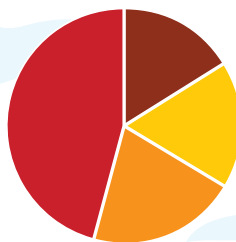
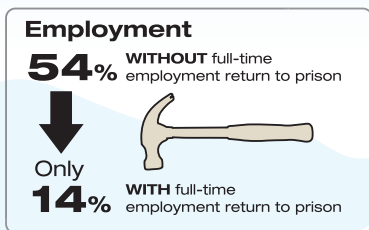
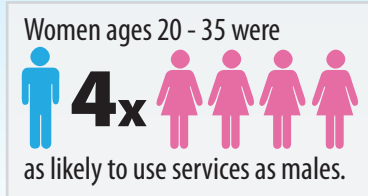


# LINC Commission Meeting

February 27, 2012

## Visualizing Our Work With Infographics

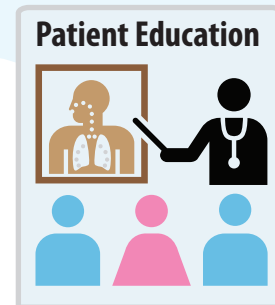
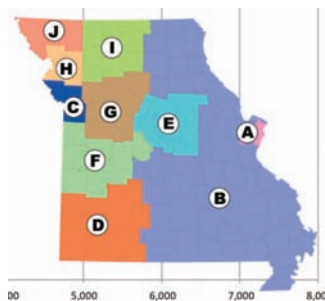
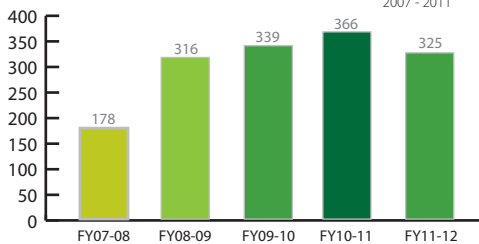


### Medical Issues

- 46% Hypertension
- 21% High Cholesterol
- 17% Diabetes
- 16% Pain / Fatigue



665 Total Foster Youth Served  
2007 - 2011



# Local Investment Commission (LINC) Vision

## Our Shared Vision

A caring community that builds on its strengths to provide meaningful opportunities for children, families and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency, attain their highest potential, and contribute to the public good.

## Our Mission

To provide leadership and influence to engage the Kansas City Community in creating the best service delivery system to support and strengthen children, families and individuals, holding that system accountable, and changing public attitudes towards the system.

## Our Guiding Principles

1. **COMPREHENSIVENESS:** Provide ready access to a full array of effective services.
2. **PREVENTION:** Emphasize “front-end” services that enhance development and prevent problems, rather than “back-end” crisis intervention.
3. **OUTCOMES:** Measure system performance by improved outcomes for children and families, not simply by the number and kind of services delivered.
4. **INTENSITY:** Offering services to the needed degree and in the appropriate time.
5. **PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT:** Use the needs, concerns, and opinions of individuals who use the service delivery system to drive improvements in the operation of the system.
6. **NEIGHBORHOODS:** Decentralize services to the places where people live, wherever appropriate, and utilize services to strengthen neighborhood capacity.
7. **FLEXIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS:** Create a delivery system, including programs and reimbursement mechanisms, that are sufficiently flexible and adaptable to respond to the full spectrum of child, family and individual needs.
8. **COLLABORATION:** Connect public, private and community resources to create an integrated service delivery system.
9. **STRONG FAMILIES:** Work to strengthen families, especially the capacity of parents to support and nurture the development of their children.
10. **RESPECT AND DIGNITY:** Treat families, and the staff who work with them, in a respectful and dignified manner.
11. **INTERDEPENDENCE/MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Balance the need for individuals to be accountable and responsible with the obligation of community to enhance the welfare of all citizens.
12. **CULTURAL COMPETENCY:** Demonstrate the belief that diversity in the historical, cultural, religious and spiritual values of different groups is a source of great strength.
13. **CREATIVITY:** Encourage and allow participants and staff to think and act innovatively, to take risks, and to learn from their experiences and mistakes.
14. **COMPASSION:** Display an unconditional regard and a caring, non-judgmental attitude toward participants that recognizes their strengths and empowers them to meet their own needs.
15. **HONESTY:** Encourage and allow honesty among all people in the system.



Monday, Feb. 27th, 2012 | 4 – 6 pm  
Kauffman Foundation  
4801 Rockhill Rd.  
Kansas City, Mo. 64110

---

## Agenda

---

- I. Welcome and Announcements
- II. Approvals
  - a. **January minutes (motion)**
- III. Superintendent's Reports
- IV. LINC President's Report
- V. LINC Site Coordinator Roundtable
- VI. Other
- VII. Adjournment



## THE LOCAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION – JAN. 23, 2012

The Local Investment Commission met at the Kauffman Foundation, 4801 Rockhill Rd., Kansas City, Mo. Chairman **Landon Rowland** presided. Commissioners attending were:

Bert Berkley  
Sharon Cheers  
Jack Craft  
Steve Dunn  
Herb Freeman  
Tom Gerke  
Anita Gorman  
Bart Hakan

Rosemary Lowe  
Sandy Mayer (for Mike Sanders)  
Mary Kay McPhee  
Richard Morris  
Marge Peltier  
David Rock  
David Ross

*A motion to approve the Nov. 21, 2011, and Sept. 19, 2011, LINC Commission meeting minutes was passed unanimously.*

### Superintendents' Report

- **Bob Bartman** (Superintendent, Center School District) reported Center High School has been nominated by the Missouri Department of Secondary and Elementary Education for the 2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools award. He also reported the district has received 81 applications for student transfer from the Kansas City, Mo. School District.
- **John Ruddy** (Assistant Superintendent, Fort Osage School District) reported Superintendent Mark Enderle's son returned today from a tour of duty in Afghanistan. He also reported the district will be able serve more hungry families when it implements a mobile food pantry in February to add to its other family food assistance efforts such as holiday assistance, food pantry, and Backsnack.
- **Ralph Teran** (Superintendent, Grandview School District) reported that although the district has received about 20 inquiries from Kansas City, Mo. School District parents regarding transfer to the Grandview district, no transfer forms have yet been received.
- **Todd White** (Superintendent, North Kansas City School District) reported school districts are closely following discussions in the state legislature regarding school district funding in connection with the issue of education reform. He also reported the district has received 36 applications for student transfer from the Kansas City, Mo. School District.
- **John Tramel** (Community Development Specialist, Independence School District) reported the district was concerned that the state education formula should not be changed so that it hurts the district's ability to provide needed supports for families.

Discussion followed.

LINC staff **Robin Gierer** introduced a presentation by **Harold Miller** of the Center for Healthcare Quality and Payment Reform. Miller, who gave the presentation via phone, outlined ways that local leadership can act to control health care costs without rationing, and thereby encourage economic development. The presentation is available through the LINC website, [www.kclinc.org](http://www.kclinc.org).

Discussion followed.

LINC Treasurer **David Ross** presented a summary of the LINC second quarter FY2012 financial statement.

### **President's Report**

**Gayle A. Hobbs** presented the following:

- LINC Commissioner **Gene Standifer** has been released from the hospital and is convalescing at Bishop Spencer Place, where his health is improving.
- **Margaret Hansbrough** of the Kansas City Mayor's Office reported that LINC and 29 other agencies are participating in the Mayor's Campaign for Grade Level Reading. The campaign, developed as part of the All-American Cities Award, is intended to promote school readiness, summer reading, and school attendance.
- LINC is again developing Black History Month materials to share with the community. Orders can be placed at [www.kclinc.org/blackhistory](http://www.kclinc.org/blackhistory)
- LINC will again participate in the Summer EBT for Children food assistance program in the Kansas City, Center and Hickman Mills school district. This year the program has been expanded to double the number of families.
- Kansas City Regional Administrator **Marge Randle** reported the Mo. Family Support Division is making resource centers available in every county to meet clients' needs. FSD also has placed a full-time worker at Operation Breakthrough to assign case workers to families who use services there. FSD would like to expand the effort to place workers at Caring Communities sites.

The LINC in Photos 2011 slideshow was shown.

The meeting was adjourned.

Mon, Feb. 20, 2012

## Ideas to reform Kansas City Public Schools ramp up

**In a public report Thursday, work between district, state to turn around the schools will go back on display**

By JOE ROBERTSON  
The Kansas City Star

At first, the feared fall of Kansas City Public Schools came blowing at parents like a storm.

Loss of accreditation. The prospect of the district being carved to pieces. Ephemeral lifeboats promising transfers, appearing and disappearing.

“Oh, my God ... were we going to be sucked away?” 38-year-old district parent Demonte Rochester said. “We were looking for answers. ‘Is everything going to be OK? Is my child going to be safe?’ ”

Today, parents, like the district itself, find themselves still standing, no less uncomfortable — no longer in a storm as much as peering through a fog that won’t lift.

But some realities are coming into focus.

For instance, busing students across communities wasn’t popular in the 1970s and it’s not popular now.

Even if the courts or lawmakers were to quickly resolve disputes over Missouri’s student transfer law, busing large numbers of students out of the unaccredited district’s neighborhoods would do more harm than good, many observers say.

That’s why ideas for neighboring districts to annex Kansas City’s boundaries or contract to operate Kansas City’s schools have gained serious momentum.

But most school and community leaders interested in annexation prefer a voter-driven process over a state or legislative mandate. Even if petition drives were launched, they could not expect to put boundary changes into effect before the 2013-2014 school year.

And Missouri Education Commissioner Chris Nicastro is maintaining her position that dividing up the district is not the answer.

What does that leave?

A school district that still has a chance to save itself.

This is where a look at the possible outcomes for Kansas City schoolchildren begins — with the campaign already on the ground.

### **Not the status quo**

Plenty of people have no patience for what Kansas City Interim Superintendent Steve Green is about to say.

He knows it.

In a public report Thursday, work between the district and the state to turn around the district will go back on display at an intensified pitch.

For 3½ years, the state has worked with the district. When the latest turmoil came to a head last fall, the state put the process on hold.

But after the first of the year, Nicastro gave the state team and the district the go-ahead to renew the process. They are adding more monitoring, involving more stakeholders and planning reports each month rather than every three months.

Green acknowledges some people's minds are made up — that any plan engaged by the school district, regardless of its content, represents a "status quo."

