

2014 CITY OF WICHITA STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

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AGENDA CATEGORIES

- ❖ **WATER ISSUES**
- ❖ **COMMUNITY BUDGET ISSUES**
- ❖ **POLICY ISSUES**
- ❖ **OTHER:** Public Safety, Creative Districts

2014 State Legislative Agenda

WATER ISSUES

- ❖ **EQUUS BEDS AQUIFER STORAGE AND RECOVERY FUNDING**
- ❖ **STATE WATER PLAN/GOVERNANCE/FUNDING**
- ❖ **EQUUS BEDS SUSTAINABILITY**

Equus Beds ASR funding

- ❖ **ISSUE:** The 2013 Legislature approved the Governor's FY2014 recommendation of \$449,166. The Governor's budget proposal for FY2015 provides \$449,225 for the Equus Beds Aquifer Storage and Recovery project. The Kansas Water Authority has also endorsed that budget recommendation.
- ❖ **POSITION:** The Wichita City Council supports the Governor's recommendation for FY2015.

State Water Fund

- ❖ **ISSUE:** Governance of the state's water resources has not undergone a comprehensive review since the 1980s. Gov. Brownback has called for development of a 50-year plan for the State's water resources.
- ❖ **POSITION:** The Wichita City Council supports the Governor's initiative and encourages a re-evaluation of state Water Fund governance, collection and distribution. This issue is continued from the 2012-2013 City of Wichita legislative agendas.

Equus Beds Sustainability

- ❖ **ISSUE:** Salt plumes threaten the Equus Beds aquifer from the north and the west. The ASR project offers some protection, but a broader solution is necessary to assure long term availability of this important water resource.
- ❖ **POSITION:** The Wichita City Council recommends the State of Kansas recognize the sustainability of the Equus Beds Aquifer in the same context as current dredging proposals for surface water reservoirs.

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COMMUNITY BUDGET ISSUES

- ❖ **AFFORDABLE AIRFARES**
- ❖ **NIAR (National Institute for Aviation Research)**
- ❖ **NCAT (National Center for Aviation Training)**
- ❖ **PASSENGER RAIL**

Affordable Airfares, NIAR, NCAT

- ❖ **ISSUE:** State funding for Kansas Affordable Airfares Program, National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR), Wichita Area Technical College and the National Center for Aviation Training (NCAT) is vitally important to the economic wellbeing of south-central Kansas.
- ❖ The past several years, each of these items has been funded in the Governor's budget. Last year, the Legislature cut the Governor's recommendation for NCAT by \$2 million in the FY2014 budget and has sustained that cut in the proposed FY2015 budget. Technical education for high school students at WATC under SB155 is also underfunded.

Affordable Airfares, NIAR, NCAT

- ❖ **POSITION:** The Wichita City Council supports continued state grant funding for Affordable Airfares, NIAR and NCAT at \$5 million. That includes restoration of the \$2 million funding cut imposed on the National Center for Aviation Training during the 2013 legislative session.
- ❖ Additionally, the Council supports full funding of Senate Bill 155 and the Board of Regents funding formula affecting WATC/NCAT.

Passenger Rail

- ❖ **ISSUE:** Public support and awareness of the possibility of passenger rail service connecting Oklahoma City and Wichita/Newton has grown over the past two years.
- ❖ **POSITION:** The Wichita City Council encourages the State to expedite completion of the necessary environmental study to allow future federal/state funding.

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POLICY ISSUES

- ❖ **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
- ❖ **IMMIGRATION**
- ❖ **TAXATION**
- ❖ **PUBLIC LOBBYING**
- ❖ **LOCAL ELECTIONS**

Economic Development

- ❖ **ISSUE:** Existing economic development tools are essential for the continued growth and prosperity of our community.
- ❖ **POSITION:** The Wichita City Council supports continuation of its 2012 legislative agenda item, calling for protection of existing economic development tools for local public-private partnerships. Among those are Go Wichita, Greater Wichita Economic Development Coalition (GWDEC), Wichita Downtown Development Corporation (WDDC), Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts, Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRBs) and Sales Tax Revenue (STAR) bonds. (full list on next slide)

Economic Development Programs

- GWEDC/GO WICHITA/WDDC: Support existing statutory records exemptions
- Industrial Revenue Bond tax abatements (IRBX)
- Economic Development Exemptions (EDX)
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Sales Tax Revenue (STAR) Bonds
- Community Improvement Districts (CID)
- Neighborhood Revitalization Area (NRA) tax rebates
- Special Assessment financing for neighborhood infrastructure projects, façade improvements and abatement of asbestos and lead-based paint.
- State Historic Preservation Tax Credits (HPTC)
- State administration of federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)
- High Performance Incentive Program (HPIP) tax credits
- Investments in Major Projects and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) grants
- Promoting Employment Across Kansas (PEAK) program
- Economic Revitalization and Reinvestment Act bonding for major aviation and wind energy projects
- Kansas Industrial Training (KIT) and Kansas Industrial Retraining (KIR) grants
- Network Kansas tax credit funding
- State support for Innovation Commercialization Centers in Commerce Department budget

Immigration

- ❖ **ISSUE:** Immigration reform holds tremendous economic and social implications for Kansas and local communities
- ❖ **POSITION:** The Wichita City Council encourages the Kansas Legislature to support a federal solution to immigration reform that allows reasonable access to citizenship while assuring adequate border security and protecting our economy and workforce. Any immigration legislation generated by Congress or the State of Kansas should not negatively impact local governments with additional law enforcement or administrative burdens.

Taxation

- ❖ **ISSUE:** Changes in the State's tax structure may place greater burden on local tax efforts. The Legislature periodically has considered measures to restrict local government's opportunity to raise tax revenues to meet the needs of local citizens.
- ❖ **POSITION:** The Wichita City Council opposes any legislative attempts to restrict the taxing and spending authority of local governments.

Public Lobbying

- ❖ **ISSUE:** The State Legislature currently is considering restrictions on the ability of local governments to communicate with state legislators.
- ❖ **POSITION:** The Wichita City Council opposes any restrictions on the use of state and/or local public monies to provide information to our citizens and to advocate on their behalf.

Local Elections

- ❖ **ISSUE:** The State Legislature has recently considered various bills that would force local governments to change their current schedule of local elections.
- ❖ **POSITION:** The Wichita City Council supports the current framework for local elections, continuing the current February/April schedule of local primary and general elections, as well as the local option allowing non-partisan elections.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

- ❖ **The Wichita City Council supports legislative solutions regarding certain community public safety concerns such as metal theft and domestic violence. The City of Wichita will participate in the formation of legislative solutions and support their enactment.**

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CREATIVE DISTRICTS

- ❖ **The Wichita City Council supports the development of appropriate state and local incentives to nurture and preserve arts activity throughout the City of Wichita and the State of Kansas.**