



## **2017 State Legislative Program**

The *2017 State Legislative Program* is a policy document that expresses the position of the City of Manhattan for the 2017 Legislative Session. It is not intended to be either an exclusive or all-inclusive document, but rather captures the major policy positions of the City. The City of Manhattan endorses the legislative positions and policies of the 2017 Statement of Municipal Policy from the League of Kansas Municipalities to the extent where it doesn't conflict with items listed in this document (available online at <http://www.lkm.org/smp/>). We encourage area legislators and citizens to contact City officials regarding any issue that could potentially impact local units of government. City Commissioners and City Administration welcome questions and insights and are happy to offer their knowledge and experience on those matters affecting local government.

Please direct questions or requests for additional information to

**City of Manhattan**

Kiel Mangus, Assistant City Manager

1101 Poyntz Avenue

Manhattan, KS 66502

(785) 587-2404

FAX: (785) 587-2409

[mangus@cityofmhc.com](mailto:mangus@cityofmhc.com)

## Contents

2017 TOP 5 LEGISLATIVE ACTION PRIORITIES.....	3
Internet Sales Tax Collections.....	3
Impact Aid and New School Finance Formula.....	3
Property Tax Lid/Spending Lid.....	4
Kancare Expansion & Community Mental Health Center Funding.....	4
KSU- Higher Education Funding.....	5
2017 SECONDARY LEGISLATIVE ACTION PRIORITIES.....	5
Public Retirement Systems (KPERs).....	5
Weapons and Firearms in the Workplace.....	6
Home Rule and Local Control.....	6
Local Elections.....	6
State Shared Revenues.....	6
2017 STANDING LEGISLATIVE ITEMS.....	7
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.....	7
Financing Tools.....	7
FORT RILEY.....	7
FINANCE.....	8
Accumulated Interest on Delinquent Special Assessment Taxes.....	8
Budget Timing.....	8
State Budget Concerns/Tax Policy.....	9
Unfunded Mandates.....	9
GOVERNANCE.....	9
Annexation.....	9
Consolidation of Services.....	9
Political Signs in Public Right-of-Way.....	10
Public Property and Rights-of-Way.....	10
TOURISM.....	10
TRANSPORTATION & UTILITIES.....	10
Airline Revenue Guarantee.....	10
Stormwater Grant and Loan Program.....	11
T-Works & KDOT.....	11
Water & Wastewater Quality.....	12

## 2017 TOP 5 LEGISLATIVE ACTION PRIORITIES

### Internet Sales Tax Collections

\*\*Updated Item

Collection of sales tax on remote sales would level the playing field for online and brick-and-mortar retailers. An estimated \$23 billion in uncollected sales taxes on remote sales occurs yearly that is already owed to local governments. In 2012 alone the State of Kansas missed out on an estimated \$279 million in uncollected remote sales tax. The City of Manhattan has estimated to miss out on over \$5 million between 2011-Present for uncollected sales tax on remote sales. With that money local governments could provide better services to residences at no extra state government costs, and the money could help aid the State in addressing budgetary shortfalls. This is not a new tax, rather it is just simply an issue with the collection of a tax that should already be occurring. The City recognizes that the State is limited due to interstate commerce law and ultimately the issue needs to be resolved at the federal level. However, there are actions the State can take to increase collections and awareness through law similar to what the state of Colorado did in 2010. In that law the State requires Internet, catalog, or other out-of-state sellers either to charge sales tax on their sales to Colorado buyers or to provide information about tax due on those purchases to the buyer and to the State Revenue Department. **The City encourages State Legislators to establish a program that would require internet sellers to take more efforts in securing the collection of due tax. The program should inform buyers at the time of purchase that they might owe tax on what they ordered, send all customers a year-end notice reminding them that they might owe tax along with the total amount of their annual purchases along with the fact that the Department of Revenue is being notified about the information, and requires internet sellers to provide an annual report to the Department of Revenue with information from buyers and total annual purchase amounts (staying general in nature) of Kansas customers.**