But to anyone who will listen, he says: "This is not the same old way."

The district transformation plan created under former Superintendent John Covington will carry on with higher scrutiny. And under the law as it now stands, Kansas City has two years to get its accreditation back.

Green's neighboring superintendents say they are rooting for him, even as they work with state Sen. Victor Callahan and others on possible annexation plans.

"Some will argue they've had a chance for 30 years," Raytown Superintendent Allan Markley said. "But their feet haven't been held to the fire the way they are now. If everyone is ready to rally behind them, they should be given the chance."

Schools can't sit back and wait for court or legislative resolutions that may never come, said the state's regional supervisor Tony Stansberry.

Whether the elected board stays in place or a state-appointed board comes in, this kind of heavy review would carry on, he said.

Administrators will have to convince monitors they know what's going on in the classroom, he said. Parents, teachers and community groups will play bigger roles.

"We want the entire school community to pull behind the school system and do it with good faith," Stansberry said. "We owe it to them to work with them the best we can. There is a valid opportunity for the school system to pull itself up."

### **Carving up the district**

"Don't underestimate Victor Callahan."

Former Kansas City school board member Bill Eddy was quoting any of a number of people gauging the future of Kansas City's schools.

Callahan was the driving force behind a campaign that finally succeeded in 2008 to move west Independence schools from the Kansas City district to the Independence School District.

Now he and others are talking about enabling four neighboring districts — North Kansas City, Independence, Raytown and Center — to take in shares of Kansas City's schools. It could be by annexation or by management contracts.

A watchdog organization Eddy founded — Do the Right Thing For Kids — is watching what emerges from Jefferson City. But the group is backing the kind of dramatic change Callahan is working on.

"The current situation can't go on," Eddy said. "It's time to quit pretending."

How Callahan will try to make it work is still in play. (He did not return calls for this story.) He's tinkering with his bill and is just as likely to toss its language into other bills as action heats up on the Senate floor.

Callahan's been clear on one point, however. He wants to keep annexation decisions in the hands of voters.

Callahan's working within a process already in place, used in western Independence, that allows communities to petition for a school boundary change and secure elections.

State Sen. Jane Cunningham also is pressing legislation that includes a plan to divide Kansas City among neighboring districts.

Her bill would mandate it. She says moving children out of an unaccredited school system should not be left to debate.

Children's access to education "is a right," she said. "It's not up for a vote."

The superintendents and their boards, however, seem generally unified that they want their communities to be able to decide.

If a consensus built for annexation, Center Superintendent Bob Bartman said, it should happen collaboratively. A commission representing affected neighborhoods might be needed to ponder potential boundaries and other issues.

"There is no desire to let people sit in Jefferson City and carve things up," he said.

No petition drives have started. The soonest any measure could get on a ballot would be in June, which superintendents say would not give them time to make dramatic changes for the 2012-2013 school year.

The area superintendents want to help, they say. They've opened the annexation door. But they recognize its many complications.

"I'm not chomping at the bit to go through another annexation," Independence Superintendent Jim Hinson said.

Even with Callahan at work, the odds in this case are long.

### **Open enrollment**

Perhaps the biggest fear for school districts — because there is no process in place to deal with it — lies in Missouri's transfer law.

The law, upheld by the state Supreme Court, dictates that children can transfer out of an unaccredited district, with tuition and transportation costs paid by the unaccredited district.

Various school districts in at least four pending cases hope to get courts to allow districts to limit the number and timing of transfers, or to allow claims that the law creates an unconstitutional unfunded mandate.

The Turner v. Clayton School District case in the St. Louis area is scheduled for trial March 5, but because it is now taking on some of these new issues, it probably will return to the Supreme Court, however the circuit court rules.

A Kansas City area case, still in its early stages, also promises no hasty resolution.

"There are so many ins and outs in this," said Duane Martin, who is representing districts that have sued Kansas City Public Schools and the state. "And the ground is always shifting, and that doesn't help."

It would be unlikely to get any final clarity from the courts before the end of the legislative session, he said.

Lawmakers, attempting to revise the law, worry that legislators pushing for more controversial reform ideas will keep any bills from succeeding.

School districts don't know how many families would press for transfers. They know that dozens have asked about it. Some districts have compiled potential waiting lists of close to 100 students while they wait for guidance from the courts or lawmakers.



Uncontrolled transfers would make it hard for receiving districts to plan, and would potentially bankrupt Kansas City, they said. Families need good school options in their neighborhoods, instead of trying to support their children in schools miles away.

“Do we want to close more schools?” Hinson said. “It does not benefit the kids. It does not benefit the communities they live in.”

It’s not clear how many families would want to leave their neighborhood schools. Earlier this year, the American Civil Liberties Union declared its position that school districts have to follow the law and allow transfers immediately, even if financial issues had to be settled later.

The ACLU was eager to press the issue in court. It just needed a family to be a plaintiff. But none stepped forward.

### **In the state’s hands**

Nicastro wants to cut a clean course through the legislature.

Rep. Mike Lair and Sen. David Pearce, both Republicans, are carrying bills that would remove the restriction that requires the state to wait two full school years before it can take control of an unaccredited district.

This is what Nicastro wants. If the commissioner and the state school board had discretion to step in now, then the state could consider an appointed administrative board to run Kansas City. It could even dissolve the district and divide it among its neighbors, though Nicastro has not advocated such a move.

A hasty run through the legislature with an emergency clause could see the law changed before the session and the school year are done.

But the bill sponsors also expect lawmakers to try to trade in other reforms and complicate their chances of success.

“I think it’ll be in good shape in the House,” Lair said. “But what happens when it goes into the abyss of the Senate, I don’t know. I’ll fight anything that tries to attach to it.”

Nicastro has offered little comment since her full-throttle effort last fall to produce a plan for Kansas City’s future.

During that stretch she asked the Kansas City school board to consider stepping aside voluntarily, which it declined to do. She sought out community input on potential leaders to serve on either an administrative board or advisory board.

She raised concerns about an effort by Kansas City Mayor Sly James to seek mayoral control — an effort that has lost traction in the legislature.

But she pulled back from proposing a plan, saying that the community was too divided and that the two-year restriction on state intervention needed to go.

Her request for flexibility may have the best chance of getting through the legislature.

What she’d do with that flexibility she’s not saying, except that she’d bring the discussion back to the community.

There’s plenty to talk about.

**To reach Joe Robertson, call 816-234-4789 or send email to [jrobertson@kcstar.com](mailto:jrobertson@kcstar.com).**

# Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Vol. 46, No. 14  
February 21, 2012

**CONTACT: [Michele Clark](#)**  
**Communications**  
**Coordinator**  
**573-751-3469**

## State Board Supports Accreditation Legislation

The Missouri State Board of Education is supporting legislation currently making its way through the House and Senate that would modify state law to provide more flexibility in interventions for districts that have lost accreditation.

The Board is responsible for administering the classification system for public school districts. The Board has long encountered significant limitations within the existing law to effectively intervene with failing school districts on behalf of its students. Concerns with the current law have become more critical with the recent reclassification of the Kansas City Public Schools to unaccredited status.

Under current state law ([Section 162.081](#)), an unaccredited school district has two full school years to demonstrate a sustainable level of academic progress. Should this not occur, the district would lapse, and the state would then be able to step in with a short list of interventions now prescribed in the law.

“It is critical that the law be changed to authorize the State Board to act in a more responsive and timely manner in carrying out its duties,” said State Board President Peter F. Herschend. “We urge the legislature to enact the bill with the emergency clause in place and with no crippling amendments.”

Legislation that would modify the law regarding school accreditation for failing school districts appears to have strong support in both House and Senate chambers. Commissioner of Education Chris L. Nicastro recently testified before the House and Senate Education committees in support of [HB 1174](#) and [SB 677](#). The Senate bill is identical to HCS HB 1174, which received approval on Monday in the Rules Committee and is expected to advance to the House floor soon.

In her testimony, Nicastro pointed out that changes in the law being proposed would allow the State Board to adjust the level and timing of state intervention based upon the most effective action for the students in that district.

Three of Missouri’s 522 school districts are currently unaccredited. The St. Louis and Riverview Gardens school districts have been unaccredited since June 2007. Both districts have lapsed and are now under the direction of a state-appointed special administrative board. Kansas City Public Schools became unaccredited effective January 1 this year.

## Dramatic school plan offered for failing Missouri districts

BY VIRGINIA YOUNG • [vyoung@post-dispatch.com](mailto:vyoung@post-dispatch.com) > 573-635-6178 | Posted: Friday, January 27, 2012 8:45 am

**JEFFERSON CITY** • In exchange for addressing a vexing court ruling that has become a headache for many school districts, an influential state senator wants to fundamentally reshape the urban education landscape in Missouri.

On one end of the state, Sen. Jane Cunningham would dissolve the unaccredited Kansas City School District and require adjoining school districts to carve it up and operate the city's schools.

On the other end, Cunningham would let St. Louis County districts open charter schools in the failing St. Louis district, even as students were allowed to transfer to better suburban public schools, if space was available.

Meanwhile, children in unaccredited districts statewide could tap tax credit-supported scholarships to attend private and parochial schools.

"Our goal is to make sure every child in the state of Missouri gets a quality, accredited education. Period. The end," said Cunningham, R-Chesterfield.

The proposed changes are part of a bill she introduced on Thursday. Though it hasn't been formally referred to her General Laws Committee, she announced that she will hold a public hearing on the issue at 3 p.m. Tuesday.

Ideas such as using tax credit-funded scholarships to send children to private schools spark fierce opposition and have died in the Legislature repeatedly, with critics saying the money could be better spent on public schools. But Cunningham has leverage this year because of the case of Turner vs. the School District of Clayton.

In that landmark decision in 2010, the Missouri Supreme Court held that a 1993 state law allows students in unaccredited districts, such as St. Louis, Riverview Gardens and, more recently, Kansas City, to transfer to districts in the same county or neighboring counties, with the home district paying the tab for tuition and transportation. The law's implementation has been delayed by continuing court battles.

Suburban districts are hoping to gain control over transfers to avoid overcrowded classrooms, while the St. Louis Public Schools says it could go bankrupt if thousands of students flee the city.

Cunningham has been a forceful school-choice advocate for years. Because of her strong interest in the issue, Senate President Pro Tem Rob Mayer said he put her in the driver's seat on the transfer issue, even though she does not head the Senate Education Committee.

