

LINC Commission Meeting

March 20, 2017



LINC's Books and Balls initiative in the KCPS encourages students to read one minute for every minute of basketball played. Free books were provided to the community at weekly tournaments.



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, March 20, 2017 | 4 – 6 pm
Kauffman Foundation
4801 Rockhill Rd.
Kansas City, Mo. 64110

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Announcements
- II. Approvals
 - a. February minutes (motion)
 - b. Finance Committee appointment
- III. April 4th Election Issues
 - a. City of Kansas City bond issues
 - i. Kansas City Mayor Sly James
 - b. Independence School District
 - i. Dale Herl superintendent
 - c. Grandview
 - i. Kenny Rodrequez
- IV. Superintendents Reports
- V. Kansas City Digital Equity Strategy
- VI. Other
 - a. KCPT history of education
 - b. Other
- VII. Adjournment



THE LOCAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION – FEB. 27, 2017

The Local Investment Commission met at the Kauffman Foundation, 4801 Rockhill Rd., Kansas City, Mo. Co-chair **Bailus Tate** presided. Commissioners attending were:

Bert Berkley
Sharon Cheers
Jack Craft
Tom Davis
Aaron Deacon
Steve Dunn
Mark Flaherty
SuEllen Fried

Anita Gorman
Dick Hibschan
Rosemary Lowe
Jaime Masters (for Frank White)
Mary Kay McPhee
Ken Powell
David Ross

A motion to approve the minutes of the Jan. 23, 2017, LINC Commission meeting was passed unanimously.

Archie Williams, who retired from LINC in January, was recognized for his service to LINC. **Steve Winburn** reported on Williams's career working in support of foster youth from his time at the Missouri Division of Youth Services up to the LINC Foster Youth Initiative, which began in 2007.

Superintendents Report

- **Kelly Wachel**, Director of Public Relations (Center School District), reported the district and the Southwest Alliance recently hosted an education summit featuring area school district superintendents and industry and workforce partners. A Center High School senior recently won a trustee scholarship at Rockhurst University. A video featuring student Jordan Jensen, part of the "Why I Chose Center" campaign, was shown.
- **Jason Snodgrass**, Superintendent (Fort Osage School District), reported voters will decide on two district questions on the April 4 ballot. The first is an \$11.3 million bond issue to fund construction of an early childhood center, district stadium renovations, playgrounds, safety improvements at the high school, roof improvements, and new freezer and refrigerators. The second is a 67-cent operating levy increase.
- **Juan Cordova**, Asst. Superintendent (Grandview School District), reported the district is expanding its Project Lead the Way initiative. The Meadowmere Elementary School robotics team placed second at the Kansas City FIRST LEGO League Championship on Feb. 25. Honeywell is offering five two-year full-ride scholarships to Grandview High School seniors this spring.
- **Dennis Carpenter**, Superintendent (Hickman Mills School District) reported the school board has selected **Yolanda Cargile**, Assoc. Superintendent, to be the next superintendent (Carpenter is leaving the district to serve as superintendent in the Lee's Summit School District).
- **Jerry Kitzi**, Director of Early Education (Kansas City Public Schools), reported superintendent Mark Bedell is finishing up his "Listening and Learning Tour" and is narrowing the focus of the district's strategic plan to five points, including expansion of early childhood education. The district is working with charter schools to build legislative support for a levy increase needed for dedicated funds.
- **Paul Harrell**, Deputy Superintendent (North Kansas City School District), reported a student of Antioch Elementary School was the winner of the Jackson-Clay Spelling Bee, and Staley High

School won its first state wrestling title. The district is encouraging students to enroll in Advanced Placement classes, and in April all juniors will take the ACT. Middle school students in the gifted program will be housed in the Northland Innovation Center starting next summer.

- **Kevin Foster**, Executive Director (Genesis Promise Academy), reported the school is pursuing the “Stay, Learn, Grow” campaign to increase student retention. Over 300 people attended the Black History Month program at Wednesday. The school in partnership with Black Health Care Coalition will host a Grandparent Health Care Fair on March 24.
- **Bob Bartman**, Director (Education Policy Fellowship Program), reported the Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City is focused on the issue of expansion of charter schools beyond Kansas City and St. Louis. EPFP fellows attended a session on demography in February; in March they will attend the decision-making simulation at the Truman Presidential Library.

Bailus Tate reported that LINC and Kansas City Public Schools reached an agreement for KCPS to pay for LINC Before and After School services through the end of the school year, and are discussing an agreement for the 2017-2018 school year.

Brent Schondelmeyer, Deputy Director-Community Engagement, reported on the Black History Month luncheon held on Saturday by the Black Archives of Mid-America. Congressman Emanuel Cleaver was the featured speaker. **Bob Bartman** recited a poem by **Langston Hughes** that was delivered at the luncheon.

Barbara Shelly gave a presentation on student mobility. Shelly has been reporting on the issue for KCUR from the Hickman Mills School District, and particularly at Ingels Elementary School. She reported that switching schools has negative effects on student attendance and performance. Factors on student mobility include evictions, lack of investment in low-income housing stock, and rent specials. Discussion followed.

Schondelmeyer reported on the Mid-Continent Public Library’s Reading Rocket mobile literacy vehicle. The Reading Rocket visits places such as housing complexes to provide activities to inspire a love of reading in children and prepare them for kindergarten. A video was shown.

Mark Flaherty reported a settlement has been reached in the lawsuit between the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City (HCF) and HCA. \$175 million has been paid by HCA to HCF. In January an appeals court reduced to \$200 million the earlier judgment of \$433 awarded to HCF by a trial court. Flaherty gave an overview of the litigation, which stemmed from promises by HCA to invest in area hospitals and charity care following its purchase of the nonprofit Health Midwest hospital chain.

The meeting was adjourned.

The Kansas City Star – March 6, 2017

Driving nightmares spur Kansas City plea for taxpayers' help undoing backlog of road repairs

By Joe Robertson

Any number of roads in Kansas City will drop you into a driving nightmare.

Pavement narrows. Shoulders crumble. Or they take dangerous curves, or fill with overwhelming traffic.