### Impact Aid and New School Finance Formula

The future economic success of the State and local Manhattan region depend upon a strong system of public schools to create the highly skilled workforce necessary to compete in a global economy. State Legislators are working on a new school finance formula during the 2017 session to replace the current block grant funding formula that doesn't adequately address the education funding needs of the State of Kansas, nor the local region. Military installations such as Fort Riley can be challenging to local school districts due to the large amount of fluctuations in enrollment and also the loss of property tax revenue due to federal property that is tax exempt. USD 383 in Manhattan applies for impact aid yearly from the federal government and over the last 10 years has been eligible for over \$2 million in total aid. By the State equalization formula the District only realized approximately 30%, or \$575,164 during that time. The rest of the funds were redistributed across the State. The State previously allowed for a military second count date to assist impacted districts. This policy was especially important in the military communities that see large fluctuations in attendance during the year. USD 383 experienced an average increase of over 131 additional students per year from 2006-2014 through the military second count legislation. **The City of Manhattan supports the State adopting a new school finance formula that includes a military second count date and considers allowing the school districts eligible for impact aid to keep a larger portion of the aid intended for them.**

### [Property Tax Lid/Spending Lid](#)

In 2015 the Legislature passed a bill that enacted a tax lid on local governments beginning in 2018. First and foremost, the City of Manhattan opposes the enactment of State-imposed spending or taxation lids/controls. The City believes local taxing and spending decisions for a community should be made by local officials who were elected to shoulder that responsibility. Additional oversight from the state is cumbersome and unnecessary. In the 2016 Session the Legislature cleaned up some language in the prior tax lid bill and added various exemptions to the tax lid. The State also moved the implementation date of the bill up to January 1, 2017. Some of the more important exemptions for the City of Manhattan include exemptions for bond and interest payments, principal and interest on state infrastructure loans, special assessment payments, court judgments or settlements of legal actions against the City, expenses related to natural disasters or emergencies, or any increased costs above the CPI Index related to law enforcement, fire protection, or emergency services. One exemption that wasn't added was for the employee benefit fund. Cities are often hit by health insurance increases that are outside of their control. Those marketplace increases should be exempt from the tax lid. In addition, the cost of a special election that would be necessary if a municipality desired to increase their budget is significant, and would not coincide with the timing necessary to get a budget approved and to the State. Thus, a protest petition would seem more effective. **The City of Manhattan supports the Legislature adding the employee benefit fund as an exemption to the tax lid bill and also supports the bill being changed from a special election process to a protest petition.**

### [Kancare Expansion & Community Mental Health Center Funding](#)

Community based mental health services must be restored and expanded across the State in order to improve a mental health system that is stretched beyond its ability to provide the right care at the right time, in the right place for Kansas citizens. The health and safety of our citizens, families and communities are at risk in a system where we must desperately seek alternative placements in order to avoid unacceptable hospital census numbers. Since 2007, grant funding for mental health services has been cut by approximately \$20 million. As programs are restricted and grant funding reduced, the state has shifted costs to other service providers and to local governments, placing an undue burden on local taxpayers. This also means that recovery options are not available statewide. Families face repeated hospitalizations or arrests of their loved ones. There are also increased expenses related to the overuse of jails, prisons and emergency rooms. 53% of individuals served by CMHCs also do not have insurance. This amounts to 65,000 Kansans whose mental health care is not reimbursed by Medicaid, Medicare or private insurance. Expanding KanCare would qualify these Kansans for essential health benefits, including mental health and substance abuse treatment in their communities. In Kansas, untreated mental illness is associated with an estimated 128 suicides, 21,000 incarcerations and 29,000 unemployed adults, costing the private sector, including employers, nearly \$429 million per year. Unrealized earnings for individuals due to unemployment, disability, institutionalization, or suicide amount to approximately \$522 million annually. In addition over 2,900 people alone in Riley County would benefit from KanCare expansion that are currently not eligible. Recent KanCare cuts from the State are impacting local hospitals, such as Via Christi in Manhattan, to the tune of several hundred thousand dollars in less reimbursement for taking care of people in the community. These impacts extend down to the local physician level, where some physicians are saying they will no longer treat certain patients accordingly. **The City of Manhattan supports the expansion of KanCare and the**