Cunningham said the Kansas City part of her plan was drawn up by the superintendents of the bordering districts in that area. She even named the Kansas City portion of her proposed law after the Independence district's leader, Jim Hinson, who spearheaded it along with Bob Bartman, superintendent of the Center School District. Bartman is a former state commissioner of education.

While effusive in her praise for Kansas City-area officials for "focusing on what's best for kids," Cunningham blasted St. Louis County superintendents, accusing them of foot-dragging since the Turner decision was handed down.

"I've been asking for two years: 'Come up with your plan.' And we haven't gotten anything except, 'Let us out of the law,'" she said.

Don Senti, executive director of the Cooperating School Districts of Greater St. Louis, defended the area's educators. He noted that St. Louis County districts have a long history of admitting city students under the voluntary transfer plan.

Districts are willing to accept even more city students, he said, so long as the numbers don't inflate class sizes to unacceptable levels.

"We just wanted to have some reasonable parameters placed on the process, so we could control the quality of schools," Senti said.

He added that the state's two urban areas can't be handled the same under Turner, because in Kansas City, the adjoining districts are all academically and financially healthy while some of the so-called collar districts in St. Louis County have problems of their own. The Jennings and Normandy districts, for example, are provisionally accredited.

St. Louis Public Schools Superintendent Kelvin Adams could not be reached Thursday for comment.

But Mike Lodewegen, who represents the Missouri Association of School Administrators, said the bill was "an attempt to take advantage of the severe situations that are occurring in St. Louis and Kansas City and does nothing to address the underlying problems in those communities."

Cunningham shared details of the bill Thursday evening at a public forum on the Turner lawsuit at Washington University. Panelists included lawmakers, one of whom questioned whether the bill would apply as equally to struggling rural schools as it does urban ones.

"Is this a fix that applies to kids in Perry County, Pemiscot County, Hayti or Caruthersville?" asked Rep. Tishaura Jones, D-St. Louis. "We have to be forward looking here."

In an interview earlier in the day, Cunningham said she didn't know what the city districts would make of her plan. "They're unaccredited and we have to deal with it."

The suburban districts have to deal with it, too, because of Turner.

Bartman said the Center, Independence, Raytown and North Kansas City districts had worked together on the Kansas City plan. Rather than annex parts of the Kansas City district, he said the neighboring districts proposed to contract to operate city schools. The outlying districts would be paid from Kansas City district taxes and state money.

"The idea was that we would break even," Bartman said. "We wouldn't make money but it wouldn't cost the taxpayers of our respective districts money, either."

Bartman said the plan would provide stability for low-income families, who often move in and out of various school districts that have varying standards now.

Under the bill, the Kansas City plan could be used in other parts of the state where districts became unaccredited, except in St. Louis, where city families would meet with an independent clearinghouse to determine the best option.

While some could transfer to county districts, the bill grants St. Louis County superintendents their wish — to control transfers based on 'seats available.' The bill says that calculation should take into account the availability of teachers and classroom space. It doesn't dictate class size, though Cunningham said she considered it.

But she hopes the additional charter schools and virtual schools described in the bill would help fill any gap.

Even with all those far-reaching changes, her proposal to use tax credits to send city students to private schools could be the most controversial part of the plan.

The bill would authorize up to \$40 million in tax credits for donors who contributed to scholarship funds that would help cover tuition at private schools for children in unaccredited districts. People and companies that gave to the fund would have 60 percent of their donation reimbursed by the tax credit.

The "passport scholarships" would be available to all children in unaccredited districts, including those who currently attend private schools.

Cunningham said she views that as saving the state money because funding the tax credits would be cheaper than paying for the students to transfer to suburban public schools, as the law allows.

Steering tax credits to parochial school scholarships would pass legal muster, she contended, because, unlike a direct voucher program, the tax credit money "never comes through the treasury."

Still, that part could prove troublesome. Sen. Victor Callahan, D-Independence, has worked closely with Cunningham and has filed a similar bill carving up the Kansas City School District.

But as for the tax credit scholarships, Callahan said: "I don't have that in my bill. I'm sure there's going to be ample disagreement on that. I think we need to keep this as simple as possible."

The bill is SB706

*Elisa Crouch of the Post-Dispatch contributed to this report.*

# More public schools dish up 3 meals a day

HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH, Associated Press

Sunday, February 19, 2012

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Too often it is after the fact that teachers discover their students are worrying less about math and reading and more about where the next meal comes from.

So Doug White, principal of Garfield Elementary School in inner-city Kansas City, was relieved when his school, like many across the country, began offering dinner to students enrolled in after-school child-care or tutoring programs.

With breakfast and lunch already provided for poor students, many children now are getting all their meals at school.

"When you know about those situations those kids are bringing into the school and we are asking them to sit down and concentrate and do their work, and they might be hungry and we haven't been made aware of it yet — we definitely want to do everything we can to help the kids," White said.

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, signed into law by President Barack Obama in December 2010, provides federal funds for the after-school dinner program in areas where at least half the students qualify for free or reduced price lunches. Before the change, the program was limited to 13 states and the District of Columbia. Most states had provided money for only after-school snacks.

Since the change, districts have started rolling out dinner programs both in states newly able to offer them and states like Missouri where funding was available previously but districts didn't always know about it. The Congressional Budget Office estimates there will be almost 21 million additional suppers served by 2015 and that number will rise to 29 million by 2020. The added spending would total about \$641 million from 2011 to 2020.

Advocates for the poor praise the program, but there have been complaints from conservatives who question whether the schools should be feeding kids three meals a day. Radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh asked on-air in November, "Why even send the kids home?"



*In this Jan. 23, 2012 photo, students at Garfield Elementary School eat dinner after classes as part of a new program in Kansas City, Mo. Too often it is after the fact that teachers discover their students are worrying less about math and reading and more about where the next meal comes from. So Doug White, principal of Garfield Elementary School in inner-city Kansas City, was relieved when his school, like many across the country, began offering dinner to students enrolled in after-school child-care or tutoring programs. Photo by The Associated Press.*

Dinners are funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program, which also helps feed people enrolled in child and adult day care programs and emergency shelters. The number of dinners served through the program has grown over the past decade, although the USDA doesn't currently break out how many meals are served through after-school programs specifically.

"The USDA has done a lot to streamline the requirements and made it easier for people to apply and participate," said Crystal FitzSimons, who researches and advocates for after-school meals for the anti-hunger nonprofit Food Research and Action Center. "Before, we did outreach in the states that allowed it. There were programs participating. But I think it has gained a lot of momentum and a lot of visibility because it has been expanded nationwide."

In California, the Oakland Unified School District started a pilot program in October, dishing up dinner in 11 of its 101 schools. The district plans to expand the program in 19 more schools by the end of the school year.

"There are some of these kids who you know just don't eat when they go home," said Jennifer LeBarre, nutrition services director for the district, where about 70 percent of its 38,000 students qualify for subsidized meals.

In Tennessee, Memphis City Schools are serving about 14,000 after-school meals daily. About 84 percent of the district's 110,000 students qualify for free- or reduced price lunches.

Kate Lareau has mixed feelings about the program even though her first-grader enjoys eating dinner at her Memphis elementary school's after-school program. As a grant-writer for a nonprofit that works with people in a south Memphis housing project, Lareau said she can afford to feed her daughter, but knows that a lot of children go without.

"Do we need to provide all three meals? I'm not sure," she said. "But I personally know children who don't get any food after they get home. I don't want those kids to be hungry for sure."

The district began offering the meals, featuring entrees such as Cobb salads and ham and cheese sandwiches, in 70 of its 200 schools in November and plans to expand to the program in 30 more school by year's end.

"In a perfect world, June and Ward would grab the Beav and Wally and give them a great big breakfast with a hug and kiss and send them off," said Tony Geraci, executive director of child nutrition for the district. "There would be pot roast wafting through the living home when they show up at home. But that's not how it is."

Besides addressing hunger, the program also draws children into after-school programs that can help children learn, said FitzSimons.

That was the case in Kansas City, where 86 percent of students are so poor they qualify for government-subsidized meals. The district expanded its after-school meal program into Garfield and six other schools in January. The district now serves dinner to about 1,700 students in 18 schools each weeknight, about 10 percent of the district's enrollment, said Ellen Cram, the district's director of child nutrition services.

"If that meal gets the parent and child in the door for the opportunity to study I'm happy to offer that carrot, so to say," Cram said over the din of elementary students eating a dinner of turkey and cheese sandwiches, baby carrots and raisins. "Offering this supper meal is just huge for the parent. They know they've got something good, basic here to start with. So if they are going home to a meal of pasta then at least here they had milk, they had a fruit, a vegetable."



## For a Greater Kansas City



**THE CHAMBER**  
Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

### ***Update: January 23, 2012***

---

On January 12, 2012, the Champions of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce Big 5 initiatives met to report on their progress. The meeting was the first of regular quarterly sessions established by Chamber Chair Frank Ellis.

This summary is prepared for The Chamber's Board of Directors and the community.



## Urban Neighborhood Initiative

*Co-Champions: Terry Dunn, JE Dunn Construction and Brent Stewart, United Way of Greater Kansas City*

Revitalizing our urban neighborhoods – that’s the goal of this Big 5 initiative. The plan is to select an area east of Troost, partner with the neighborhood(s), and bring necessary resources.

### Progress to date:

- Neighborhood residents will be active partners in this effort.
- Sylvia Robinson, PhD, was hired as Project Manager by United Way of Greater Kansas City in mid-October.
- Two community meetings were convened to determine needs and explain the UNI process.
  - Total attendance: 200+
- The UNI Committee then asked for expressions of interest – 30 were received.
- Following the necessary due diligence, the target neighborhood(s) will be announced in late February.
- Efforts in the target area will focus on:
  - Health and Safety
  - Income
  - Education
- The UNI has 13 Founding Members, which include the United Way of Greater Kansas City; Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce; Swope Community Enterprises; Truman Medical Centers; University of Missouri-Kansas City; Rockhurst University; Civic Council of Greater Kansas City; Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City; Kansas City Police Department; City of Kansas City - Office of the Mayor; Hall Family Foundation; Greater Kansas City Community Foundation; and Metropolitan Community College.

## Making Kansas City “America’s Most Entrepreneurial City”

*Champion: Peter deSilva, UMB Bank*

This Big 5 initiative is designed to leverage Kansas City’s entrepreneurship legacy and assets – especially the Kauffman Foundation and UMKC’s Bloch School of Management – to become “America’s Most Entrepreneurial City.”