The city wants to fix such roads, and [lists dozens of them](#) in a public resolution asking voters on April 4 to [approve a series of general obligation bonds](#).

The road and bridge projects are scattered across all six City Council districts, representing some \$450 million worth of work. That's the majority of the total \$800 million in bonds the city is seeking. The rest would address sidewalks, flood control and public buildings.

Waukomis Drive leads to one of those nightmares — Green Hills Road.

If you were lost, you'd think this two-laner heading north off of Interstate 29 was winding you into the country — passing a miniature railroad park and the First Baptist Church with "Jesus Saves" spelled in white bricks over its door.

But beyond the ridges and rushing tree lines, you might notice the gathering rooftops of subdivisions, tethered like swarming branches to the two-lane's tiny stem.

The road has become a major commuter route. The city's efforts to modernize it show up for a stretch as it becomes Green Hills Road. But north of 76th Terrace, the new medians and turn lanes end and the old crumbling shoulder and ditches choke the road again.

It all rises to a harrowing peak at 79th Street, where hills obscure the view at an intersection linked to two large apartment complexes and the Coves subdivision and its 480 homes.

"Where I come from, a two-lane road is a nice country drive on a Sunday afternoon," said Kathy Thomas, who lives on Green Hills Road just north of 79th.

But this one brings a steady assault of vehicles at 40 and even 50 mph rushing past motorists cued up to turn onto what is definitely *not* a country road anymore.

Coves resident Russ Saltzman approaches it "like the chipmunk aiming at the acorn," he said. "You do it as fast as you can and hope you don't get hit."

Know this, say both City Engineer Jeff Martin and City Manager Troy Schulte: The city will keep scraping at resources to make over roads like this one, whether voters approve the bond issues or not.

The same goes for other pressing projects like the dangerous two-lane Lee's Summit Road with the curves at Hardin Road where motorists have died, and the failing, aging stretch of 63rd Street between Prospect and Troost avenues.

But Mayor Sly James and the City Council believe the city has fallen too far behind over the past several decades to dig its way out without the relief that general obligation bonds and a supporting property tax increase would provide.

“We have only two options,” James recently told The Star’s editorial board. “We can fix it or watch it crumble.”

“It’s easy to say, ‘Pay for it a different way,’ ” James added. “But it’s just not that easy.”

The city’s backlog of major repairs exceeds \$750 million, Schulte said, so it’s not easy limiting the resolution with work amounting roughly to the \$450 million the bonds would provide.

Reconstruction of 23rd Street east of Prospect Avenue is on the list. So is reconstruction of 39th Street west of Emanuel Cleaver II Boulevard. Briarcliff Parkway east of North Oak Trafficway is there. Blue River Road, with landslide problems south of 87th Street, is there too.

Kansas City is hardly alone among cities burdened with aging infrastructure, nor is it alone in wrestling with options and the politics of taxes, bond issues and debt.

A shared pain

On Election Day in November, voters across the nation decided on 436 transportation-related ballot measures totaling \$250 billion, according to the [Eno Center for Transportation](#) in Washington.

More than 70 percent of them passed.

“The public is generally good at picking out what are good investments and what are not,” said Eno President and CEO Robert Puente. “The public is willing to invest, and that’s in red states and blue states and everything in between.”

What to make of Kansas City’s bid?

Many of those successful issues in the fall across America were in high-growth cities of the West and Southwest that were building new transit and infrastructure, Puente said. Kansas City is in a wave of cities having to make the harder pitch for repairing existing roads, bridges and highways.

Cities like Chicago and Boston in the Midwest and Northeast already went through this, he said, while middle-tier cities like Kansas City, Washington and San Francisco are now deep in those past-due, less-appealing projects.

“You can’t cut a ribbon in front of them,” Puente said.

The Citizens for Responsible Government in Kansas City and its spokesman, Dan Coffey, have long insisted the city should be focusing on its tired infrastructure needs rather than new projects such as the streetcar. But Coffey says the city, in the way it would increase property taxes, is putting too much burden and risk on homeowners.

The tax would add an estimated \$8 a year in incremental annual increases on the owner of a \$140,000 home and \$15,000 car, peaking at around a \$160 annual increase. That’s a total nearing \$2,000 over 20 years.

In addition to the \$450 million for roads and bridges, the bonds would provide [\\$150 million for sidewalks](#), another \$150 million for flood control, and \$50 million for a new animal shelter and public building improvements to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Several budget forces compel the city's decision to seek approval for the series of bonds, Schulte said.

The city's general budget, which now devotes 76 percent to police and fire, is "cut to the bone" for other services, he said.

Adding to the city's sale tax is not an option, he said, because it needs to preserve sales tax room as a contingency if the city were to lose the ability to assess its 1 percent earnings tax.

Special obligation bonds that are paid out of the city's budget were rejected as an option because each year a new City Council would have to reapprove the payments, which would add too much risk, he said.

The city's \$750 million backlog would grow to \$1.2 billion by 2027 if the work continues to be neglected, he said. The best way out, he said, is the dedicated revenue of a property tax increase to support a series of 20-year general obligation bonds.

The general obligation bond "was the only way to build a big enough program," Schulte said.

Here's how Kansas City got to this point with its roads, Martin said.

The city has more than 6,500 miles of roads, and the city engineer says it would take roughly \$45 million every year to keep up with resurfacing, maintenance and repairs.

The city has been budgeting just over \$10 million each year, paid by a motor fuel tax and some revenue from the city's 1/4 -cent capital improvements sales tax. That amount supports the resurfacing and treatment of about 170 miles of roadway — well below the 540 miles Martin said the city needs to resurface and treat annually to keep ahead of deteriorating roads.

The untended wear and tear speeds up the need for reconstruction, which adds to the constant demand to widen or improve roads, or construct new.

The city can compete for Federal Highway Administration grants, as it did in earning \$2 million to make improvements in Waldo at the intersection of 75th Street and Wornall Road.

Community interests can also press the city for a share of the highly competitive dollars distributed by the Public Improvements Advisory Committee out of the city's capital budget. But of the \$212 million PIAC recommended citywide and in districts for the current fiscal year, less than \$18 million went to road repair and resurfacing requests.

