

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

April 30, 2026

Message from the Manager:

Planning Director/Building Official Michael Beard brings us this month's message:

When I got the chance to pick a month for the City Manager's Update, I went with April. Not because of April Fools' Day, although I do appreciate a good prank, but because April is basically the warm-up act for May. And May, as we all know (or should know), is Building Safety Month. So really, choosing April was just my way of getting a front-row seat to talk about building codes.

Building codes aren't just rules on paper, they're the difference between a home that's safe and one that puts people at risk. Every code requirement is there because someone, somewhere, was hurt or even killed when the code was not followed. When we build to code, we're learning from those lessons and preventing the same problems from happening again.

Following code protects homeowners, protects contractors, and protects us all from costly failures, lawsuits, and damage. A simple oversight such as an undersized handrail, a missing guard, an improperly supported deck can lead to devastating accidents. But when we build to code, we remove those risks before they ever have a chance to become tragedies. This thought coined the phrase, First Preventers. Preventing terrible events before they happen.

Building to code isn't about making the job harder. It's about making the structure stronger, the design safer, and the result something we can stand behind with confidence. It reflects professionalism, integrity, and respect for the people who will use the space every day. And honestly, when everything lines up, bolts down, and passes inspection without any surprises, it feels pretty great. After all, nothing beats that moment when you can look at your work and say, it's not only is this safe...it's code-tastically safe.

"Quality means doing it right when no one is looking." - **Henry Ford**

"The bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low price is forgotten." - **Benjamin Franklin**

I thank Michael for his writeup on the importance of codes and inspection. We are blessed to have Michael on our team as he is a leading expert in the State of Texas on building codes. Beyond being a code expert though, Michael is an excellent leader. Just check out some of the initiatives such as yard of the month and Certificate of Occupancy celebrations coming out of Planning/Building! It speaks volumes of him and his team!

General Updates

Retirements:

Fernando Fernandez retired on April 23rd with 10 years of service to the City. Fernando was such an honorable officer and a good friend to so many of us. His service with the City will be missed and we wish him nothing but the best in his endeavors!

Calving Fleming is set to retire on May 28, after 32 years of dedicated service. A celebration will be held on May 28 from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Activities Center for Calvin. I know I am not alone in saying it just won't be the same without Calvin around! Make sure you stop by and congratulate him and join me on May 28 for his celebration.

Promotions:

Massoud Howayeck promoted to Sergeant on April 11th

Brianna Daniel promoted to Sergeant on April 11th

Cory Bates promoted to Sergeant on April 11th

Trevor Jorgensen promoted to Project Manager on April 11th

Orlando Calderon De La Rosa promoted to Code Enforcement Officer on April 11th

Tyrin Godfrey promoted to Heavy Equipment Operator on April 11th

Christian Batista promoted to Deputy Court Clerk on April 27th

Welcome to our new hires:

Melonie Matthewson re-hired on April 1st as Part Time Human Resources Clerk

Christina Cassidy hired on April 6th as Assistant Finance Director

Lesli Owens hired on April 6th as GIS Coordinator

Vincent Palmisano hired on April 13th as Aquatics Supervisor

Amy Shutz hired on April 20th as Information Services Administrator

Jade Garcia hired on April 20th as Telecommunicator

Coletyn Brownlee hired on April 27th as Firefighter/Paramedic

Rose Gonzalez hired on April 27th as Telecommunicator

Joshua Hogue hired on April 27th as Lifeguard

Accomplishments/Awards:

Sonja Clay was selected as the Committee Chair of the Texas Police Chiefs Association Professionalism and Ethics Committee.

Courts awarded the MTSI Traffic Safety Award

Stephanie Hall graduated from Vision 21

Joshua Larremore recognized through Bubba's 33 First Responders Recognition Program for his outstanding service and contributions

Ethan McClellan obtained his Driver/Pump Operator certification

Nathan Elliott and Sean Kampmeier earned Instructor certification

April Kudos Award Winners: You all do such great work serving our public and each other! Congratulations to Kristina Ramirez, Dennis McAfee and Lonnie Clark who were our April kudos winners! Many more to come!

Clyde's Crossword Challenge: This month's Clyde's Crossword Challenge winners were 1st Place – Ashlyn Brooks, 2nd Place – Sherill Carillo and 3rd Place Haley Alcorn.