### Progress to date:

- A strong partnership among UMKC’s Bloch School, the Kauffman Foundation, and The Chamber, has been forged.
- The Kauffman Sketchbook featuring mayors Sly James and Joe Reardon has been released, to bring to light messages about the important role entrepreneurs play in innovation, job creation, and economic growth.
- Key measurables will include increasing the growth rate of businesses and thereby the growth of the regional economy, increasing the rate of startups, and improving the survival rate of those startups.
- “This is about creating a comprehensive ecosystem for entrepreneurs,” deSilva says. “We have many of the assets in place, but those assets need to be better connected.”

- The steering committee for this initiative met in mid-January. A number of community conversations will take place throughout February, with a kick-off event in the planning stages. Additional activities are being organized for April's "Entrepreneurship Week."
- JoAnne Gabbert has been hired as project manager. Gabbert is an entrepreneur herself, founding Adams-Gabbert, a Chamber Top 10 Small Business.
- UMKC's Bloch School continues to receive national and international recognition:
  - In December, the Bloch School was named No. 1 in the world in innovation management research.
  - That followed the Princeton Review's ranking of the Bloch School as among the Top 25 entrepreneurship programs in the country.
  - In September, entrepreneur Henry Bloch bequeathed \$32 million to the school.

## Moving the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance to a New Downtown Location

*Champion: Chancellor Leo Morton, University of Missouri – Kansas City*

Since this Big 5 idea was announced in September, it has evolved into a UMKC Downtown Campus for the Arts concept that would house the Conservatory of Music and Dance and other arts programs, including possibly the UMKC Theatre Department, the Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Arts and Art History department, KCUR public radio station and others.

A number of positive effects will result from the creation of a downtown arts campus. UMKC students will have substantially upgraded facilities. They will have access to the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, the Crossroads District and Kansas City's vibrant arts community. In addition, the new population of students, faculty, and administrators would live, work and perform downtown adding to its density and vibrancy.

### **Progress to date:**

- Support of students and faculty has been achieved.
- Conversations with key donors have begun.
- Three studies are underway to explore the viability of a Downtown Campus for the Arts.
  - A feasibility study by Helix Architecture + Design, Integra Realty Resources and HGA Architects and Engineers to develop a preliminary program and cost estimate for the project, look at potential downtown properties, develop site and concept plans and gather feedback from UMKC and the community. The feasibility study results should be released in late February/early March.
  - Economic impact study to investigate how a UMKC arts campus could complement investments in other arts facilities and help small businesses emerge.
  - Campus impact study to determine how effects on academic, campus and social life at Kansas City's downtown/Crossroads areas and UMKC's Volker and Hospital Hill campuses.
- UMKC launched an informational site on the Downtown Campus for the Arts at [www.umkc.edu/artscampus](http://www.umkc.edu/artscampus), which will include links to The Chamber's Big 5 website when it has launched.

## Growing Kansas City's Medical Research, from Discovery to Cure

*Champion: Dr. Patrick James, Quest Diagnostics*

This initiative has two components: (1) leveraging the \$20 million NIH Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) grant recently awarded to KU Medical Center and a number of regional partners by raising additional research funds to expand the scope of the collaboration, and, (2) exploring the feasibility and funding options to establish establishing an Institute for Translational Research. For additional information on the CTSA collaboration, see: <http://www.kumc.edu/frontiers.html>.

### **Progress to date:**

- Funding proposals are being generated.
- The bistate collaboration among the CTSA partners is fully operational. CTSA partners and additional information on the collaboration can be found at the website for Frontiers: The Heartland Institute for Clinical and Translational Research – <http://www.kumc.edu/frontiers.html>.
- On April 10, the keynote speaker for the KCALSI Annual Dinner is David M. Livingston, MD, a well-known champion for the importance of translational research and its significant impact on the future of medicine in our region and nation. Dr. Livingston is deputy director of the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center, chief of the Charles A. Dana division of human cancer genetics at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, and the Emil Frei Professor of Genetics and Medicine at Harvard Medical School.
- On May 31, a symposium on translational research will be held in conjunction with the CTSA retreat and will feature national speakers.

## Global Symposium on Innovation in Animal Health

*Champion: Gary Forsee*

Building on the demonstrated success of the KC Animal Health Corridor, the goal of this initiative is to elevate the Corridor to international prominence, by hosting the Global Symposium on Innovation in Animal Health.

### **Progress to date:**

- Based upon guidance from the CEOs of the Corridor based Animal Health companies, the focus of the symposium will be innovation in animal health.
- Tentatively scheduled for September 2014, the symposium will be built around the already well-attended Animal Health Corridor Homecoming.
- The symposium is designed to be an event that will be held in Kansas City regularly (time frame to be decided) following the planned success of the initial event.
- The Board of the Animal Health Corridor and Kansas City Area Development Council are providing initial direction and staff support for this initiative.
- Discussions are planned with symposia and event management companies in this space regarding their interest in serving as either a partner or a contractor for the symposium.
- A project budget and funding sources have yet to be identified.



## Office of the Mayor

**Mayor Sylvester “Sly” James, Jr.**

29th Floor, City Hall  
414 East 12th Street  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

(816) 513-3500  
Fax: (816) 513-3518

February 9, 2012

Dear Councilmembers:

Pursuant to our City Charter, I hereby submit to you my recommendations regarding the City Manager's preliminary FY 2012-13 budget.

Last April, before we were sworn on our oaths to serve the people of this city, we met to discuss our priorities and goals. That first meeting, in my opinion, set the tone for what I believe has become a productive working relationship based on mutual respect and genuine friendship. I am honored to be your colleague.

We have been able to build a shared list of priorities and goals. We have agreed that issues related to crime and violence, investment in the urban core, funding for infrastructure needs, reducing blight, and fiscal responsibility, among others, are priorities we should pursue.

As has been our habit, we were not satisfied to rely solely on our internal discussions and so solicited ideas and input from the citizens that we serve. From this effort, we learned that youth services, accessible transportation, public safety, services, urban growth and education are also important goals and priorities to pursue.

As I work through this first budget of our administration, I have tried to keep our shared goals and priorities at the front of my thoughts. I have attempted to find ways to make our budget come alive so that we can fund as many of our priorities as possible. The unfortunate reality is, however, that there is simply not enough money available to us to devote significant sums to every significant issue at the same time. We have, therefore, attempted to prioritize our goals strategically and use them as catalysts to systems approaches that yield greater productivity and success to “Make Kansas City Best.”

My friends, I do not pretend or suspect that this first attempt to handle a complicated budget will be flawless. I can tell you, however, that it represents the culmination of many hours of work of my dedicated staff, several wonderful volunteer experts from the business and academic sectors, a Council Chairperson, a new member of the Council, the Manager and the Director of Finance. In short, there is much collaboration in this effort. Further, this letter contains our best efforts to address serious issues with big ideas. Some may be bigger than some may like, however I see our role as to dare our city to be best. We cannot be best if we are afraid to act boldly to resolve issues and put ourselves on the right path.



I hope that this effort will stimulate a civic conversation that excites our imagination and leads us to the question of “What if...?” I further hope that we respond to the question in ways that

### **MAKE KANSAS CITY BEST!**

We have a great deal going for us! In many ways, 2012 could be the year that Kansas City steps up, finds a new voice and is regarded in a way that we have not been for years. Our time is here, our time is now, and if we do not seize this moment we will only have ourselves to blame.

The simple truth is that Kansas City has an amazing opportunity in the next few years to remake itself into a hub of ideas, innovation, excitement and entrepreneurship. We have already begun, and the world seems to be noticing.

1. The *Wall Street Journal* included Kansas City in a list of “up-and-coming” innovative centers. We are one of only seven innovation and entrepreneurship hubs for new businesses across the nation and they called Kansas City the “new home” for high tech.
2. *Forbes* recognized Kansas City as the number five city in it’s “America’s Biggest Brain Magnets” feature. This is where the future is folks, if we attract the best minds, we can write our own ticket.
3. *Frommer’s* chose Kansas City as one of its top 10 destinations for 2012. We were the only U.S. city to make the list.
4. The Bloch School at UMKC has just been named the best entrepreneurship program in the country by the United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (USASBE). Bloch was selected above programs like Harvard, Stanford and MIT.
5. The Urban Land Institute named Kansas City as one of only four cities in the country for its prestigious Rose Fellowship Program this year. We are one of the first 12 cities in the country to be selected for this honor.
6. *Forbes* has ranked our downtown as one of top 10 in the country.
7. Coast-to-coast and around the globe, the arts community is singing the praises of the new Kauffman Performing Arts Center. Both the *NY Times* and *LA Times* have written glowing reviews of the Kauffman Center.
8. Google has selected the two Kansas Cities from over 1,100 competing cities around the country as their ultra-high speed Internet testing grounds.
9. Major League Baseball’s All-Star Game will be played here in Kansas City this summer. Already 600 press credentials from across the globe have been requested.
10. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art was recently proclaimed as one of the best architectural marvels of the world.

There is a ton of good news to share, but I am the sort of person that believes we should press any advantage. I am both proud and honored to be Mayor of this city on the move. We are going places.

As we count our blessings and dream of where we might be in future years, we must take stock of the investments we should make and the resources we will need to make Kansas City Best!

The way we build and use our budget is crucial to our shared future and the success of this great city. The current financial climate creates both challenges and opportunities. We should confront the challenges head on and seize the opportunities.

## **THE LONG VIEW**

In the midst of all this excitement, and as we begin our public budget process, we need to understand the importance of taking the LONG view. Cities do not exist for a single generation but are instead built to serve centuries, not merely decades. Our budgeting and forecasting needs to be done with the long view as well, to facilitate a more strategic approach. Our budgets should support long term plans.

I am committed to shifting to multi-year budgeting to align our budgeting process more towards outcomes and less reliant on a single year's needs. Moving to this multi-year system will obviously not happen in this budget, however that should not stop the Council from assessing this submitted budget in the context of long-term financial stability and civic investments that will stand the test of time.

I am reminded of this fact when I look at the Power & Light District and the Sprint Center. Seventy-five years ago, our predecessors built City Hall, the County Courthouse and Municipal Auditorium with taxpayer funds. In current dollars, the amount of bond and debt issued for those projects would be in the billions.

