

CITY OF LAWRENCE 2007 LEGISLATIVE POLICY STATEMENT



Lawrence continues to build on its distinctive history as it seeks to enhance the future for all current and future residents. We continue to build and plan for our remarkable future. Progress continues on several infrastructure projects which will shape the future of our community, including the \$18 million expansion of our Clinton Reservoir water treatment facility and design of our new water reclamation facility located south of the Wakarusa River. We continue to invest in our historic downtown ensuring its long-term vibrancy. We also have placed an emphasis on economic development to foster job growth in the community.

Lawrence continues to receive high marks from residents, visitors, and new-comers. In our recent citizen survey, 84% of Lawrence residents indicated they were satisfied with the quality of life in Lawrence – 13% higher than the national average. A recent edition of *US News & World Report* included an editor's pick of Lawrence as one of the top ten communities in the nation to retire. While the reviews are heartening, we are not retiring on this good news, instead we are pushing forward to make Lawrence an even better place to live, learn, raise a family, and grow a business. We appreciate the work our federal delegation and their staff do every day to help Kansas and Lawrence prosper.

FEDERAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION FUNDING IS A NECESSARY PART OF LAWRENCE'S FUTURE

Lawrence and the entire Northeast region of Kansas face major surface transportation challenges as our community continues to grow. Neither local nor state resources will be sufficient to provide the infrastructure needed to meet future regional transportation needs.

If Lawrence and surrounding areas are to ensure the safety and convenience of residents while providing the necessary infrastructure for strong, sustainable economic growth, we must begin building today a transportation network capable of responding to tomorrow's street and highway needs.

We urge our delegation to increase its surface transportation funding for our community. We have specifically

requested federal funding for improvements to: 1) East 23rd Street at the intersection of Franklin Road which would ensure safe and improved access to growing industrial areas of our community; and 2) the intersection of the K-10 and Bob Billings Parkway on the city's growing western side.

Future challenges to the federal highway trust fund must be addressed. We look forward to working with our congressional delegation and the federal government to fulfill its obligation to provide adequate funding for surface transportation needs.



Major surface transportation is a challenge as the community continues to grow.

LAWRENCE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT FLIES HIGH WITH SUPPORT FROM THE FAA

The Lawrence Municipal Airport has received FAA funding for a variety of infrastructure projects over the past several years, helping improve safety and operations. These projects include a major expansion and rehab of the apron, improvement and expansion of the main runway and taxiway and lighting improvements. Continued work to improve Lawrence Municipal Airport is vital as we strive to meet the aviation demands of a growing community.

This year's airport project is focused on runway safety area improvements. Work on Runway 15-33 is eliminating low areas that do not conform to current FAA safety standards. The project also includes relocating two existing gas pipelines. An FAA grant of \$966,254 was essential in making the project possible.

We appreciate the past support provided by our legislative leaders and look forward to funding assistance in the future in order to continue providing aviation services that are safe, proactive and responsive and that contribute to the economic viability of the community and region.



Improving Lawrence Municipal Airport is vital to meet the aviation demands of a growing community.

FEDERAL FUNDS HELP FUEL LAWRENCE TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

Lawrence Public Transit is one of only fourteen small urban transit systems to experience over 100-percent growth since its founding. Lawrence Public Transit continues to provide not only local, but region-wide access to quality, affordable transportation alternatives. As the Lawrence transit system prepares to celebrate its 7th anniversary this December, efforts to improve and expand transit service across the community continue. Creative partnerships are helping deliver affordable transportation options for Lawrence and regional riders even as increasing fuel costs and environmental concerns make transit alternatives more vital for our community.

Partnering with Johnson County Transit, KDOT, University of Kansas, Haskell Indian Nations University and Johnson County Community College, Lawrence Transit helped launch K-10 Commuter service earlier this year, linking college campuses in Lawrence with campuses in neighboring Johnson County. Ridership has exceeded projections, presently serving approximately 600 passengers a day. Work is underway to determine how K-10 service can link with the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority Metro service to better provide citizens with more transportation options. In addition, Lawrence continues to work closely with the University of Kansas to further coordinate transit services. Our partnership with the Mid-America Regional Council Rideshare program, "Carpool Connection," has served over 1,700 riders, and discussions are underway to expand the service area to integrate riders in Topeka and St. Joseph.