**restoration of grant funding that has been cut prior from Community Mental Health Centers such as Pawnee Mental Health Center here in Manhattan, Kansas.**

#### [KSU- Higher Education Funding](#)

The City of Manhattan has a great partnership and town-gown relationship with Kansas State University (KSU). KSU is the largest employer in the area and is a key driver for the economy in the City and also for the State of Kansas. KSU received nearly \$5 million in budget cuts in 2016 due to revenue shortfalls at the State Budget level. As revenues continue to come in below estimates at the State level it is likely that further cuts might occur. Federal money, tuition dollars, and private grants were also considered in the overall amount considered for the budget cuts. This hurt KSU because it has a large research portfolio and brings in federal research grant dollars for the state of Kansas. Budget cuts and lack of pay raises makes it difficult to retain the quality faculty at the University level necessary to remain a top-flight research University as well as students at all levels. **The City of Manhattan supports the Kansas Legislature fully funding the budget requests from the Kansas Board of Regents.**

## **2017 SECONDARY LEGISLATIVE ACTION PRIORITIES**

#### [Public Retirement Systems \(KPERs\)](#)

The City applauds the 2013 legislature for passing legislation that encourages sustainability in the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERs). However, the State should still honor the funding commitments designated in the 2013 legislation. The State did put in more than \$40 million in gaming revenue in 2014, but did so instead of, rather than in addition to, State general fund monies. In 2015 the State of Kansas cut their employer contribution to KPERs and in 2016 the State of Kansas delayed their \$93 million payment to KPERs until 2018. Between 2003-2014 the State of Kansas only funded KPERs at an average funding ratio of 65.1%, thereby short changing the investment funds and subsequent overall performance of the fund. That funding ration puts the State of Kansas in the bottom 25% of State Funded public retirement systems. The City opposes the state not making its KPERs employer contribution while mandating state employees, other local units of governments and school districts, along with their employees, to make their increased contributions. Bond rating agencies are also taking into account the liability of the financial status of the state pension system. Cities can be adversely affected from that. Much work was done to improve the financial capacity of the retirement system and now is not the time to short change it and put KPERs back in jeopardy. Any changes to the current system should consider the need of local governments to predict and control employee benefit costs and to recruit and retain qualified employees. Recently KPERs noticed participants of a reduced investment rate of return target percentage which resulted in an upcoming increase in contribution rates by participants. One wonders if that would have been necessary if the State had made it's equivalent mandated contributions. The other participants expect the State to catch up and kepp up with it's equivalent mandated share of employer contributions. **The City of Manhattan encourages the legislature to honor its full funding commitments to KPERs. The City requests that the legislature include local governments in discussions about changes to KPERs or the Kansas Police & Fire Retirement System (KP&F).**

### [Weapons and Firearms in the Workplace](#)

In 2015 the state of Kansas passed Legislation allowing the open carry of firearms in public places and in 2016 the state passed Legislation that limited the ability of public employers to limit the carrying of firearms by their employees at any time. The recent Legislation passed in 2016 brings much concern regarding the possible actions of employees not required to carry a weapon, but who choose to carry a weapon at work and have an incident. Cities and other public employers should not be liable from the actions of those employees who choose to carry a weapon. The City of Manhattan has also experienced events at public parks and other open, public areas where citizens have open-carried weapons and caused discomfort to other users in the area. Ultimately, many of those other users left the area due to the discomfort. This could happen at many different public areas such as parks, sports fields, arenas, playgrounds, and zoos. **The City of Manhattan supports the ability of local government to regulate the open carry of firearms in areas of significant assembly and support the ability of local governments to set policies regarding the carrying of firearms by municipal employees while they are engaged in their work.** The City also supports requiring concealed carry individuals to go through the appropriate training and licensing.