Communities are constantly scouring for these and other resources, said City Councilman Dan Fowler, who knows of the Green Hills Road drama not just as the district representative but as a former resident of one of the road's apartment complexes.

He hadn't lived there long before he was stirred by the smash of a vehicle into a tree and the sight of the fire he could see from his window.

Many of the grant-funded sources the city pursues — if they can be gotten at all — require matching funds, he said. Whatever happens in April, the pursuit would carry on for Green Hills Road and other most-urgent projects.

“Without the bonds,” he said, “it is a long, long process.”

A road fit for a parade

Here’s what a grandly remade street can do, says Karyn Brooke.

The Martin City neighborhood’s annual parade in south Kansas City on the Sunday before St. Patrick’s Day will come rolling down 135th Street, right outside of her store, Sidelines Custom Floral Designs.

No more, if it has rained, will spectators dodge the poorly drained puddles that used to collect on the street’s curb-less, crumbly shoulder.

Kids will be sitting on new curbs. Spectators will watch from 135th’s sidewalks and fresh landscaping — probably in bright sunshine, the way things are going.

“We’re seeing the community we always dreamed of,” she said.

It took several years. The Martin City Community Improvement District pushed the city for PIAC dollars, ultimately getting some \$2.7 million from PIAC and previous city bond funding. And the Community Improvement District merchants raised \$750,000 on their own to further beautify the work.

It’s probably not a coincidence that Martin City has gained a dozen new businesses and seen at least 10 existing businesses expand since 2014, said the Community Improvement District’s executive director, Missy Wilson.

However, Holmes Road, the major artery that carries people through south Kansas City, now has a lot in common with Green Hills Road as it approaches Martin City — a sometimes two-lane road carrying a heavy load of traffic.

The city knows. It’s on the list.

Joe Robertson: [816-234-4789](tel:816-234-4789), [@robertsonkcstar](https://www.instagram.com/robertsonkcstar)

Proposed road and bridge projects for Kansas City's April 4 bond issue election:

103rd Street Bridge over Indian Creek (east of State Line Road)
107th Street from Blue Ridge to James A. Reed
12th Street Bridge over the Big Blue River (between Crystal and I-435 outer road)
135th Street — Wornall to Missouri 150
20th Street Improvements
Admiral Boulevard Improvements
23rd Street Reconstruction from Prospect to Indiana
27th Street Reconstruction from Troost Ave. to Prospect Ave.
31st/Linwood/Van Brunt Intersection
39th Street Reconstruction from Elmwood to Emanuel Cleaver II Blvd.
43rd Street and Pittman Road Bridge (and intersection improvements)
63rd Street Reconstruction from Prospect to Troost
75th Street — Swope Industrial District
Benton Blvd. Bridge over Brush Creek
Blue River Road Landslide Issues — 87th Street to Red Bridge Road
Briarcliff Parkway/NE 42nd Street - North Oak Trafficway to Davidson
Broadway/West Pennway Bridge over KCTRR
Brookside Plaza Street Improvements
Byrams Ford Bridge over Round Grove Creek (between Raytown Road and 47th Terrace)
Cleveland Bridge over Brush Creek
Front Street from I-35 to I-435 (city obligation)
Frost Road Bridge
Gillham Road Corridor Improvements
Grand Boulevard from 14th to 27th Street
Gregory Boulevard — Eastern Avenue to Blue Ridge Boulevard
Hillcrest Road Bridge (200 feet south of Oldham)
Holmes Road Bridge over Indian Creek Rehab (north of 100th Terrace)
Holmes Road Improvements — Minor Drive to 137th Street
J.C. Nichols Parkway Bridge over Brush Creek
Lee's Summit Road from Anderson Drive to Lakewood Blvd. (Hardin Curves)

Lee's Summit Road from Lakewood Blvd. to Gregory
Line Creek Parkway — N.W. 62nd Street to N.W. 68th Street
Line Creek Parkway from N.W. 68th Street to N.W. 72nd Street
Maplewoods Parkway from Missouri 1 to North Antioch
Meyer Blvd. from Wornall to Baltimore
N. Antioch Road Bridge over small creek
N. Brighton — N. Pleasant Valley Road to N.E. 72nd Street
N. Coventry from N.W. 68th Street to N.W. 76th Street
N. Green Hills Road from N.W. 78th Street to Barry Road
N. Green Hills Road from N.W. Old Tiffany Springs Road to N.W. 108th Street
N. Hampton Road Bridge (just south of N.W. Tiffany Park Road)
N. Woodland/Maplewoods Parkway from Shoal Creek Parkway to Cookingham
N.E. 45th Street Bridge
N.E. 79th Street from North Oak to Oak Park High School/Troost
N.E. Industrial Trafficway Bridge and Street Improvements Cherry to Nicholson
N.E. Parvin Road Improvements from N.E. Davidson to N. Brighton
N.E. Pleasant Valley Road from N. Brighton to N. Searcy Creek Pkwy.
North Oak Trafficway Reconstruction
N.W. 108th Street/Shoal Creek Pkwy. from Cosby to Platte Purchase
N.W. 108th Street Single Lane Bridge Replacement
N.W. Tiffany Park Drive Bridge (west of Hampton Road)
Old Bannister Road over Big Blue River and over Blue River Road (2 bridges)
Oldham Road Bridge 500 feet south of KCSRR
Paseo Gateway (Paseo Blvd. and Independence Ave.)
Prospect MAX
Red Bridge Road from Blue River Road to Grandview Road
Red Bridge Road Reconstruction from Holmes Road to Wornall Road
Roanoke Pkwy. Bridge over Brush Creek Deck Rehab
Rockhill Road Improvements
Searcy Creek Pkwy. from N.E. 48th Street to Maple Park Middle School
West Pennway Improvements to Summit Street intersection

Westport Triangle Improvements

Wornall Road Reconstruction from 63rd Street to 79th Street

Wornall Road Reconstruction from 85th Street to 89th Street

Read more here: <http://www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/article136096418.html#storylink=cpy>

Campaign flier on KC's infrastructure proposal understates tax increase

By Lynn Horsley

The main campaign flier for [Kansas City's \\$800 million infrastructure proposal](#) says simply:

“Paying back \$800 million over 20 years will result in a property tax increase of just \$8 more on average each year for the typical homeowner.”

