of Broken Arrow residents and Oklahomans with members of the Housing and Urban Development Department as



well as White House staff.”

This was Thurmond’s fourth invitation to the White House in 2018. He was previously invited as a select group of U.S. mayors to attend Mayors’ Day at the White House: A Conversation with President Trump in January where President Donald Trump announced plans to spend \$1.7 trillion on infrastructure.

The mayor was invited

to attend the Mayor’s Infrastructure Discussion in March, where a select group of mayors met with D.J. Gribbin, Special Assistant to the President for Infrastructure. Thurmond also attended the White House Conference with Oklahoma Local and County Leaders in August.

City Plan Development Manager Larry Curtis accompanied the Mayor to the roundtable.

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Ongoing through January 12 — Broken Arrow Soccer Club Spring registration** Open to boys and girls ages 3-18. Visit [www.bascok.com](http://www.bascok.com).
- January 1 — New Year’s Day** City offices closed. No trash pickup.
- January 2 — Broken Arrow City Council** 6:30 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 220 S. First St.
- January 10 — Planning Commission** 5 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 220 S. First St.
- January 15 — Broken Arrow City Council** 6:30 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 220 S. First St.
- January 21 — Martin Luther King Jr. Day** City offices closed. No trash pickup.
- January 24 — Planning Commission** 5 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 220 S. First St.
- January 25 — Community BUNCO Bash** 6 p.m., Broken Arrow Senior Center, 1800 S. Main St. \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. 918-259-8377
- February 9 — Daddy Daughter Dance** 6 p.m., Nienhuis Park Community Center, 3201 N. 9th St. \$5 per person in advance. 918-259-6550
- February 5 — Broken Arrow City Council** 6:30 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 220 S. First St.
- February 14 — Planning Commission** 5 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 220 S. First St.

## Holiday trash schedules

City offices will be closed on Tuesday, Jan. 1, for New Year’s Day. There will be no trash service that day. Service will resume on the next regularly scheduled day.

City offices are also closed Monday, Jan. 21, for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Monday’s trash will be picked up Tuesday and Tuesday’s trash will be picked up Wednesday.



## About the department

The mission of the Utilities Department is to protect the public health by supplying high quality drinking water and safely reclaiming wastewater in a cost efficient manner, while continuously improving service and planning for future needs.

The Utilities Department is responsible for the installation, maintenance and repair of water and sanitary sewer lines; water metering; the treatment and distribution of water and the collection and treatment of wastewater.

The department has 84 employees in four divisions: Water Treatment; Wastewater Treatment; Water Distribution and Metering; Wastewater Collection and Water and Collection

line construction.

The Verdigris River Water Treatment Plant has 15 employees and a capacity of 20 million gallons per day.

The Lynn Lane Wastewater Treatment Plant has nine employees and a capacity of 8 million gallons per day.

The City has 670 miles of water distribution lines maintained by 42 employees. This also includes 5,745 fire hydrants, seven storage tanks holding up to 17 million gallons, four pump stations and 38,600 water meters.

The City's sanitary sewer collection system covers 693 miles of collection lines, 33 lift pump stations and 17,616 manholes maintained by 15 employees.

## DIRECTOR PROFILE



### Charles Vokes

Charles Vokes began serving as the City of Broken Arrow Utilities Director in September 2018 and has over 35 years Utilities experience.

Charles graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington with a degree in Biological Sciences and began his career with Arlington Water Utilities.

Before coming to Broken Arrow, he served as the Facilities Director for the Buckman Direct Diversion, a joint City/County project in Santa Fe, N.M.

Charles and his wife have five children and seven grandchildren and enjoy spending time with family and friends and playing golf, snow skiing and traveling.

## Water plant supplies up to 20 million gallons per day

The \$65 million Verdigris River Water Treatment plant was placed into service in 2014 and serves Broken Arrow by producing up to 20 million gallons of drinking water per day.

The facility uses settling basins to prepare the raw water for microfiltration using state-of-the-art membranes. The water is then disinfected with chloramines and stored in a 6 million gallon clearwell until it is pumped into the City's water distribution system.