### [Home Rule and Local Control](#)

Constitutional Home Rule is the cornerstone of municipal government and should not be preempted by State action. The City of Manhattan believes that the preservation of constitutionally-granted home rule authority is essential to effective and responsible local self-government. Local elected officials are in the best position to make decisions concerning their local communities and are most accountable for those decisions, particularly regarding taxing and revenue decisions. **The City opposes any change in state law which would limit the Home Rule authority of cities.**

### [Local Elections](#)

In 2015, the Legislature passed a bill that moved local election to the Fall of even years. The reasoning behind this action was said to be low voter turnout. Further discussion has occurred in efforts to make local elections partisan in nature. Political parties are irrelevant in providing services at the local level, and cooperation is more likely to occur between elected officials who might otherwise fall in opposite parties were elections partisan in nature. **The City of Manhattan supports local government elections remaining non-partisan in nature.**

### [State Shared Revenues](#)

The State has discontinued a number of initiatives that had previously constituted a significant contribution to local government revenues, and the State has reduced or threatened revenues from the following sources: State Liquor Tax distributions; Machinery & Equipment (M&E) Property Tax Exemption reimbursements; Local Ad Valorem Tax Reduction (LAVTR) distributions; and Special City/County Highway Fund (SCCHF) distributions. Since 2003, the City is estimated to have missed out on over \$7,800,000 in funds that the State was supposed to share through LAVTR. The City is especially concerned about the direct impact to citizens if further reductions are made in State Liquor Tax distributions which fund numerous social service agencies, programs, and initiatives supported by the Special Parks and Recreation Fund and the Special Alcohol Programs Fund. Additionally, the reduction of the M&E, LAVTR, and SCCHF revenues will most impact planned infrastructure maintenance projects and the Riley County Police Department, among other initiatives supported by the City's General Fund. The

resulting effect of these reductions to local governments will likely be a greater burden on the State's property taxpayers. **The City supports the reactivation of previously eliminated state-shared revenues and strongly opposes budget-balancing measures that simply displace the problem by reducing or eliminating revenue distributions and reimbursements to local government.**

## 2017 STANDING LEGISLATIVE ITEMS

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The City of Manhattan is utilizing an approach to economic development that leverages the research strengths of Kansas State University to lure technology, bioscience, and global food related companies to Manhattan. We work closely with the following organizations in Knowledge Based Economic Development (KBED): Kansas State University, Kansas State University Foundation, Kansas State University Research Foundation, Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce, Kansas State University Institute for Commercialization (KSUIC), and the North Central Kansas Community Network. We need the state to partner with us by offering programs that sustain and enhance economic development capacity for the future economic growth of our state, region, and community. These partnerships are necessary to ensure that Kansas can attract and retain quality employers and ensure an available skilled workforce. For example, in 2009 the City leveraged a local commitment of \$425,000 to secure a \$1 million grant from the Kansas Bioscience Authority to add three new laboratories in the Manhattan/K-State Innovation Center to accommodate animal health or other bioscience related research. In 2012, the City successfully partnered with the Kansas Department of Commerce to retain and grow CivicPlus, a community engagement software company that specializes in cost-effective website solutions for public sector clients. CivicPlus expects to add 250 jobs earning wages above \$45,000 per year over the next 10 years. **The City supports continued funding for the Kansas Department of Commerce and other State economic development programs that would help leverage local investments in attracting and keeping high-skill, high-wage jobs.**

#### Financing Tools

The ability to utilize Tax Increment Financing (TIF, Community Improvement District (CID), STAR Bonds, and Transportation Development Districts (TDD) has been critical for redevelopments in Manhattan, and will continue to be vital for future redevelopment in Manhattan. These tools are essential to communities throughout Kansas when engaging in public improvements and economic development projects. **The City of Manhattan opposes any changes in state law that would restrict the flexibility of cities to use financing tools including TIF, CIDs, STAR Bonds, and TDDs to promote economic development in their communities.**