Each of those projects built by our predecessors were expensive in the short term, but today, they each still stand serving their public purpose and the investment made in them has been recovered dozens of times over.

Because we have not spent what is needed on infrastructure for decades, we now need an estimated \$6 billion dollars to eliminate our maintenance backlog. For perspective, this year's entire budget is \$1.3 billion. This is the cost of putting off until tomorrow what should be done today. The excuse of doing things the same way simply because "that's the way its always been done" is no longer acceptable.

To repair and replace the over 5,000 miles of water and sewer pipes would require an investment of \$55 million a year. Last year we spent only \$22 million. We are not even treading water, we are sinking.

We should be spending \$100 million a year in infrastructure maintenance to keep up what we have, without spending a dime on our deferred backlog.

How we fund our infrastructure replacement and maintenance is a discussion about one of the essential services of city government, but it is not the only piece of our spending we should be examining. Is our fire protection arrayed in a way that makes sense? Are our police forces deployed in a way that best reduces crime? Are our city departments reflective of the times we live in now? Could they be less divided and more effective? Are there changes we can make structurally that will improve the way the City serves the public?



These are the questions whose answers I will be seeking as we work through the budget this year.

Our City Manager has taken the long view and proposed a budget that is bold and makes hard choices. I support many of the Manager's proposals, including a reduction in the Fire Department budget. I would, however, leave the process of how to achieve approximately \$7.6 million in permanent cuts to Chief Smokey Dyer, a nationally recognized leader in the area of fire suppression and safety. By allowing Chief Dyer to trim his budget, he can do so in a way that is most efficient and effective in providing fire protection and emergency health care within an approved scheme of deployment and personnel utilization. If personnel needs to be trimmed or other methods employed to achieve the budget reductions necessary, Chief Dyer is in the best position to decide how to trim a department that has performed in exemplary fashion without doing unnecessary violence to the mission.

Manager Schulte has also suggested, based on the recommendations of the Mayors' Task Force on Pension Reform, recommendations to reform several of the City's pension plans. Reform is necessary to provide stability and to address funding shortfalls to ensure that the pensions plans are sustainable into the future for the sake of all employees depending on them. I fully support the Manager's efforts and the Council's directions to him to recommend to the Council, at a specified time, reasonable reforms necessary to achieve the desired outcomes, including where possible and advisable, defined contribution plans and other potential cost saving measures.

The Manager has also suggested that some employees receive salary or wage increases which, in some instances, may represent increases for the first time in the last three years. The city staff has been strategically trimmed in recent years in response to budget constraints. In fact, since 2000, City Hall has cut close to 663 non-public safety personnel, or 25% of its work force. As a result of these efforts, this city is now working with the an extremely lean cadre of personnel. As a by-product of the cutbacks, the city now finds itself under-staffed in some management and leadership positions. Further dramatic personnel reductions in areas unrelated to public safety, such as fire suppression and police, could affect efficiency and service delivery. If we continue to suppress the salaries of personnel, we risk losing them to other employment options and thereby further decrease efficiency and incur additional costs to locate, hire and retrain replacements. Therefore, I support reasonable raises as suggested.

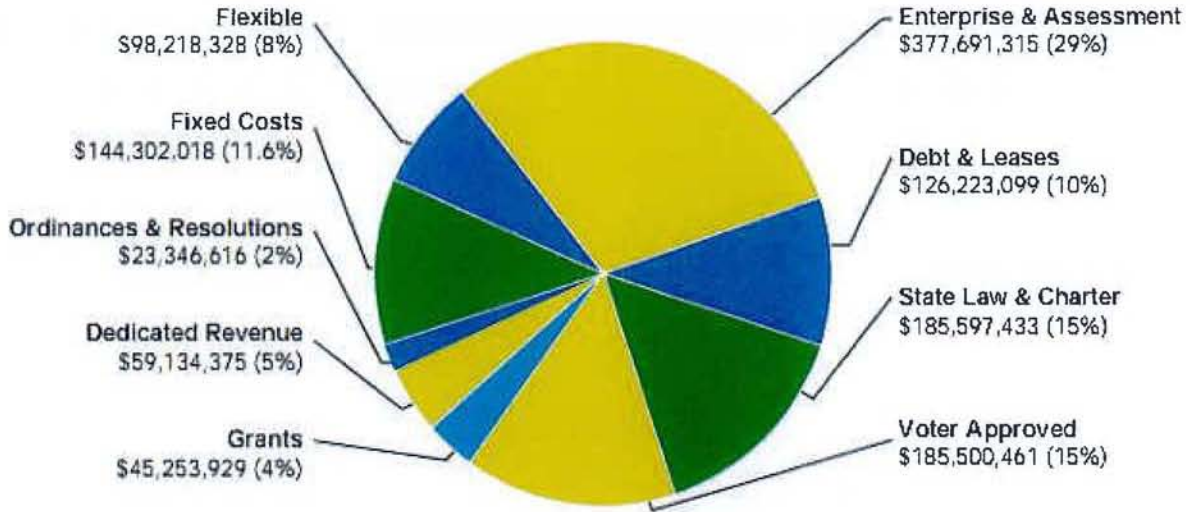
In looking at the issue of compensation for both our public safety and non-public safety personnel, however, I urge the Manager and the Council to develop a comprehensive and predictable system of employee compensation and increases based on budgetary realities. Personnel costs - compensation and benefits - consume over 60% of this city's budget. Although that number is better than many comparable cities, it is still a number that, left unchecked, could adversely impact our ability to address pressing issues such as deferred maintenance, infrastructure needs and neighborhood revitalization. Further, a comprehensive system addressing future employee compensation would allow for more precise and predictable long term planning for both employees and the city.

In addition, the City's budget is large and complicated, and contains many long-standing funding silos that need to be examined. In this fiscal year and in the fiscal years ahead, I will work with the City Manager to ensure that funding for specific programs is truly achieving its purpose or is an effective use of limited City resources. As we move forward with this governance strategy that takes the long view, it is important to fairly and accurately assess our current budget situation.

**BUDGET FACTS**

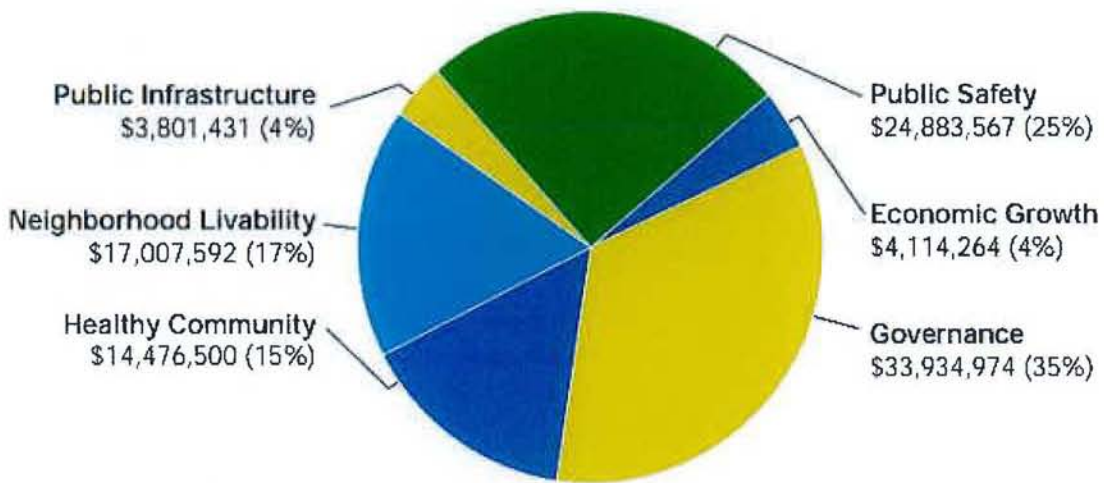
As we consider our budget for FY 2012-13, I believe it is helpful for us to attempt to clarify the components of our budget. Often, budgetary numbers are thrown around in ways that may be misleading.

The FY 2011-12 adopted budget was \$1,245,267,574, a figure that contains all monies from all sources. It is erroneous, however, to believe that the entire amount of the adopted budget is available for ready use for general purposes and services. The Budget Constraint Analysis of the FY 2011-12 budget demonstrates how little budget flexibility this city actually has. Here is how things break down:



We rely on that relatively small amount of “flexible” funds to allocate to streets, bridges, pipe replacement, public safety, programs etc. that are foundational.

In FY 2011-12, “Flexible” dollars funded:





The Budget Constraint Analysis illustrates that, although the adopted budget number looks large, at the end of the day, just like any household budget, after the mortgage, gas bill, insurance, repair bills, grocery bills etc. are paid, there is little left to do other things.

We have the double whammy of having a huge amount of territory to cover in this city and low population density. In short, we have a lot of needs in a big area and a small number of people to help pay for them.

**Population Density of Cities  
Based on 2000/2010 Census Data**

City	2000 Population	2000 Area in Square Miles	2000 Population per Square Mile	2010 Population per Square Mile
Boston, MA	589,141	48.4	12,165	12,793
Cincinnati, OH	331,285	78.0	4,249	3,810
Denver, CO	554,636	153.4	3,617	3,923
Kansas City, KS	146,866	124.3	1,182	1,168
<b>Kansas City, MO</b>	<b>441,545</b>	<b>313.6</b>	<b>1,408</b>	<b>1,460</b>
Los Angeles, CA	3,694,820	469.1	7,876	8,092
Minneapolis, MN	382,618	54.9	6,970	7,088
New York, NY	8,008,278	303.3	26,401	27,012
Oklahoma City, OK	506,132	607.0	834	956
Portland, OR	529,121	134.3	3,939	4,375
San Francisco, CA	776,733	46.7	16,633	17,179
Seattle, WA	563,374	83.9	6,717	7,251

We learn several things from the chart above. Kansas City is big. Eight San Franciscos can fit in the area of Kansas City. We have a similar amount of infrastructure as Los Angeles. In other words, we have similar amounts of road miles, pipes and sewers as the second largest city in the entire United States. Los Angeles, however, is a city of nearly 4 million people. Eight-thousand people pay for every lane mile of roadway in Los Angeles while only 1,460 pay for that same lane mile in Kansas City. You do the math..

Our tax base needs to be expanded but we also need to actively pursue new sources of non-tax revenue. If we are to compete, we must be innovative and aggressive. We are a city of entrepreneurs. We need your big ideas.

