

2026 Legislative Priority Statement

Mission: We create a community where all enjoy life and feel at home.

Vision: The City of Lawrence – supporting an unmistakably vibrant community with innovative, equitable, transparent, and responsible local government.

To realize our Vision for Lawrence, we endeavor to achieve important strategic outcomes. The City's strategic plan outcomes represent what our City is in the business to do and what we plan to accomplish with our community. The outcomes are organized under the following headings: Unmistakable Identity; Strong, Welcoming Neighborhoods; Safe and Secure; Prosperity and Economic Security; and Connected City. For more information, please visit the City's website at lawrenceks.org.

The Lawrence City Commission supports legislation, programs, and funding mechanisms, at the state and federal level that further the City's strategic plan and align with League of Kansas Municipalities 2025 Statement of Municipal Policy. Specifically, we support the following priorities:

1 We support legislation that helps low income and marginalized populations, such as Medicaid expansion and an increase in minimum wage.

2 We advocate for state and federal programs and state and federal funding to help local communities address housing shortages across all segments of the community, including low and moderate income housing and those who are unhoused.

3 We believe strongly that local spending and taxing decisions should be left to local officials representing the citizens that elected them.

4 We request that the Legislature enact a state law that prohibits any organization that receives state funding, including municipalities, from transporting any individual experiencing homelessness across county lines and leaving the individual in the other county, unless the sending organization has received specific assurances in advance of the transport from the destination county that services will be available to that individual.

5

The city relies on a stable and high-quality workforce to deliver vital services. The city supports efforts to improve the competitiveness of public employment and benefits to attract and retain professional public servants and to support their physical and mental health. One example is: The City asks the Legislature to reduce the vesting period from 15 years to five years for public safety employees who participate in the Kansas Police and Fireman's (KP&F) Retirement System Plan so municipalities can better attract qualified people for critical public safety positions.

6

Programs and support to develop greater environmental resilience and sustainability and the development of advanced/renewable energy.

7

Support policies and funding for economic development and growth. In particular tools and funding for extension of infrastructure for land development for workforce housing and industrial development.

8

Increased funding and statewide capacity for mental and behavioral health and treatment of addiction.