### FORT RILEY

In June 2014 the Army issued a report on their Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment (SPEA). The report showed possible significant losses of troops to the Fort, and economic detriment to the Manhattan area. The worst case scenario in the report showed a loss of 16,000 military and civilian personnel to Fort Riley. Fort Riley has experienced some civilian and troop loss to this point, but is always in danger of further cuts due to uncertainty in the federal Defense budget. Currently, Fort Riley is in the process of advocating for another Brigade to locate there. This could mean up to 4,000 troops and possibly

up to a total of 15-16,000 people overall in growth for the region when you count families. The City supports the Fort efforts in trying to advocate for another brigade. MWR (morale, welfare, and recreation) programs in the Army are currently going through a \$105 million budget cut. Fort Riley will experience that MWR cut first hand through the closing of Custer Hill Golf Course, limited pool hours, and changes in hours at Fort Riley Marina and Warrior Zone. Overall, Fort Riley could see the loss of over 258 positions in MWR on post. This includes the possibility of losing several positions in Public Works, Fire, and EMS on post. Those losses could see an increase in response time for fire on base go from five minutes to twelve minutes. That is a dangerous loss of time in response due to those budget cuts. The Fort provides approximately \$1.8 billion in direct economic impact to the Central Flint Hill Region and is the largest employer in the area and the State of Kansas. The City and the Fort would like to further pursue partnerships that could benefit both parties, but are currently limited by legislation mainly at the federal level. **The City of Manhattan greatly appreciates the support of our legislative delegation over the past years in addressing identified needs for Fort Riley. The City supports continued funding and operations for the Governor's Military Council; further development of partnerships with the Fort, regional entities and the State of Kansas.**

## FINANCE

### Accumulated Interest on Delinquent Special Assessment Taxes

State Statute K.S.A. 79-2004 pertains to the timing for the payment of real estate taxes, and the accumulation and distribution of interest from delinquent property taxes. According to the Statute when a taxpayer pays delinquent taxes, plus interest, the County in which the property is located gets to keep all of that associated interest. Although the Statute provides that the County can enter into an agreement with any City within the County for the distribution of interest associated with special assessments levied by the City, as a practical matter there is no incentive for the County to enter into that agreement and, therefore, in practice, the County routinely keeps all of the interest associated with those special assessments. The City of Manhattan routinely utilizes special assessment financing in new subdivision development to fund streets, water lines, sewer lines, and storm sewer improvements. The special assessment financing requires the City to issue bonds to pay for those improvements and the bonds are repaid by the special assessments on the benefitting property over a 20-year time period. Special assessment bonds are backed by the full faith and credit of the City, so if the property owner doesn't pay their special assessment taxes then the City at large taxpayers must pick up that debt. This is unlike the failure of a property owner to pay the basic ad valorem taxes associated with that property. In that instance, no entity is "out of pocket" the delinquent taxes. They have only failed to receive those taxes. Because the City has to actually "cover" the delinquent special assessments, the City incurs substantial carrying costs for those delinquent special assessments. **The City of Manhattan requests, and supports, amending K.S.A. 79-2004 to provide that delinquent special assessment taxes are differentiated from general property taxes and the associated interest from those delinquent special assessment taxes is distributed to the entity which levied those taxes.**

### Budget Timing

The state imposed deadline for filing City budgets occurs in August of each year for the City's calendar year budget. This forces the City to engage in an early budgeting process and limits the information available for producing more accurate revenue and expense projections. The early timeframe is also

challenging for incorporating budget requests from outside agencies. **The City of Manhattan supports legislation that would extend the statutory timetable for municipal budget preparation, publication, hearing, adoption, and certification by at least 30 days to allow for more accurate assessed valuation information and sales tax receipts.** The City recognizes delaying budget certification can impact other levels of government and would support requiring local governments to submit their maximum property tax levy in August, but delay the full budget certification until later in the year.

### State Budget Concerns/Tax Policy

The City of Manhattan recognizes the ongoing budget challenges for the State of Kansas. However, local governments across the State have shouldered significant responsibility as a result of cost-cutting at the state level. The State Legislature used to rely on a philosophy of balancing revenue from income, sales, and property taxes. With the passage of income tax cuts in 2012, that has thrown that balancing of revenues off, and directly impacted the ability of the State to provide necessary services. The City of Manhattan has more than contributed to the goal of reducing the State's shortfall. State budget cuts can have a dramatic effect on the ability of local governments throughout the State to continue funding planned budget expenditures and supporting programs that have historically relied either in whole or in part on distributions from State tax revenues. The City of Manhattan is growing, and the region is a significant economic engine for the State of Kansas. Further budget reductions would restrict our ability to accommodate growth and economic development. **The City of Manhattan supports the Kansas Legislature to find ways to balance the budget without shifting the burden to local government entities. Local governments should also be included in any discussions regarding restructuring of the State tax systems to ensure solutions are reached that fully assess the resulting financial burden on local taxpayers.**