In other words, taxpayers might think that at the end of 20 years, they'll have paid a total of \$160.

Not so fast. The way the campaign for the April 4 election came up with that \$8 number is a big oversimplification. Its use has handed bond proposal opponents a weapon.

What many people are missing is this: That \$8 increase is *cumulative* and *compounding* for 20 years.

For the average homeowner with a \$140,000 house and \$15,000 car, that year-over-year bump means the property tax bill in the 20th year will be \$160 higher.

Figured the more complete way, city spreadsheets show that as the year-over-year increases mount, the total 20-year cost for the average homeowner reaches \$2,026.14. That's about \$100 a year.

This very issue came up Thursday night at a Northland forum on the infrastructure proposal, where Kansas City League of Women Voters President Linda Vogel Smith said some residents believe “the city has published confusing or misleading information about the taxpayer burden.”

Campaign spokesman Steve Glorioso was at Thursday's forum and defended the flier, distributed to tens of thousands of voters. The campaign website is www.progresskc.com.

“A flier is not a treatise,” Glorioso said. “It's not like we can be able to explain in a 4-by-8 square piece of paper, so we used the information that we got from the city, the summary that said they are averages.”

Glorioso insisted the flier is not misleading.

“Kansas City voters are smart enough to know what an average is, and anyone who thinks that they aren't must have a pretty low opinion of KC voters,” he said. “We think they're pretty smart, even if our critics don't.”

City Manager Troy Schulte, also at Thursday night's forum, quickly clarified that the \$8 cost compounds each year. He agreed the total 20-year tax burden would be about \$100 per year for the average homeowner. That's because the city expects to issue about \$40 million in bonds every year for 20 years, so the debt service adds up.

Schulte said the city was not responsible for the campaign materials.

“That's why they hire the fancy campaign person,” Schulte said.

Critics of the city's proposal are raising an outcry about the campaign downplaying the tax burden. They argue it just feeds persistent distrust over city promises and financial

management at a time when the infrastructure ballot questions need 57 percent approval to pass.

“If voters feel that they’ve been hornswoggled, won’t they vote ‘no’?” asks Robert Suhre, a homeowner and retired IT professional who has lived in the Southwest Corridor for 32 years.

In response to taxpayer scrutiny, the city has updated its infrastructure tax information.

Chris Hernandez, communications director for Kansas City municipal government, said the city has provided comprehensive information for voters, about the total tax impact and the potential projects that would be funded, at kcmo.gov/infrastructure.

Glorioso said the campaign also refers people to kcmo.gov/infrastructure in its literature and news releases.

“We’ve been trying to make a complicated issue as simple as we can for people that just want the basics, while providing a deep dive for those who want more information,” Hernandez said.

In an email Wednesday to Suhre, Hernandez conceded some people may not understand the campaign flier.

“It is possible that some voters may conclude that the additional amount to be paid is as simple as taking the average annual increase and multiplying it by 20 years,” he wrote. “However, the 20 year amount is meant to reflect the amount over and above the resident’s current tax bill for that particular year. The total amount for the first 20 years for that particular taxpayer example is a little over \$2,000.”

These official acknowledgments represent a change from the earliest presentations on this bond plan. When Schulte first spoke to a community meeting last Sept. 14 about the bond proposal, he suggested the one-year impact of the tax would be about the cost of a McDonald’s quarter-pounder with cheese, a large fry and a large Coke.

“So it’s the equivalent of one quarter-pounder value meal once per year, and we can fix a lot of infrastructure for the city,” Schulte told the crowd.

Suhre credits Schulte with now being candid about the full tax impact at public forums. But he finds the campaign literature mentioning only the \$8 increase over time to be grossly misleading.

Patrick Tuohey, Western Missouri field manager of the Show-Me Institute, a libertarian think-tank that criticizes Kansas City as a high-tax city, calls the bond cost estimates “fuzzy math” and says taxpayers need to look at the [cumulative impact over the life of the bonds](#).

“Anyone who talks about an \$8 average annual increase is engaging in financial sleight-of-hand,” he said.

The tax derives from three separate ballot questions: \$600 million for streets, bridges and sidewalks; \$150 million for flood control; and \$50 million for city buildings. The assumption is all three questions will pass. If only one or two pass, the tax impact is lessened.

In all the debates about the city’s proposal, the size of the tax increase has become the greatest source of confusion and criticism. And it could be the deciding factor April 4 on whether the bond authorization passes.

Will voters believe the improvements are worth the cost, or decide taxes have reached a tipping point? Will critics’ use of the problem with the campaign flier succeed in defeating the issue?

As voters consider the costs and benefits of the infrastructure improvements, key points should be considered:

- The tax increase builds over 20 years.

Now, the property tax on a \$140,000 house in the Kansas City school district is about \$2,500. That's the city property tax plus library, county and school taxes.

So a \$160 increase, added to that \$2,500 bill at the end of 20 years, would be about 6 percent. The owner of a \$200,000 house and a \$35,000 car would see the tax increase peak at \$250 at the end of 20 years. That's assuming a 5 percent interest rate on the borrowing, although city officials point out interest rates are less than 3 percent now.

- The tax will fluctuate year to year.

The city's calculations, assuming a 5 percent interest rate, show the projected annual increase is often more than \$8. In the program's first year, the tax for the owner of a \$140,000 house and \$15,000 car is expected to go up nearly \$14. Then it goes up another \$13 for two years. It finally tapers off in latter years, because the city expects to pay off other debt.

- The total tax adds up, peaking in 2037.

The annual tax increases for the first 20 years for the owner of a \$100,000 house total about \$1,540. For the owner of a \$140,000 house, it's more than \$2,000. It totals about \$3,185 for the owner of a \$200,000 house.

At Thursday night's forum, several people said they have trouble trusting the city to fulfill its promises. But Northland resident Dave Swiss said he had gained more insight into the tax burden. He said that even with the additional tax, he was leaning toward supporting the plan, to get needed improvements to North Brighton Avenue and other city roads.