Sudoku Winner: This month's winner of the Sudoku Challenge was Lorissa Byse!

March Move Your Body Challenge Winners: The challenge winners were 1st Place Betty Delong and 2nd Place Erica Rossmiller!

HH-N-GO: A new HH-N-GO bingo challenge began with the start of 2026! A new letter/number will be pulled each week and there are specific things to do for that letter/number if you have it on your card. There is a game card for employees and one for citizens. The game helps us to get to know our organization better and for our citizens it helps them get to know the City better. Contact HR for your bingo card! It's never too late to get a card and play!

First Fridays Music Series: This coming Friday, May 1, come out to Carl Levin for a concert performed by G. Samuels and The Complete Puzzle! Concert time is 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the amphitheater at Carl Levin. Bring a chair or a blanket out and enjoy!

Harker Heights Farmers Market: It's back! Starting Saturday, May 2, the Harker Heights Farmers Market will be in full operation. Due to voting, the May 2 Market will be held at Carl Levin Park. The Market will run every Saturday morning through July 25 for the early season and then open back up October 3 to December 5 or the late season.

Aquatics' Summer Staff Needed: Parks is hiring for summer aquatics staff: lifeguards, cashiers and water safety instructors. Know of someone who would enjoy a temporary summer job please refer them to Parks.

Library Programs: Our Library is full of great programs for the entire family to enjoy – make sure you check out the Library's webpage for programs your family may have interest in.

Regional Waterway Clean Up: Harker Heights will be participating in the Regional Waterway Clean Up on Saturday, May 16 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at Dana Peak Park (3800 Commanche Gap Road). Donate an hour to help clean up trash in the area.

Harker Heights Police Department Annual Health Fair: The Harker Heights Police Department Annual Health Fair is on May 16, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Harker Heights Library. The event is free and family-friendly! It will offer mammograms, vision screenings, glucose testing, vitals checks, and blood pressure checks.

Spotlight on Service:

Dennis McAfee is Complimented: PD's Lieutenant Dennis McAfee recently assisted on a code issue of water being pumped from a pool. The citizen called to state how pleased they were with how responsive Lieutenant McAfee was and complimented how McAfee handled the situation.

Ashlyn Brooks is a Treat: Library's Ashlyn Brooks recently brought baked goods by to members of the admin team at City Hall. HR Director Leona Clay wrote, *"Thank you so much for the delicious treat! It was absolutely wonderful and truly brightened our day. Your thoughtfulness meant a lot.*

Thank you for all you do!"

Jeff Jordan Reassures: PD Officer Jeff Jordan recently worked the Harker Heights polling location for the municipal election. A citizen gave a kudos after coming up to vote. They were very reassured to see such an active and pleasant officer on duty.

Alex McCoy Appreciated: Planning Administrator Stephanie Hall wrote to share her thanks for Code Officer Alex McCoy. Stephanie wrote, *"I wanted to share a quick note of appreciation for Alex McCoy. Last week, we were very short staffed at the front office and needed extra support to handle phones and assist customers at the counter. Alex stepped in immediately without hesitation and was willing to help wherever needed. His positive attitude and readiness to support the team made a big difference during a challenging time. I truly appreciate his effort and teamwork."*

David Mitchell, Betiale Hawkins, Mark Hyde, Houston Johnson and Michael Starr are Cooking: Court's Administrator Catharina Hoffman wrote to thank David Mitchell, Betiale

Hawkins, Mark Hyde, Houston Johnson and Michael Starr for preparing breakfast for staff. Catharina wrote, *“Thank you for the pancake breakfast. Coming in for work this morning was easy peasy, knowing that breakfast would be waiting for us. Everyone seemed to enjoy the spread and the casual conversations before the day started. Thank you again for helping us enjoy the morning before the hustle and bustle started.”*

John Fox Saves the Day: Planning/Building’s Fabian Brooks wrote to share his appreciation for Public Works’ John Fox. A recent development had debris wash into a roadway that posed an immediate danger to traffic. John Fox quickly brought out the sweeper and took care of the issue. Fabian wrote, *“Thank you so much for your help and quick response time. You are AWESOME!!”*