The best models of supporting and sustaining growth and innovation come from the private sector. It seems natural that we should look to business to find examples of how to improve and attract investment.

**A BUSINESS APPROACH:**

My background prior to being elected Mayor was slightly different than many who hold public office. I bring a slightly different perspective to City Hall - a perspective that I hope will serve the city well during the budget process.

I have run a small business, made payroll and grown a business. I, like many who operate businesses, understand that there are two fundamental things upon which all successful enterprises rely:

1. Keeping current customers happy
2. Attracting new customers

Fundamentally these are the same two functions of city government, and are the overarching goals of this Council. Both goals are served well by taking the long view of problems and solutions.

We want to provide excellent services that exceed expectations to the 459,787 residents who call Kansas City home. Our long term success relies on recruiting more residents to build their lives in our city limits.

In order to find better business models in which to run our city, we need our citizens to help us find ways to govern more effectively.

For the past few months, the Citizens' Commission on Municipal Revenue has been reviewing how our City funds itself. The AdvanceKC Committee has been examining our economic development practices. A Blue Ribbon panel has spent the last six months examining our ethics policies. We now have serious recommendations from a panel of citizens for reforming our pension system.

Literally hundreds of citizens from every walk of life - north, south, east and west - have been meeting to help make our city a better place to live. All were charged with taking the long view. This investment of time and energy will bear fruit and will feed our commitment to finding more business-like solutions to public problems.

**Efficiency**

To help advance this model from inside city government I am asking for a Chief Innovation Officer, reporting to the Mayor and City Manager, and tasked with both finding efficiencies and aligning City Hall functions with best business practices. As I have made known throughout my tenure in office, I make evidence-based decisions using available data because to do otherwise



would result in ineffective policy. In that vein, I have already partnered with the City Manager to establish the KCStat program. KCStat is designed to identify efficiencies and inefficiencies throughout city government and track progress toward achieving goals for better governance and management. The Chief Innovation Officer would work with the KCStat effort to challenge current practices across City Hall, asking “why” and pressing for a better way. If warranted after an assessment based on data, the Chief Innovation Officer would then work to adapt those practices to achieve new and better solutions - whether technological or operational - to traditional problems. The Chief Innovation Officer would also be tasked with creating an ongoing culture of outside-the-box problem solving amongst management in City Hall.

### **The City of Entrepreneurs**

Our drive to become *the* City of Entrepreneurs promotes our businesslike approach to growth and innovation, and it is a drive reflective of taking the long view for a prosperous future for Kansas City. Efforts are now well underway to better foster and encourage the establishment of small start ups. We are laying the groundwork for Kansas City’s next big employer — ten fold. Rather than counting on one idea to make it, we are essentially “crowd-sourcing” our future.

We do not know where the big idea will come from, nor are we counting on just one. Rather we need to invest in the tools and amenities attractive to smart people. If you have a great idea, we want you to explore that idea here because it is faster, friendlier and cheaper to do work here than anywhere else. We already know that one tool in our belt is the potential that Google Fiber’s faster Internet speeds will bring to Kansas City.

No one really knows how big the Google potential is, and I have partnered with Mayor Reardon of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas, to appoint the Mayors’ Bi-State Innovations Team (MBIT). The MBIT is filled with immensely talented individuals from across industries, and will develop a playbook on how the two cities can best utilize the technology to improve our community. One element of this playbook will be focusing our community’s entrepreneurial assets in order to pave the way for the next big idea, and the next big idea after that.

The Google investment represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Failure to capitalize on this technology is not an option. If we are smart, strategic and flexible, our partnership with Google and our fellow Kansas City in Kansas will be the singular event that will shape our future economy.

Ultimately our model of economic development requires us to understand what creative innovators need and want and do our best to develop those assets. The model also recognizes that our home grown talent is frankly just as likely to come up with the next big idea than anyone from anywhere else in the world.

### **Building Partnerships:**

The fundamental role of the Mayor in the Council/Manager system is to build partnerships across business, philanthropic and community lines in order to advance common civic goals. This is also critical to a businesslike approach to city governance. A successful Mayor must gather resources. When big ideas and big projects have moved forward in Kansas City it has never been because of

the city alone. Each was because a larger group of committed partners gathered in support of the Mayor and city to push an agenda forward. Partnerships are a foundational element to this Administration. Citizens absolutely expect that their tax dollars will not stand alone.

To that end, each of the goals we set — both short and long-term — will require partnerships. The public good cannot be served without private will, but private enterprise relies on public investment. Achieving Kansas City's common goals will take all sectors working together. We intend on continuing to demonstrate successful models of productive partnerships.

### **Keeping Current Customers Happy:**

Prior to taking office, the Council and I met to establish common goals for the upcoming term. As the City Manager referenced in his transmittal of the budget to my office, the priorities we developed - and have continued to clarify over the course of this first year - align with the FOCUS strategic planning goals of governance, public safety, public infrastructure, economic growth, healthy communities, and neighborhood livability. These focus areas are of course not exclusive, but are meant to guide a holistic approach to governing our City. The central tenet of this broader vision, whether one views it through the lens of a business approach or any other approach, is to provide the City's clients - its citizens - with the best experience and product possible. This includes providing:

- Efficient basic services
- Effective public safety
- World-class amenities
- Livable, sustainable, healthy neighborhoods and a strong urban core

Each of these elements requires revenue at a time when, as noted, resources continue to be scarce. Despite limited resources, client satisfaction - in our world and in the business world - remains paramount. To that end the Council and I have hosted, and continue to host throughout the budget process, listening sessions with our residents to ensure that our community's aspirations are reflected in our budget choices. In addition, we recognize that a large portion of citizens' satisfaction hinges on whether they consider us to be good stewards of their money. As we evaluate the priorities of the citizens, the priorities of the Council, and any additional priorities I lay out in this letter, we must remember that our actions as a Council and as a City must both demonstrate efficiency and produce measurable outcomes. Our City runs lean, but there are improvements that can still be made.

I believe these elements capture what I have heard from our citizens so far, but also capture the hard work we as a Council have put in to prioritize our efforts. However, our efforts in each of these areas cannot move independently. They must work as part of a cohesive unit toward the larger vision of a successful city. In addition, we must also work cohesively and in partnership with other, outside initiatives - like the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce's "Big 5 Ideas" - that are simultaneously working toward City improvement.

### **Efficient Basic Services:**

The basic services we provide our citizens are a core mission of government. Despite this fact, many of the services we provide are reliant on aging infrastructure we have



neglected for long periods of time. Each year, the disparity between our funding for capital improvements and maintenance and our need for capital improvements and maintenance gets larger. This summer we had more water main breaks than ever, which is indicative of the larger infrastructure issues facing our city. Our public services were built well, but every pipe, valve and gasket has an expiration date.

However, part of the story about our record number of water main breaks that has been missed is that, of the 1,400 breaks we had last year, 85% we fixed within 24 hours. We know this fact because it is an indicator we track and will continue to question as part of our KCStat evaluations.

However, despite the encouraging news above, for the customer whose water was off for days the 85% fixed in 24 hours is relatively meaningless. And even for the vast majority whose water was restored the same day, that did not make up for the inconvenience.

We have a massive amount of public infrastructure to maintain, and we need to fundamentally change the way we do maintenance. This is why the Manager and I have tapped the private sector and recruited Bill Downey, formerly the President of KCP&L, to help shift the way the water department, a large source of a majority of our citizen complaints, operates.

The City is continually upgrading and maintaining a water system which includes more than 2,300 miles of water mains, 2,600 miles of sewer lines, more than 30,000 storm drain inlets and nearly 18,000 fire hydrants. With all this infrastructure, the ability to treat our water delivery much more like a electrical grid will save headaches, save money and is a far more efficient way to do business.

This shift in how we respond to our customers, the residents of Kansas City, will be inherent in retaining our population and making our City a great place to call home. The new approach to the water department is reflected in a different approach to all the City's basic services. With over 6,600 lane miles in roadways to maintain, plow and keep in working order in the city limits, we have to focus on efficiency and effectiveness to keep up.

**Effective Public Safety:**

As the City Manager notes, the combined cost of Police and Fire protection consumed \$266.6 million, or 57% of the General Fund budget. The numbers of personnel for both the Fire Department (480) and the Police Department (197) have increased by a total of 677 since 2000, while the number of city employees not engaged in public safety has decreased by 663 over the same period.

Our citizens have consistently rated the public safety services of this City high. I agree. We are, however, in turbulent economic times in which other cities have found it necessary to make draconian cuts in public safety personnel. Kansas City, in large part due to the diligence of our professional staff and the priorities of elected leadership, has

not had to travel that bumpy road to date. Projections for City revenues over the next two years, however, are not very encouraging and, therefore, we must do all that we can to enhance efficiencies in our public safety sector.

No household or business budget would ignore a discussion of an expenditure that consumed 57% of its budget. In the city's budget, that requires a discussion about how we spend our public safety dollars.

We are fortunate to have a nationally recognized Fire Chief in Smokey Dyer. He has built a Fire Department with a reputation as one of the best in the nation. The merger of the agency formerly known as MAST into the Fire Department offers some opportunities for cross-framing and cross-utilization that may, hopefully, help to decrease personnel costs while maintaining high standards of separation.

We are also fortunate to have found a new Police Chief, Darryl Forté, right here in our backyard.

The Police Chief's "hot spot" initiative is beginning to show results. The initiative focuses on four separate areas totaling 13 square miles that since 2009 have been responsible for 50 percent of Kansas City's homicides and 42 percent of its aggravated assaults with firearms.

In the coming year, implementation of "Shot Spotter" technology in a pilot area will be a priority. External funding and partnerships for this crime reduction tool has been identified.

Additionally, I am asking for \$200,000 to implement a closed-circuit camera pilot program. The program will be an added tool in Chief Forte's arsenal as he continues to work to reduce violent crime.

These initiatives, and others, are good examples of the community helping its Police Department. Partnerships to reduce crime will pay dividends over the long-term even as the technology shows reductions in the short-term.

#### **World-Class Amenities:**

I was blown away the first time I saw the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts up close. The attention to detail, the unyielding dedication to quality and the bold daring lines made, and continue to make, me proud of this great city and people such as Julia Irene Kauffman who made it so.

The Kauffman Center is the newest, but by far not the only, jewel in our City's arts crown. The ballet has a beautiful new home. The Lyric Opera is creating a new space. The Nelson is dynamic and progressive. The Kemper Museum is an avante garde space for modern art.