Some neighborhood leaders agree the total tax impact has been explained at town halls, and they believe most people understand and support it.

"The question did come up (at several community meetings)," South Kansas City Alliance President Stacey Johnson-Cosby said, noting that Schulte and Finance Director Randy Landes have fully discussed the tax change over time.

Johnson-Cosby, a real estate agent, said she's always concerned about anything that can drive up home prices, but she and other alliance members believe this tax is worth it.

City officials insist they have tailored this to be as affordable as possible, and the tax increase is a small price to pay for critical infrastructure upgrades.

Mayor Sly James says if there were any other way than a property tax increase to pay for \$800 million worth of streets, bridges, flood control and buildings, he would go that route.

"Nobody likes to talk about the tax aspects, but the fact of the matter is there's no way to do it other than that," James told The Star's editorial board. "We can't just sit and ignore it."

Lynn Horsley: [816-226-2058](tel:816-226-2058), [@LynnHorsley](https://www.instagram.com/LynnHorsley)

A comprehensive look at taxpayer impact

Year	\$140,000 House \$15,000 Car		\$200,000 House \$35,000 Car	
	Tax increase each year	Actual amount paid each year	Tax increase each year	Actual amount paid each year
1	\$13.67	\$13.67	\$21.49	\$21.49
2	\$13.27	\$26.95	\$20.86	\$42.35
3	\$12.88	\$39.82	\$20.24	\$62.59
4	\$12.49	\$52.31	\$19.63	\$82.22
5	\$12.11	\$64.42	\$19.04	\$101.25
6	\$11.74	\$76.16	\$18.45	\$119.71
7	\$11.38	\$87.54	\$17.89	\$137.59
8	\$11.03	\$98.57	\$17.33	\$154.93
9	\$10.68	\$109.25	\$16.79	\$171.72
10	\$10.35	\$119.60	\$16.26	\$187.98
11	\$10.02	\$129.61	\$15.74	\$203.72
12	(\$16.85)	\$112.76	(\$26.48)	\$177.23
13	\$9.09	\$121.86	\$14.29	\$191.53
14	\$8.79	\$130.65	\$13.81	\$205.34
15	(\$4.85)	\$125.80	(\$7.62)	\$197.72
16	\$1.81	\$127.61	\$2.84	\$200.56
17	\$8.19	\$135.80	\$12.87	\$213.43
18	\$7.91	\$143.70	\$12.43	\$225.87
19	\$7.64	\$151.34	\$12.00	\$237.87
20	\$7.37	\$158.71	\$11.58	\$249.45
Total	\$158.71	\$2,026.14	\$249.45	\$3,184.54

(In years 12 and 15 the amount drops because other bonds get paid off.)

Here's the confusion

The campaign is using \$158.71 divided by 20 to show the average annual increase of \$8. Which is an oversimplified amount.

$$\frac{\$158.71}{20 \text{ year}} = \$8$$

Here's what you're actually paying each year

The actual total average cost for a \$140,000 house/\$15,000 car would be \$101.30.

$$\frac{\$2,026.14}{20 \text{ year}} = \$101.30$$

The actual total average cost for \$200,000 house/\$35,000 car would be \$159.23.

$$\frac{\$3,184.54}{20 \text{ year}} = \$159.23$$

Big ticket taxpayer, private sector KC area projects

Kansas City's \$800 million infrastructure bond proposal seems like a big deal. And it is. But it's helpful to keep it in perspective by considering other huge projects that both taxpayers and the private sector have taken on in the KC metro area. Many of these other projects did not involve a public vote.



- 1 Kansas City streetcar**, \$100 million, including federal funds, taxpayer-voted funds and city money.
- 2 Grandview Triangle**, \$300 million, a Missouri Department of Transportation project.
- 3 Kit Bond Bridge**, \$245 million, another MoDOT project
- 4 Downtown Power & Light entertainment district**, KC invested \$295 million, plus Cordish private investment
- 5 Sprint Center**, \$276 million, including a \$50 million contribution from AEG, plus rental car and tourism taxes.
- 6 Cerner Bannister Campus**, \$4.45 billion, including \$1.75 billion public assistance.
- 7 Johnson County Gateway Project**, 1-435/1-35/K-10. \$280 million so far, Kansas Department of Transportation.
- 8 Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts**, \$413 million, including \$40 million endowment and \$47 million from Kansas City for a parking garage.
- 9 Kansas Speedway**, \$224 million.
- 10 Truman Sports Complex renovation**, Total \$625 million, mostly taxpayer dollars but teams kicked in \$150 million.

THE KANSAS CITY STAR




- ▶ No tax increase
- ▶ Eliminate mobile trailers
- ▶ Reduce overcrowding
- ▶ Build new elementary school
- ▶ Add classrooms at all high schools
- ▶ Remodel science classrooms

The 38 million dollar bond will build a new elementary school to ease overcrowding, eliminate all mobile trailers in the ISD and advance the Academy model for all ISD high school students by adding and enhancing classrooms for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), Culinary, Vocational and Business coursework.

The no tax increase bond will also mean a modern and more secure entrance at

Truman High School along with added classrooms and a lunchroom expansion. The bond will add culinary and metals classrooms to Van Horn High School, along with a physical therapy area for the Academies and a new competition gym. At William Chrisman High School, the no tax increase bond would pay for two Cisco networking rooms for the Academies, a weight room and remodeled science classrooms.



On April 4, 2017, voters in the Independence School District will be presented with a no tax increase bond issue.

These projects were identified by patrons, parents, students, teachers and community members through our Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) process.

NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- ▶ The new elementary school at 31st Street and Hardy would have a capacity of 450 students.
- ▶ This would ease overcrowding and eliminate all mobile trailers in the district.
- ▶ The new elementary would open in the summer of 2019.



TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL



- ▶ The bond would pay for a new entry and exterior upgrades, addressing safety concerns and modernizing the building exterior.
- ▶ Four additional classrooms would be added, moving four math classrooms out of the mobile trailers and into the school.
- ▶ The bond would expand and remodel the lunchroom, remodel science classrooms and add a physical therapy and athletic training classroom space for the Academies.