Broken Arrow's drinking water is safe and meets all State and Federal standards. This past summer, the City experienced some taste and odor episodes that come from the algae that grows in raw water sources. These algae naturally produce musty or earthy compounds that are detectable by some people at extremely low concentrations. The unusually heavy algae growth exceeded our existing water treatment plant's capacity to remove them to below detectable levels. Although



they alter the taste of the water, these compounds are not considered a health risk.

As a response to these compounds, the treatment plant this summer began using an additional chemical that has been successfully used by the City of

Tulsa to treat their raw water.

Other effective treatment processes exist and the City is actively researching which of these additional treatment processes will be most effective to resolve the taste and odor concerns for Broken Arrow residents.

## Pretreatment protects residents, environment

Federal and state law requires the City to operate a pretreatment program for the protection of the sewer collection system and wastewater treatment plant.

Pretreatment controls discharges to the sewer system with three main goals in mind:

1. Keep untreated wastewater in the system by limiting sanitary sewer overflows caused by obstructions such as grease and rags; thereby protecting the environment and promoting public health.
2. Protect infrastructure and equipment by limiting pollutants that are harmful, corrosive, or otherwise have a potential to deteriorate taxpayer investment.
3. Reduce interference with the biological treatment process to ensure wastewater is adequately treated before being released into the environment by limiting toxic pollutants discharged by industry.

The pretreatment program consists of two main components — industrial pretreatment and the FOG (fats, oil and grease) Program.

### Industrial pretreatment

- Surveys industrial sewer users for applicability with pretreatment program regulations.
- Permits industry with process waste streams.
- Establishes pollutant discharge limits for industry.
- Requires laboratory analysis of process waste streams.
- Inspects permitted facilities.

### FOG Program

Fats, oils and grease, or FOG, is a problem for the drainage pipes in homes and businesses.

Most foods and many drinks contain elements of FOG. When these are put into the sewer, the FOG attaches to the sides of the sewer pipe which reduces flow. This can cause raw sewage to back up into homes or businesses, resulting in extensive building and property damage.



Our Pretreatment program:

- Works with management at food handling facilities, automotive shops, and car washes to ensure oil, grease and sand are kept out of the sewer system.
- Inspects grease interceptors, oil/water separators and sand interceptors for proper maintenance.
- Coordinates pollution prevention and community awareness efforts with residents, schools, and other community groups for the reduction of sanitary sewer overflows caused by fats, oil, grease and rags.

**Remember:** protection of the sanitary sewer system equals protection of the environment and public health.



## Remote camera inspects sewers

Did you know that the Utilities Department uses CCTV to inspect wastewater lines?

The collection line camera system provides information on which lines may have problems and helps maintenance crews determine the best way to address them.

The camera equipment is housed in a specially designed van. A remote camera is placed into the sanitary sewer line and sends precise data to the work station in the van. This data shows distance, pipe diameter, slope, misaligned pipes, erosion, damage, leaks and debris.



Using this data, graphs and reports, crews document the inspection and repairs can be planned and performed as a result of the information gathered.

## Automated meters improve accuracy

The City of Broken Arrow continues to improve its water meter program by installing Automated Meter Readers (AMR), in the City. Installation has been underway since March 2016.

The AMR system results in greater accuracy of meter reads, establishes efficiency in the collection of water use data and helps keep staffing and operational costs down.

Many communities in the area, such as Owasso, Sand Springs, and Tulsa, already use AMR systems.

### Benefits of AMR

- Obtain accurate readings
- Reduce reading/recording errors
- Eliminate need for estimated consumption during bad weather
- Minimize the need for personnel to go on the property
- Detect leaks/backflows occurring in the plumbing system

## Upgrades needed to meet demand

In 2016, the City of Broken Arrow administration completed the process of updating its operations and five-year Capital Improvement Plan for the Utilities Department.

With regard to infrastructure reinvestment, the administration identified a need for a total of \$140 million worth of improvements which included:

- \$26 million to improve the water system

- \$102 million to improve the wastewater (sanitary sewer) system
- \$12 million to improve stormwater systems

2018 projects recently completed or under construction include a new headworks facility at the wastewater treatment plant and an improved settling facility at the water treatment plant.