Not only can we boast of the world's finest performing arts center, we are about to witness a transformation in Crown Center with the spring openings of a new aquarium and Lego Land. Those world-class amenities are bound to attract new visitors to our city.

We are also on the cusp of FINALLY starting a rail transit line in Kansas City, the downtown modern streetcar. Although we have never been closer, we are not there yet. Finishing this job will require vision and commitment from land owners, business and residents of downtown. It is important that together, as partners, we complete this starter line now because we cannot possibly finish until we actually do start. Once we start, we can expand until we have — perhaps 15-20 years in the future — caught up with all the other major cities who have provided a transit system that facilitates mobility, commerce, development and recreation throughout their regions.

We have Google! Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas — no one else in the country. We must find every way possible to use this opportunity to enhance education, business, medicine and the arts. In short, we must monetize this intellectual property and develop it as an economic development project.

Finally, our parks system and the Director of the Parks Department, Mark McHenry, enjoy a national reputation. We need to recognize them even more locally as a key partner in youth employment and programming, the keepers of our world renowned fountains and boulevards and as a key economic development asset.

Although our Parks Department has progressed with changing recreational demands, such as biking and walking infrastructures throughout the city, we have failed to adequately fund it making progress is slow and halting.

Our world-class amenities are more than beautiful buildings or recreational experiences. They are economic development tools that impact tourism, commerce and quality of life. Our budget should recognize the potential of these assets to generate non-tax revenue and provide the necessary resources to maximize the return on the already significant investment.

**Livable, sustainable, healthy neighborhoods with a strong urban core:**

For several decades, Kansas City has been held back by a divided strategy of neighborhood improvement. Scattered resources, dealing with scattered issues, have left swaths of neighborhoods unimproved. Too often rather than focusing our investments and initiatives in concentrated and targeted ways, we have divided by six, and in order to reduce risk, have spread limited dollars thinly, often to little effect.

There are lessons to be learned in the Green Impact Zone, a project I continually hear praise about when in Washington. The project concentrates and targets resources to areas with the most need, and magnifies each investment because of proximity and density of

other complementary investments. The Green Impact Zone is also an effective model of public-private partnerships that has been able to leverage every tax dollar with a private investment. The city's largest solar array was a public-private partnership on top of Paseo High School inside the Green impact Zone. Though it has taken time, public dollars are encouraging private investment.

We are following a similar strategy surrounding the new East Patrol and crime lab location. We need to continue our commitment to both projects, without losing sight of the whole. They are examples of focused civic investment that a neighborhood can leverage to rebound.

Our civic investment needs to be strategic and holistic, and made in collaboration with other community investments such as the Big 5's Urban Neighborhood Initiative, another example of public-private partnerships leveraging limited resources. Crime, education, and the physical aspects of our neighborhoods all factor into a community's satisfaction and sense of ownership in the area in which they live.

We need to demonstrate a commitment to neighborhood solutions. Part of this demonstration will be reflective of our commitment to public infrastructure. Part of this demonstration will also be a focus on crime reduction. And part will be a renewed commitment to the Office of Civic and Community Engagement. All of our investments must be made in conjunction with our overall efforts toward solid customer service, backed by a focus on data through KCStat.

#### *Commitment to the Big 5 Urban Neighborhood Initiative*

The partnerships created by the city-wide discussion of the Big 5 priorities has been important to aligning public and private interest in improving Kansas City. To seed the Urban Neighborhood Initiative, the city will contribute \$25,000 in this budget year. Our funding, along with similar funding of other founding members, will serve to attract private investment in one of our most important collective initiatives. The understanding of the entire area of the importance of improving some of our most impoverished neighborhoods is wise and heartening.

#### *Commitment to our neighborhoods' youth*

In response to violence on the Plaza last August, the City Council stood united to enact curfew ordinances that helped ensure the safety of our young adults for the remainder of the summer. At the time we enacted our aggressive policies, we pledged to develop more proactive and positive programs for our city's youth.

I have charged the Office of Community and Civic Engagement to better target programming for youth, and to build the commitment and confidence of the civic community spurring them to contribute to the cause.

To seed this effort, I am not only contributing staff, but also requesting an allocation of an additional \$100,000 to the effort and actively seeking private



partners to contribute to the program. We can no longer see our summer internship programs as merely a paid summer activity, we must utilize the programs to substantially improve the professional readiness of the city's youth. If our programs are not providing concrete skill development then we have missed an opportunity to improve our future workforce.

*Commitment to solving our housing issues*

Vacant and abandoned housing continues to be a drag on our neighborhoods. As the City Manager notes in his letter, our City has approximately 12,000 vacant lots and abandoned structures. These vacancies are not only magnets for blight and crime, but often ultimately cost the City money for maintenance and drag down the the value of the surrounding property. We need to continue to think about solutions for our housing issues in a collaborative and strategic manner, identifying partnerships with like-minded organizations in order to develop solutions. Part of our focus must be on tearing down dangerous buildings, rebuilding and repairing urban housing stock, and restoring our Housing Division- all in alignment with our broader strategic vision for the City. We similarly need to continue with efforts to bring us out of receivership, and continue with efforts to establish a land bank that will help us better control vacant and abandoned property.

*Commitment to growing downtown*

We have seen positive growth in our downtown, but need more growth to increase the overall return on downtown investments. In 1950, more than 60,000 residents called downtown home. After contraction over the decades, the number of residents in downtown is rebounding. Currently 16,000 citizens call downtown home.

Downtown's rebirth has come with a substantial increase of property values. In 1980, less than 1% of properties were valued over \$200,000 in the downtown area. Now 44.6% are valued above \$200,000. The downtown area is also directly appealing to young entrepreneurs, exactly the residential population targeted with city incentives. Nearly 45% of downtown residents are between the age of 20-35. By comparison, city-wide that demographic only comprises 24% of the population. Based on the potential return of having more of our citizens reside closer to major City investments, we should look at developing a strategic plan to increase housing units by 1,000 within the next five years.

**Attracting New Customers:**

As with any business, in order to truly raise the tide in Kansas City, we can not simply propose more taxes, fees or cuts. Ultimately the goal should be to grow the proverbial pie. When Kansas City has the same amount of roads and pipes as Los Angeles, yet has only 1,460 people per

square mile as compared to 8,000, the issue and solution become evident. We need to grow the number of businesses and residents within the City.

Early in my term as Mayor, we as a City declared that Kansas City was open for business. Shortly thereafter we declared that we were "The City of Entrepreneurs." But we cannot just make declarations without actions. That is why I applaud Councilman Scott Taylor and the other members of the Special Committee on Small Business who identified 67 specific suggestions to make it easier for small businesses to grow in Kansas City, Missouri. While the implementation of those suggestions is underway, we need to press this issue and continue the momentum we have.

One evident indicator of the health of our business community is the vacancy rate of our office space. Our City's overall rate is at 16.3%, while downtown and Crown Center are hovering near 27%. Though these numbers are discouraging, with recent announcements from companies such as Data Systems International declaring that the primary reason for relocating downtown is the vibrant atmosphere that the talent they are recruiting demands, suggests that we are seeing a shift in a decades long migration to more suburban settings. We need to capitalize on this with a pointed strategy for reducing our city-wide vacancy rate to 10% city wide within the next three years.

Opening of new markets for our new and existing businesses further adds to our efforts in this arena. We are behind in our efforts to make Kansas City a global city in part because we have limited our public investment in this area. Because of this, the City needs to establish a coordinated effort to 1) raise awareness of Kansas City-based companies, goods, services and offerings with the goal of increasing international trade and 2) to drive entrepreneurial development, thus creating new jobs in the area.

My office is currently crafting a strategy of leveraging existing resources in the community to recreate a revamped international office that is less dependent on taxpayer funds, but more productive in their use. Additionally, efforts are already underway to comprehensively evaluate the city's Economic Development strategy. AdvanceKC, our economic development strategic planning process led by two of our communities experts from the business sector, will return its recommendations later this year. Part of their analysis will help assist the City to vigorously work to focus and align our incentive packages to respond to these citizen recommendations and target our packages toward development that moves our unified plan forward strategically.

Challenges persist. Our city's unemployment levels remain far too high. Our regional employment has had the third largest decline through the recession of any metro in the top 200 in the nation. Kansas City's population continues to lag behind growth in peer cities. In the decade between 1990-2000, the city only grew by 1.5%. In part because of the growth downtown and north of the river, the city grew by 5.1% prior to the recession.

The trend reversed in the last five years. The City experienced negative growth in that time period. Total population declined by 3,318 people or nearly -1%. The population loss has cost the city nearly \$101 million in income.



We have many advantages to press in recruiting talented new residents. Many of the same reasons Google selected us from a pool of 1,100 other cities can draw others to Kansas City. We have a lower cost of living than many of our peer cities, significantly lower than the national average.

All of the above, along with additional efforts, will work to ensure that we are providing our citizens with the basic services and amenities to improve our great City. However, the most significant issue holding our recruitment and retention of new residents is our continued struggles with guaranteeing a quality education for every young resident of Kansas City.

## **EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IS OUR CHIEF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOL**

Despite all the exceptional efforts underway to better coordinate our economic development policies, educating our young people remains our single most important economic development issue. This represents a fundamentally different view of economic development. It is a view that recognizes that investments in people are far more important long-term than investments in buildings and equipment.

By spending more time arguing about TIF allocations than SAT scores, we are reducing the odds that the world's next ground-breaking innovation will come from Kansas City. Being Mayor has its privileges, and as I said, one of those is the ability to use my office to set our tone and priorities, build lasting partnerships and marshal resources and energy toward a common goal.

As an example of constructing relationships to move our city forward, I gathered together more than 30 of our city's largest organizations and charged them with crafting a plan to get every child reading at grade level by 3rd grade.

The group I convened, which includes our community's most influential philanthropies, non-profits and civic organizations, school districts, and educators will present a plan to invest in our most important asset — our children. Kansas City, in partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the National League of Cities, will commit to providing the energy and resources to get every one of our children reading at an appropriate level by 3rd grade. I am requesting \$50,000 be devoted as seed capital to begin this critical project.

If we can achieve this goal, it will be bigger than Google and will have an impact on the future well-being of our city far greater than any headquarter relocation.

It is also the right thing to do.

This is my most important economic development priority. It is the ultimate example of taking the long view of a problem.