VAN HORN HIGH SCHOOL

- ▶ The bond would pay for instructional space for our Culinary Pathway, with five commercial kitchens to be used by students from all three high schools.
- ▶ A new competition gym would be added with locker rooms, concession stands and a mezzanine for wrestling and seating.
- ▶ The bond would add a metals classroom, wood shop, remodel science classrooms and add a physical therapy and athletic training classroom space for the Academies.



WILLIAM CHRISMAN HIGH SCHOOL



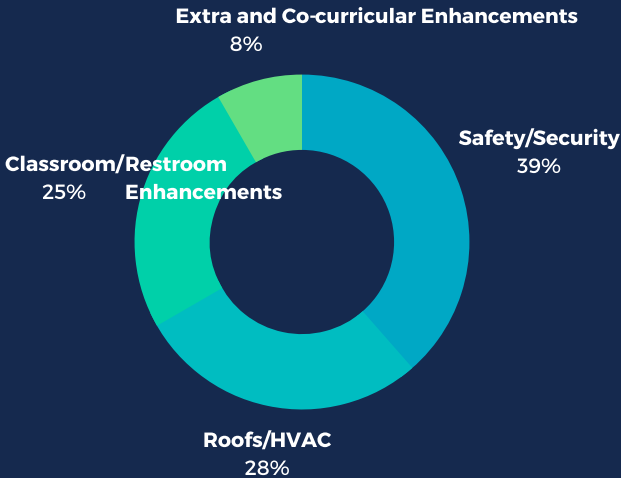
- ▶ The bond would pay for four additional classrooms, including two Cisco computer networking rooms for the Academies.
- ▶ A weight room would also be added, allowing the wrestling room to move to the existing weight room.
- ▶ The bond would remodel science classrooms and add a physical therapy and athletic training classroom space for the Academies.

PLEASE VOTE APRIL 4, 2017



Grandview C-4 School District

No-Tax Increase Bond Issue Proposed Three-Year Plan



Bond Breakdown

The Board of Education approved the placement of a \$9 million no-tax increase general obligation bond issue on the April 4, 2017 ballot for voter consideration.

Funds would be used to pay for renovation and remodeling of existing school buildings.

Initial projects have been proposed in areas such as:

Safety and Security Enhancements

- Fire alarm system upgrades (BV, BG, MC, GHS, GMS, HG)
- Parking lot improvements (MM, GHS, BG, Maintenance)
- Camera system and intercom upgrades
- Phone system replacement
- Fencing and lighting upgrades

Classroom/Restroom Renovations and Improvements

- Industrial Arts area renovation
- Ceiling and lighting upgrades
- Restroom renovations
- “Sports floor” for elementary gymnasiums
- Corridor flooring

Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Enhancements

- Stadium bleachers (GHS)
- Band Instrument replacement
- Gym doors (GMS)
- Electric gym winches (GMS)

Roofing, Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Improvements

- Roofing upgrades/repairs (GMS, GHS, HG)
- HVAC improvements (BV, HG, GMS)
- Windows/solar shades (MM)
- Exterior awnings (MM)
- Grandview Assistance Program building windows/shades and carpeting

Quick Facts:

- Election day is April 4, 2017.
- If passed, the bond will provide \$9 million to fund capital improvement projects.
- Last bond approved by 70-percent of voters was in 2013, in the amount of \$9 million.
- Without this funding, renovations and improvements would either be deferred or be supported through the district’s general fund operating levy. The general fund is used for salaries, benefits, and the district’s daily operations.

The Kansas City Star - March 8, 2017

Kansas City unveils a new strategy to get high-speed internet access to all

The promise of community digital equity in Kansas City remains elusive, despite many programs and initiatives, including the arrival of Google Fiber in 2011. John Sleezer File photo

By Joe Robertson

Kansas City's highly fueled rush to become a gap-less digital community needs a boost.

For all the advantages the city has seized — pioneering Google Fiber networks, stirring a wave of community activism and marshaling its high-tech [Smart City innovations](#) — the rewards still spread unequally across the city.

Hard lessons prodded a new Digital Equity Strategic Plan, [which was passed Wednesday](#) by the City Council's Neighborhood and Public Safety Committee, and goes to the full council Thursday.

The city needs more vigorous tactics to equalize the opportunities high-speed connectivity delivers in education, civic growth, jobs and start-up businesses, advisers to the plan say.

"The original goals came with high fanfare," said Tom Esselman of [Connecting for Good](#), one of the city's nonprofit partners. "But it's not just about providing access." The awareness campaigns, free training and other outreach efforts have not been enough to combat the gap, he said, "and that's been the new learning."

Kansas City is still struggling to close gaps revealed in Google Fiber's assessment six years ago that a quarter of the people in the city did not have high-speed internet connections, and 17 percent were not going online at all.

Of those not online at that time, 28 percent said it was because they did not have a computer or could not pay the fees, and 41 percent said it was not relevant to their lives. Seven out of every 10 children in the Kansas City Public Schools did not have internet access at home.

A city equity strategy "is something we desperately need," said Carrie Coogan, deputy director for public affairs and community engagement at the [Kansas City Public Library](#).

The fact that Kansas City is "known as a national leader in digital equity" is not enough, Coogan said. Attacking the persistent gaps means the city has to make sure "that people know this has to be a priority and why," she said, "and make sure they understand that it's complicated."

Data in the plan show the gap in internet access splits both by income level and in high-minority neighborhoods, said McClain Bryant, the policy director for Mayor Sly James, addressing the committee.

Citywide, only 56 percent of people earning less than \$30,000 a year have internet access at home compared to 91 percent among those earning more than \$30,000. But access among

people in the low-income category drops to 52 percent in the 5th District and 48 percent in the 3rd District, which have higher minority populations than other districts.

The strategic plan will serve as a “basis for action,” she said.

Within six months, according to the plan, the city intends to build out a three-year road map with “quick-win” projects, including funding sources, leadership, return-on-investment projections and criteria for measuring success.