### Unfunded Mandates

State and federally mandated functions, without the financial resources to accomplish their legislative intent, are contrary to the spirit of constitutional home rule and are not conducive to cooperative intergovernmental relationships. **Any function of sufficient importance mandated to local governments by the State or Federal branches of government should be fully funded by the State and/or Federal government on a continuing basis.**

## GOVERNANCE

### Annexation

The ability of cities to grow is inherent for the economic growth and development of the state. Statutory framework for annexation was amended in 2011 to balance the interests of cities and those to be annexed. Any further amendments would impede orderly growth for cities. Manhattan is a growing city and annexation is a key tool in helping aide that growth. **The City of Manhattan opposes any change to legislation that limits the authority of the city to grow through annexation.**

### Consolidation of Services

The City of Manhattan and Riley County have had great success with consolidated law enforcement services through the Riley County Police Department (RCPD). The City of Manhattan believes we have quality, effective law enforcement services through the RCPD model that allow for good stewardship of the taxpayer dollar. Local voters should determine whether consolidation of any type of service with

another unit of government should occur. **The City of Manhattan supports processes for local consolidation of services without undue statutory barriers and specifically supports the consolidated Riley County Police Department structure, and the legislation (K.S.A. 1944-27) which allowed such consolidation to occur.**

### Political Signs in Public Right-of-Way

The State of Kansas passed legislation in 2015 that does not allow a city or county to regulate or prohibit the placement of political signs on private property or unpaved right-of-way during the 45-day period prior to any election, or 2-day period following the election. Shortly after that law was adopted by the State, the United States Supreme Court rendered its opinion in the Reed v. Gilbert case stating that content-based sign regulations are unconstitutional. The ruling by the Supreme Court likely renders the State Statute unconstitutional because of the content basis of the law. **The City of Manhattan supports the State amending K.S.A. 25-2711 to comply with federal law, and allowing input locally during the amendment process from cities and counties regarding their local practice in right-of-way sign regulation.**

### Public Property and Rights-of-Way

The City of Manhattan has the responsibility of managing the orderly, efficient, and safe use of the public rights-of-way within its boundaries. In today's society, electronic needs and service to networks is ever increasing from citizens and businesses. The public right-of-way is becoming more and more limited in space as that demand grows. Cities should be able to impose franchise fees on utility, telecommunications, and cable companies wishing to use those rights-of-way. Recognizing that use of the public rights-of-way is important to the enhancement of services for businesses and citizens, the City must continue to maintain order in this crowded and limited space as demand for use of public rights-of-way increases. Citizens can be adversely affected by these facilities being located in their yards. **The City of Manhattan supports legislation that enables cities to enforce maintenance and repair standards on franchisees that disturb the public right-of-way and/or damage the existing public infrastructure, and also allows the City to negotiate, within reason, location of facilities and how the final product may look.**

## TOURISM

The approval by the Kansas Department of Commerce of \$50 million in STAR bond financing for the South End Redevelopment District, including a Flint Hills Discovery Center which opened in 2012, is an encouraging indicator of the State's dedication to its planned initiatives to promote the Flint Hills region as a tourism destination. **The City of Manhattan supports cooperative ventures between state and local government in Kansas to promote tourism as an industry which is vital to growth and development.**

## TRANSPORTATION & UTILITIES

### Airline Revenue Guarantee

Adequate and affordable air service is a key factor in improving the economy and tourism potential of regions and cities throughout Kansas. Support from the State of Kansas, in partnership with regional communities, facilitated the recruitment of non-stop jet service from Manhattan Regional Airport via

American Airlines. The airline offers daily, non-stop flights to Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport and Chicago O'Hare International Airport. Due to the overwhelming success of the program, the City returned the full investment from the State of Kansas of \$2 million, including interest.