A commitment to funding public transit from the Federal Transit Administration is vital to successfully meet the growing transportation needs of Lawrence and the region. Operating and capital projects are in need of urgent support. It is anticipated that the City of Lawrence's entire fixed-route service fleet (12 vehicles) will fulfill their federally mandated useful service life requirements in 2008. While some funding has been identified, we need legislative assistance to obtain additional funds to help replace these vehicles and to prevent a disruption in service for riders who need public transit for work, health care and community access.

We greatly appreciate past efforts and urge our legislative partners to continue to support public transportation so that we can provide our citizens with safe, accessible and reliable transportation options.



Public transit requires legislative assistance for additional funds to help replace vehicles and to prevent a disruption in service for riders who need public transit for work, health care and community access.

FREEDOM'S FRONTIER NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Lawrence is excited to take a leadership position in promoting the recently established Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area under the National Park Service. This designation will provide educational and cultural opportunities

that capture and preserve the history of the area and focus attention on the role the region has played in the nation's struggle for freedom and opportunity for all of its people. The City of Lawrence and Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area are cooperating through a new organizational structure to provide additional resources to promote our historic role. We urge our federal delegation to support funding National Heritage Areas in order to preserve and enhance the interpretation of this important legacy.



Supporting funds for National Heritage Areas will preserve and enhance the interpretation of this important legacy.

FEDERAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM IS A CORNERSTONE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN LAWRENCE

For federal fiscal year 2007, the City of Lawrence allocation for CDBG was \$828,822 and \$643,923 for HOME. While Lawrence residents seek additional affordable housing options and the betterment of their neighborhoods, CDBG and HOME funding have been either reduced or remained stagnant this decade.

The City of Lawrence uses CDBG and HOME funding to provide vital community-wide support, including a highly successful comprehensive housing rehabilitation program, first time homebuyer, emergency energy

efficiency and weatherization programs – all for low and moderate income owner/occupants. Funding also supports neighborhood associations in targeted neighborhoods, targeted capital improvement projects, as well as funding for public service agencies helping the homeless and other low and moderate income persons in our community. As the City awaits the outcome of the 2008 funding allocation, we oppose efforts for any further cuts to these allocations.



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SUPPORT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IS ESSENTIAL TO LAWRENCE

The University of Kansas

The University of Kansas serves as the flagship research institution for our state and as an excellent educational institution for preparing our future leaders. Congressional support for future research grants and research facilities, including those in the bioscience and life science fields, will help keep Kansas at the forefront of emerging technologies and help provide vital resources that benefit not only Lawrence, but our entire state. Potential commercial benefits generated from a thriving research climate can help keep Lawrence and Kansas on the path to strong, sustainable economic growth.

Haskell Indian Nations University

Haskell Indian Nations University represents an important national commitment for providing excellent educational opportunities for Native American students from around the country. We urge our congressional delegation to support full funding for this important institution.

FEDERAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS LAWS

Recent proposed legislation would strip the ability of local communities to regulate the use of their local right-of-way by telecommunications companies. We urge our federal legislators to recognize recent changes made by the Kansas legislature on this topic. Lawrence and other Kansas cities must continue to receive appropriate compensation for the use of their public right-of-way and must remain able to regulate the use of public right-of-way in order to protect our community's interests.



Regulating the use of public right-of-way in order to protect our community's interests is vital.

INTERNET CATALOG SALES AND LOCAL SALES TAXES

Sales taxes are an increasingly important component of city budgets, funding essential municipal services and capital improvements. The recent economic climate has seen those city

revenues dependant upon growth and development stagnate. An important federal and state issue that must be addressed is the legal authority to impose state, city and county sales taxes on electronic commerce and catalog sales. Empowering local and state governments with the authority to tax e-commerce and catalogue sales will not only generate important revenue for state and local governments, but will also eliminate an unfair competitive advantage against traditional land-based Kansas businesses. Kansas businesses deserve to compete on an equal taxation footing with electronic competitors often located outside the state.

UNFUNDED MANDATES

The City of Lawrence opposes unfunded mandates from the federal government. These mandates drain limited resources from needed City programs and activities.

BIOSCIENCES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Lawrence-Douglas County Biosciences Authority is seeking to partner with State resources to enhance the biosciences industry in the Lawrence-Douglas County area. We urge you to support these efforts as we seek to enhance economic growth.

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The City of Lawrence is committed to providing excellent city services that enhance the quality of life for the Lawrence community.