Recommended actions include:

- Mapping and supporting a network of community learning centers among several collaborators to ensure all children have resources within walking distance of their home.
- Providing not just high-speed broadband access in centers, but also up-to-date devices and training.
- Building equity awareness and accommodations into all city departments and public services.
- Adding digital equity as a goal in the city’s Community Health Improvement Plan.
- Considering the digital equity efforts of potential vendors when securing partnerships or contracts.
- Developing and promoting distance working and learning opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Adapting city services and business and zoning regulations so that they promote and encourage online commerce for home-based and small business owners.

Many high-profile efforts have built Kansas City’s digital reputation, including the push from Google, the federal government’s choice to make Kansas City the first site of its [Connect Home program](#), and Kansas City’s Smart City initiatives, all part of [a futuristic vision](#) of what’s to come.

But a codified equity plan is critical, said Aaron Deacon, the managing director of the nonprofit [KC Digital Drive](#), if the impact of the digital city is going to elevate everyone.

“This puts it out in front of the public that this is what we believe,” Deacon said. “These are our priorities ... and the city is on the record.”

Joe Robertson: [816-234-4789](tel:816-234-4789), [@robertsonkcstar](https://twitter.com/robertsonkcstar)



MISSOURI'S TAX FOR CHILDREN: AN INVESTMENT THAT COUNTS

For almost 25 years, the Family and Community Trust (FACT), working closely with 20 Community Partnerships across the state, has had communities as the focal point of efforts to improve the quality of life for Missouri families and children. Each year, FACT (with funding from the Annie E. Casey Foundation) supports KIDS COUNT in Missouri to disseminate information on the well-being of children in our state. In the most recent release of the Missouri KIDS COUNT Data Book (2016), a narrative on [“Why Community Matters”](#) drew attention to the various challenges that children in Missouri face in their surroundings and social environment. This is why FACT and Missouri KIDS COUNT support the communities that have implemented the Missouri Community Children’s Services tax, a legislatively created, voter-approved effort to respond to the behavioral health needs of children, thereby strengthening families and the communities in which they live.

Brief History

In 1993, during the 87th General Assembly of the Missouri legislature, former Senator Harold Caskey sponsored two state laws (RSMo 210.[860-861](#)) that were passed to establish what would come to be called the Community Children’s Services Tax. These laws presented an opportunity for all Missouri counties and the City of St. Louis¹ for a voter-approved property tax to support children 18 years of age and younger. The laws passed with only one nay vote.²

In 2000, the General Assembly expanded this opportunity by passing an additional law (RSMo [67.1775.1](#)) to include a voter-approved sales tax to establish a Community Children’s Services

¹ The City of St. Louis is not a part of any county, and in fact operates as its own county. State law commonly refers to the City of St. Louis as a “city not within a county”.

² This special voter-approved tax law was not the first of its kind in Missouri. In 1969 a state law passed authorizing a voter-approved tax for a Community Mental Health Fund (RSMo 205.977) and in 1989 a state law was passed authorizing a voter-approved tax for Senior Citizens’ Services (RSMo 67.990.1). Of the counties that have passed the Community Children’s Services tax, three counties have the Mental Health tax: Jackson, Jefferson, and the City of St. Louis. Only the City of St. Louis has the Senior Tax. The City of St. Louis is the only community that has all three taxes.

Fund. This law passed without any nay votes, expanding the type of levy and coverage to children 19 years of age and younger.

These taxes, after approval by a majority of voters, are specifically designated to fund services to protect the well-being and safety of children, to strengthen families, and to promote healthy lifestyles among children and youth, with a focus on behavioral health.³

These statutes together prescribe basic requirements but also allow for local control. Local governmental authorities, whether it be the County Commission, or through a local ordinance, prescribes the makeup of the governing board and its responsibilities, in accordance with the statute. For the property tax, the governing board is responsible for administering and expending all funds. In this case, the funds are maintained by the locale's county treasurer. For the sales tax, the funds are managed by the Missouri Director of Revenue and held in a special fund by the Missouri State Treasurer.

In November 2016, Jackson County was the latest to pass a Community Children's Services Tax. There are now nine counties (i.e., St. Charles, Lincoln, Boone, Franklin, St. Louis County, Lafayette, Jefferson, Jackson and the City of St. Louis) that have passed either a sales or property tax levy on behalf of children and youth.

The citizens of these communities have made an explicit commitment to improving the lives of children through what is often an unpopular ask for voters—a tax. Missouri KIDS COUNT and FACT applaud these communities of voters whose collective voices on behalf of children are manifest through this tax and what it does. The following section includes brief summaries of each of the eight communities that have implemented the tax along with inspiring stories illustrating how the tax is changing the lives of children.

Significance

The establishment of the Community Children's Services Fund has fundamentally changed the way in which children's behavioral health is addressed in Missouri. Although there are some restrictions regarding the services that can be provided with the fund,⁴ in general, local administrative entities have the autonomy to decide which services are provided in their county. Each county is responsible for identifying needs and gaps, monitoring utilization, and assessing the impact of the services provided.

Before the Community Children's Services Fund, the services available to address children's behavioral health were limited and fragmented. Thanks to the fund, collaborations among service providers, agencies, organizations, and schools have emerged, creating more efficient systems of care. Instead of competing for resources, people are working together to find solutions. The fund has fostered collaborations that are systematically reducing previous barriers to care.

³ The authorizing legislation for the property tax includes the following uses [\[RSMo 210.861.4\]](#): (1) Up to thirty days of temporary shelter for abused, neglected, runaway, homeless or emotionally disturbed youth; respite care services; and services to unwed mothers; (2) Outpatient chemical dependency and psychiatric treatment programs; counseling and related services as a part of transitional living programs; home-based and community-based family intervention programs; unmarried parent services; crisis intervention services, inclusive of telephone hotlines; and prevention programs which promote healthy lifestyles among children and youth and strengthen families; (3) Individual, group, or family professional counseling and therapy services; psychological evaluations; and mental health screenings.

⁴ The tax cannot be used for transportation or for inpatient medical, psychiatric or chemical dependency services.