David Mitchell, Betiale Hawkins, Mark Hyde, Houston Johnson and Michael Starr Thanked: Court’s Melissa Chevalier Duenas wrote to thank David Mitchell, Betiale Hawkins, Mark Hyde, Houston Johnson and Michael Starr for cooking breakfast. Melissa wrote, *“I just want to take this time and thank you for a yummy, fantastic breakfast. It was a wonderful way to start the day. I appreciate everyone taking time out of their busy schedule and coming in early to get everything ready. Thank you for all you do and again for the great breakfast.”*

Amber Love, Tyrik Alderson, Donovan Martinez, Tamara Gonzalez and Kai-Tano Concepcion Duenas are Incredible: A baseball coach wrote to share their thanks for Parks’ Amber Love, Tyrik Alderson, Donovan Martinez, Tamara Gonzalez and Kia-Tano Concepcion. The coach stated, *“I wanted to send a huge thank you to the entire athletic department and the grounds crew for the incredible work on the field today. Given how much rain we’ve had throughout the day and the weekend I honestly wasn’t sure we’d be able to play. The fact that the field was safe and ready for game time after it was completely rained on is a testament to how hard you all work behind the scenes. We know it took a massive effort to manage and prep the surface in those conditions, and it didn’t go unnoticed. We really appreciate you going the extra mile so we didn’t have to deal with a cancellation.”*

Haley Alcorn Takes Initiative: Library’s Angie Sabino wrote to thank Library’s Haley Alcorn. Angie wrote, *“I would like to nominate Haley Alcorn for a kudos award. It takes a*

special kind of person to have the initiative to go above and beyond in creating a welcoming and engaging space like the one we strive for in the library. Haley Alcorn has done a wonderful job, without being asked-taking the initiative to update the Story Walk and thoughtfully align it with April's Poetry Month. The result is both creative and inviting, and it truly enhances the experience for our community. Thank you Haley for your effort and care."

Jordan Clopton and Mason Heifner are Helpful: FD received a phone call acknowledging the good work for Firefighter/Paramedic Jordan Clopton and Mason Heifner. The citizen was very appreciative and wanted to thank them for such wonderful care. She shared how much it meant to her as they were very helpful and kind during their interaction.

Josh Delong and IT Team Get a Shoutout: Police Chief Sonja Clay wrote to thank IT's Josh Delong and the entire IT Team. Chief Clay wrote, *"I want to give a huge shoutout to Josh and his team for getting the technology set up at the PD so quickly. Not only did they get our work cell phone situation taken care of, but we are now receiving our new work laptops as well, even though I was initially told it could take some time because a new server needed to be set up. We are truly appreciative of all the hard work Josh and his team have put into making all of this happen. Thank you!"*

Norris Lockett Shows Kindness: Harker Heights' Chamber's Rebekah Moon wrote to give thanks to Parks' Norris Lockett. Rebekah stated, *"I came to City Hall this morning around 8:50. As I walked up, a gentleman was on a riding mower by the employee entrance. He stopped well away from me while I walked by. I noticed and waved at him, and after I left he continued mowing. It was simple, but I appreciate how he was paying attention and kept it from being too loud or anything potentially blowing on me. If you can find who this gentleman was, please give him my thanks. His simple kindness made my day!"*

Clyde Hicks Goes the Extra Mile: HR Director Leona Clay wrote to thank Building Security Officer Clyde Hicks. Leona stated, *"I just wanted to recognize you for going above and beyond today. You noticed the recycling containers were full and took the initiative to empty them without being asked. That kind of thoughtfulness and attention to detail is truly appreciated."* That's just another example of service above job description by Officer Hicks!

Jeff Deleon, Jonathan Hicks, Leonardo Solis, Corey Johnson and Jonathan Rosado

Protect: A citizen wrote to personally thank Public Works' Jeff Deleon, Jon Hicks, Leonardo Solis, Corey Johnson, and Jonathan Rosado for assisting her after she was involved in a car accident. These great Public Works' employees jumped into action checking on the citizen and calling the Police Department. Great job team!

Jeff Jordan is Thoughtful: PD Officer Jeff Jordan received a social media kudos for his work at the voting polls at the Recreation Center. The citizen stated they, "*would like to thank the officer who came out to the voting pools Tuesday to make sure everyone was staying hydrated. What at TEAM HHPD. Thank you again it was so kind and thoughtful.*"