Study after study tells us that if a child cannot read at grade level by the time they get to 3rd grade they are 12 times less likely to graduate. We also know that 85% of a person's brain development occurs in the first three years of life. Yet, only 5% of our public investments are devoted to those years. Dollar-for-dollar, increasing the learning skills of Kansas City's youngest residents is absolutely the best investment we can make. Every dollar invested yields \$12 in increase economic activity or saved social cost.

Surveys of adolescents and young adults with criminal records show that about half have reading difficulties. Similarly about half the youths with a history of substance abuse have reading problems. The states of California and Arizona have taken that a step further. Because seven in 10 prisoners perform at the lowest literacy levels, they have used 3rd grade reading test scores to determine how many jail cells to build.

Each high school dropout costs our community about \$260,000 over their life time in additional social services or decreased economic productivity. We absolutely can and must change this dynamic.

We can choose to commit to raising the reading level of our youngest children. I am committing my political capital to the cause and together we will find a long-term solution that will provide every Kansas City child with a quality early learning program.

Frankly, our future depends on it.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this letter, I have attempted to sketch out a broad vision for the city we love. I applaud the work of the Manager, Budget Office and City staff who continually do exceptional work in service to the people of Kansas City.

In reflecting the priorities of the Council, what has emerged is a budget document that will move our city forward. Our challenge is to be bold and not shrink from the challenges that lay before us. To that end, I propose that we tackle head-on our crumbling infrastructure. As I have said, if there is a silver lining to the recession it is that there are very low interest rates, a willing, available workforce and low construction costs.

In short, if we finally want to stop pushing repairs across the city to future generations there will not be a better time financially to tackle the job. We must take the long view.

While I do not agree with some of the specific funding mechanisms in the Manager's proposed budget, I am in complete agreement that we owe the citizens of Kansas City infrastructure worthy of a great city. I also believe the Manager is correct to identify a need in our neighborhoods to remove blight.

However, in both cases I think we can be far more bold in our approach. Raising utility taxes is painfully regressive on the very neighborhood the funds raised would seek to help. I believe we should not take half measures in addressing our infrastructure needs and our neighborhood stabilization projects. The need is great, the complaints are valid, and the work needs to begin now.

### **Recommendation #1: Infrastructure/Deferred Maintenance**

For too long, we have either failed or been unable to address our deferred maintenance and infrastructure needs. In order to preserve our physical assets and infrastructure, we have to address specific issues including, but not limited to:



- We need to replace 2,300 miles of water mains at a minimum rate of 55 miles per year at a cost of \$1 million per mile. The City currently spends approximately \$22 million between cash and water bonds on this effort.
- We have approximately 6,600 miles of paved roads. When it snows, we plow the equivalent of two lanes of pavement stretching from Boston to San Diego and back. Subsistence maintenance of this expanse of roadway would require that we repave about 650 lane miles of roadway a year. We have budgeted only \$5 million for this effort, which will repair 83 lane miles.
- We have over \$60 million of current serious bridge maintenance needs. We have budgeted \$800,000.
- We currently have more than 12,000 abandoned lots or boarded residential structures and an additional 2000 abandoned or boarded commercial structures. A disproportionate amount of these structures are located in the 3rd and 5th Council districts. They blight the communities in which they stand and may need to be demolished. Demolition of an average building costs approximately \$7,500. The Manager's budget allocates \$1 million or enough to demolish only about 125 of these structures. And yet, while the balance of these structures remains in place, most serve no purpose other than to depress the values of other property in the vicinity and to discourage development and neighborhood revitalization.

These situations will not repair themselves - they will simply get worse. Although each of these substantial issues need to be and must be addressed, current revenue is simply inadequate to adequately address these problems separately, let alone in total.

Because our maintenance and neighborhood needs are substantial and foundational to keep Kansas City livable, I ask the Council and the Manager to work with me to take advantage of commodities made available by this persistent recession: low bond rates (3.5%); abundant and ready labor that needs to get back to work; and a plethora of overdue projects.

Attacking the problem requires a two-pronged approach. I suggest that we commit to obtaining \$100 million of General Obligation (GO) Bonds each year for the next 10 years and devote those funds to:

- A systematic rebuilding of depressed neighborhoods, six square blocks at a time. In this scenario, the city would designate six contiguous blighted blocks, remove the blight, repair the infrastructure and lighting and then solicit public/private partnerships to redesign and rebuild the areas with in-fill housing and green space amenities, offering the homes for sale in a now revitalized neighborhood. The estimated cost to the city is \$10-15 million per project.
- Rebuild 10-20 miles of city roadway each year at a city cost of approximately \$5 million per mile.
- Strategically rebuild and replace sidewalks throughout the city at a cost of \$250,000 per block. We should be spending \$20 million a year on this task..
- Repair bridges currently in need of repair, estimated cost \$60 million.

In addition, I suggest that we explore revenue bonds for our water and sewer projects:

- Funding some portion of the EPA mandated \$2.5 billion overflow control project to slow and offset water and sewer rate increases
- Repair and replace some aging water infrastructure.
- Push out and accelerate mandated Overflow Control demonstration projects.

As of April of this year, this city will have no GO Bond authority with which to address these needs. Further, sewer bond authority is a low \$35 million that will be exhausted in April. Without the ability to address long term infrastructure, maintenance, water and sewer issues in an organized, predictable and strategic manner, this city will not grow.

**Recommendation #2:** Community Initiatives

Our budget must also consider the City's short-term needs while it looks to address long term and systemic issues. My colleagues on the City Council, have worked together to identify and establish targeted programs that can help our citizens in the near term. To better reflect the priorities of my colleagues on the City Council, I request that the City Manager locate and allocate \$1 million from the current preliminary budget to address the following issues:

*Efficient basic services*

- \$200,000 to locate, hire, and staff a Chief Innovation Officer who reports to the City Manager and Mayor on governmental and administrative innovations and efficiencies that can help deliver services at the lowest cost and most efficient levels.

*Effective public safety*

- \$200,000 for a pilot program to test the effectiveness of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) as a crime fighting prevention mechanism in areas of high crime and violence.

*World-class amenities*

- \$25,000 to the Mayor's Arts Task Force to create a strategic plan focused on additional non-tax revenue, such as a week-long regional arts festival and other ways to enhance cultural tourism.

*Livable, sustainable, healthy neighborhoods and a strong urban core*

- \$50,000 of seed capital for the Annie E. Casey Foundation and National League of Cities Grade Level Reading Program, as part of the 2012 All-American City Competition that envisions a three-year program implementation
- \$200,000 for additional summer programming for youth and extended hours for designated community centers
- An additional \$100,000 for Bright Futures summer internships
- \$25,000 to support in the first year the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce Big-5 Idea, the Urban Neighborhood Initiative.
- \$200,000 to partially fund administrative costs of the Green Impact Zone.

**Recommendation 3:** Review our current revenue structure

We have to fundamentally examine the City's use of the earnings tax as a funding stream. We need the tax currently for day-to-day operations. I believe we need to shift the earnings tax to a project-based funding mechanism that gives citizens concrete improvements for their hard earned dollars. This will require adjusting to "back-fill" the operations currently funded by the earnings tax with different sources. I look forward to the Citizen's Commission on Municipal Revenue's recommendations on this critical issue.

## **MAKE KANSAS CITY BEST - TOGETHER**

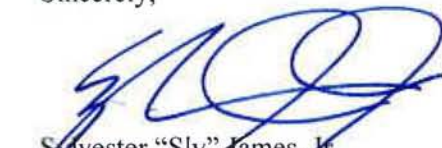
Some of the recommendations made in this letter are bold. We have, however, taken the timid path up to this point only to fall further behind. I believe a beautiful, vibrant and energetic city deserves a plan that reflects the people who make Kansas City unique.

Our citizens have repeatedly told us to maintain and keep our infrastructure in repair and we have failed to listen. Now is the time to follow their lead and take aggressive action to correct decades of decay. Inaction will only hold us back.

I cannot tell you how proud I am of our city. Truly, the world is noticing that we are on the move. The investments I am requesting in this budget will take us to the next level, help us to hold firm on the opportunities we have created together, and make Kansas City worthy of the amazing people who call it home.

We can make Kansas City best and together we will.

Sincerely,



Sylvester "Sly" James, Jr.  
Mayor of Kansas City, Missouri



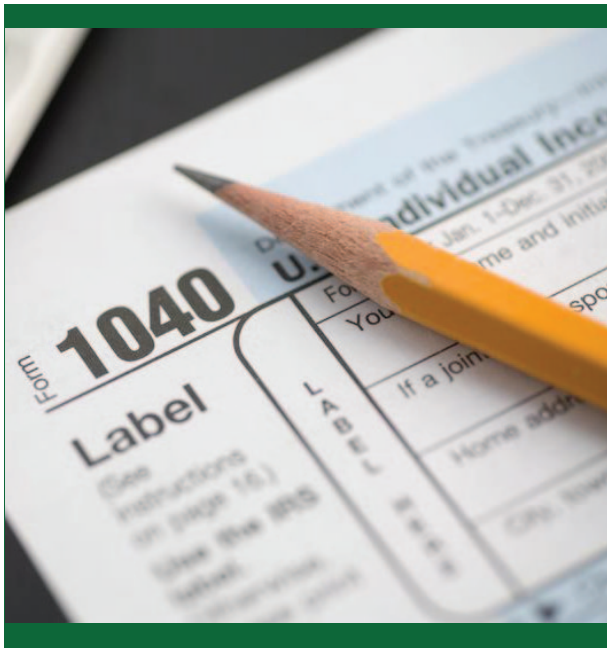


# KC C.A.S.H.

Creating Assets, Savings & Hope

You may qualify for  
**FREE** tax preparation!

Learn more at  
**kccash.org**



**If your household earned \$57,000 or less, you're eligible!**

If your adjusted gross income is \$50,000 or less, visit one of our VITA tax assistance sites to have an IRS-certified volunteer prepare your return for free. For locations, visit **kccash.org**

If your adjusted gross income is \$57,000 or less, prepare your own return at **myfreetaxes.com/kc**

Or visit one of our "assisted self preparation" sites and we'll coach you through the process.

Either way, it's free!

For more information, **dial 2-1-1**,  
**(816) 474-5112** or call toll-free at  
**(866) 320-5764**

To find tax help locations dial 2-1-1



Find us on  
**Facebook**  
KC CASH Coalition



**2-1-1**  
Get Help. Give Help.