Behavioral health is an essential component of overall well-being. It can dictate whether a child can become a productive adult that contributes to his or her community. The counties that have established the Children’s Services Fund understand that investing in child behavioral health is investing in the future of their communities. If you are interested in learning more about why it is important to invest in children’s behavioral health, we have included links to resources at the end of this article.



Conclusion

“Local dollars, local kids, local oversight” are six words that capture the unique value of the Community Children’s Services Tax. All decisions, from voter approval to fund allocation, are made at the local-level. The tax is unique in that it gives each county the ability to customize how funds are used depending on the particular needs of the community. The Community Children’s Services Tax is not intended to supplant or to diminish the critical role that state dollars and agencies must contribute to our children’s health. The needs are countless and the resources are limited for children’s behavioral health—even in communities with dedicated revenue. The communities that have implemented this tax are fully aware that it cannot solve all the social distress, but rather see it as the starting point to begin developing systems of care that are effective, cross-cutting and contextualized.

To the leadership in these counties that put the Community Children’s Services Tax on the ballot, to the voters who approved this tax, and to the executive directors and boards who manage and fund services, Missouri KIDS COUNT celebrates your commitment to children. To any counties considering a Community Children’s Services Tax, there are eight outstanding directors and boards from which to learn. Even without the tax in place, we encourage counties to contact fund leaders to learn about best practices and effective interventions and preventions.

We want to personally thank the leaders of each tax entity—Bruce Sowatsky, Jama Dodson, Ghada Sultani-Hoffman, Tiffany Dehn, Cheri Winchester, Annie Foncannon, Connie

Cunningham, and Kelly Wallis—for their efforts in helping us write and edit this article, and for serving as an example to other communities for how to collaborate, address shared challenges and build effective systems of care for children.

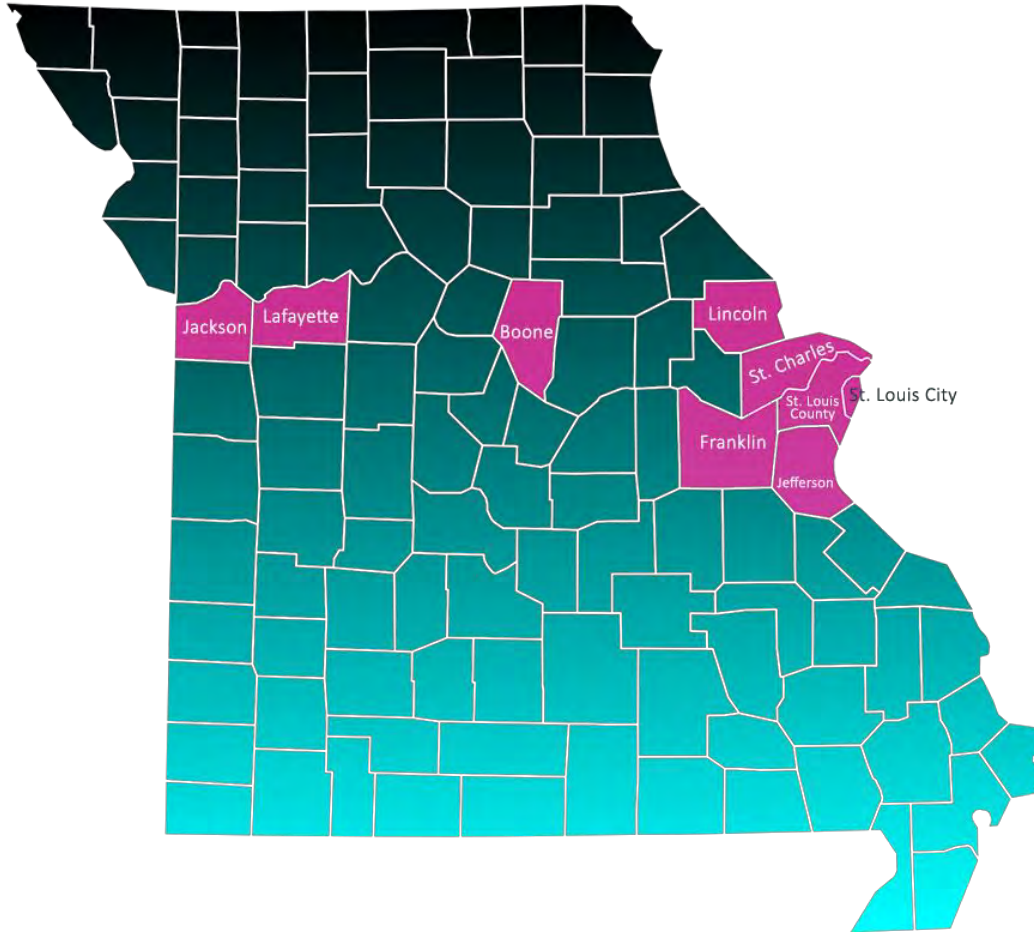
Finally, we want to acknowledge the foresight of the Missouri legislature. In 1993, when this law was passed, the legislature understood the power of community support in children’s lives, but likely did not anticipate all of the benefits flowing to children and their communities from this tax. It serves as an effective gateway to individual children, to providers, to families and to the community at large, offering training, education, collaboration, expertise and connectedness. We thank the Missouri legislature on behalf of Missouri’s children for their ongoing support for this local tax opportunity.

Resources

Learn more about the impact of children’s behavioral health by visiting the websites and reading recent Missouri research below:

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention—[Children’s Mental Health Report](#)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration—[Caring for Every Child’s Mental Health](#)
- American Academy of Pediatrics—[Promoting Children’s Mental Health](#)
- HIDI Health Stats, Missouri Hospital Industry Data Institute—[Building Resilience Around Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences: Identifying High-Risk Communities in Missouri and Kansas](#)
- Washington University—[Nurturing During Preschool Years Boosts Children’s Brain Growth](#)
- Washington University—[Poverty Linked to Childhood Depression](#)

The following map highlights areas in Missouri that have implemented a tax to support children. Click on the county or City of St. Louis to see important tax facts for the 9 counties with the tax, and to read inspiring stories about how the tax is improving the lives of children in each of the counties that have implemented the tax.





Learn Their Stories
kclinc.org/blackhistorystories