Additional routes will only enhance the economic potential of the State of Kansas and the region, particularly as it relates to the National Bio and Agro Defense Facility (NBAF), Kansas State University, and Fort Riley. Although smaller than Wichita Mid-Continent, MHK has proven to be a successful commercial airport as the States second busiest commercial service airport. This keeps transportation dollars in Kansas as opposed to going out of state. Given airline instability, having expanded service secures vital jet service for the success of NBAF and related businesses, which was the primary purpose of appropriating the original revenue guarantee funds. **The City of Manhattan thanks the Legislature and Governor for reinvesting state funds to recruit additional commercial air service, or expanding existing service, at the Manhattan Regional Airport through airline revenue guarantees or similar arrangements, rather than direct subsidies, and asks for fairness regarding the distribution of state funds for either direct subsidies or other similar programs across the state and encourages state officials to support Kansas transportation systems by flying MHK versus utilizing out of state airports.**

### [Stormwater Grant and Loan Program](#)

Cities and counties throughout the state recognize the benefits of a coordinated stormwater program that fulfills the strategic objectives of Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Water Resources. Such a program could be funded through state-issued stormwater bonds, the proceeds of which would be used to support stormwater planning and construction projects that are designed to reduce erosion, control local flooding, and create more sustainable uses of our water resources. Monies could be distributed as a combination of grants and loans disbursed through a revolving loan fund. **The City supports the creation of a Stormwater Grant and Loan Program to assist local communities in the continued implementation of the best practices for stormwater management.**

### [T-Works & KDOT](#)

The Kansas Legislature passed T-WORKS in May 2010 to support continued investment in the state's transportation system. The Kansas Department of Transportation outlined a spending plan to provide \$4.6 billion on projects to ensure the preservation of the state's highways and bridges. T-WORKS has lost over \$1.1 billion since inception, with the State of Kansas planning on more cuts in 2017. Over the past ten years the City has received on average \$1 million per year in Federal and State transportation grants funneled through KDOT. Each grant's local share varies between 10-35% depending on the source. The City has many concerns with funds continually pulled from KDOT regarding available state fund grants, and worries that continued cuts could negatively affect the city's ability to get federal grants through the state as well. The City of Manhattan supports the implementation of an effective multi-modal transportation program aligned with the region's priorities; supports measures to encourage regional approaches to public transit and transportation planning, and supports the practice of long-term multi-year comprehensive transportation programs developed through a combination of KDOT technical analysis together with local government and other stakeholder involvement. The Kansas Legislature should continue to look for ways to raise new revenues to address the state's remaining transportation needs and protect existing T-WORKS funds for transportation purposes. **The City of**

**Manhattan supports the fully funded T-WORKS program and encourages the legislature to avoid redirecting designated and traditional transportation funding for other state priorities. The legislature should be cautious about making operating reductions to the Kansas Department of Transportation that may negatively impact routine pavement and sign maintenance and snow/ice operations, as well as safety improvements and local matching grant programs.**

### Water & Wastewater Quality

In the last few years the City of Manhattan completed a major expansion/upgrade to its Water Treatment Plant/Well Field , as well as a major expansion/upgrade to its Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Water Plant project cost was \$17 million, and another \$23 million was spent for the Wastewater Plant project. These upgrades were required, in part, due to the imposition of new federal regulations. These unfunded mandates create a significant burden for our utility ratepayers. The State of Kansas is currently looking at lowering the required phosphorous levels across the State from 1.5 mg/L to 1.0 mg/L. This affects the operations of Manhattan's wastewater treatment plant. The State did this lowering action beyond the measurement level of what is required at the federal level. The City of Manhattan finds this action unnecessary and has concerns about cities with mechanical Wastewater Treatment plans being required to do more than their fair share of reducing the loading of nutrients such as phosphorous or nitrogen into the Kansas River, while other significant nonpoint sources from agricultural sources are not held at that same level. **The City supports funding for state programs, such as the Kansas Public Water Supply Loan Fund, that help local utilities meet infrastructure needs. In addition, the City encourages the state and federal governments to adopt broader standards and provide assistance to private property owners to better control non-point source pollutants to our rivers and streams rather than burdening point sources such as waste water treatment plants, which comprise only a small fraction of the input stream.**