

SOUTHEAST KANSAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

MARCH 2021 NEWSLETTER



Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission

News

March 2021

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About SEKRPC

Our Mission

At SEKRPC our goal is to improve the quality of life in Southeast Kansas by providing the tools to create and retain jobs and increase the services available in our communities

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Executive Board Members

Executive Director: Matt Godinez

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Lorie Johnson - Cherokee County
Tom Hugunin - Coffey County
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Paul Westhoff - Neosho County
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John Weseloh - Woodson County
Jody Hoener - Member-At-Large

SEKRPC Wins Five CDBG Awards

Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission is pleased to announce it has received notification that a cumulative \$2,685,745 in grant funds have been awarded to region communities from the Kansas Department of Commerce Community Development Block Grant funds. These funds will provide assistance to address quality-of-life issues within five communities.

The City of Chetopa, Labette County, has received \$600,000 to use in conjunction with other funding to make improvements to the city sewer system. The City of Independence, Montgomery County, has received \$700,000 to use in conjunction with other funding to make improvements to their city sewer system. The City of Coffeyville, Montgomery County, has received \$574,320 to use in conjunction with other funding to improve sidewalks within the city. The City of Fredonia, Wilson County, has received \$261,425 to use in conjunction with other funding to improve their storm-water drainage system. The City of Toronto, Woodson County, has received \$550,000 to use in conjunction with other funding to improve the city's water system.

The Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission is thrilled for our communities and the opportunity to enhance the quality of life throughout southeast Kansas. We appreciate the continued confidence and support from our communities in us to write and administer the CDBG grants for them. We enjoy being a continued support system for communities in improving southeast Kansas.

The CDBG program administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce provides federal funds to local governments for the development of viable communities by addressing their housing, public facilities and economic development needs. To be awarded funds, local government units must meet at least one of three program objectives:

- The grant will benefit low- and moderate-income persons
- The grant will prevent or eliminate slums and blight
- The grant will resolve an urgent need where local resources are not available to do so

The CDBG funds are one of the Department of Commerce's primary tools in supporting the state's small, predominantly rural communities.

2021 Spring Virtual City Clerks and Municipal Finance Officers Association of Kansas Conference

The week of the ninth, the PPMC will be hosting a conference via Zoom for the City Clerks and Municipal Finance Officers Association of Kansas (CCMFOA) Institute and Master Academy, which both offer continuing education and professional development for CCMFOA members. In addition, self-paced sessions will be offered throughout the month of November for years 1-3. In previous years, more than 170 city clerks from across Kansas have gathered in Wichita to attend the Institute and Master Academy to participate in sessions regarding budgeting, communicating trust, community partnerships and resiliency. Though this year will look a bit different, the conference will be just as informative. To earn their professional credentials, city clerks must complete a minimum of 120 hours of continuing education. The PPMC is proud to support the work of city clerks across the state, and commends them for their dedication to public service. To learn more, contact Morgan Barnes at morgan.barnes@wichita.edu or (316) 978-6535. SEKRPC News | 1

SEKRPC Welcomes a New Planning and Development Consultant

Amber Dean has joined the Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission as a Planning and Development Consultant. Amber was previously the grant writer, building inspector and code enforcer for the City of Cherryvale.

Amber has experience in writing numerous types of grants and is great asset to our organization and the area communities. Amber has previously written and won grants in the areas of law enforcement, fire and EMS, wildlife, street, parks and recreation, and more.

Amber will be working on Community Development Block Grants in the areas of infrastructure, community facilities, and commercial rehab as well as working on smaller grants to help our communities in as many ways possible.

The Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission is thrilled to have Amber and her knowledge on our team. The Southeast Kansas Regional Planning

Commission is also thrilled about the opportunities that this allows to help improve the quality of life within southeast Kansas.

Amber currently lives in Cherryvale, she has been married to her husband for eleven years and they have four sons who keep them very busy. Ambers husband the Public Works director for the City of Cherryvale and their sons are ages thirteen, eleven, and twins who will be two in April. Amber enjoys spending time with family and enjoying outdoor recreation in her spare time.



Project Spotlight

Girard Street Project



The City of Girard was awarded \$600,000.00 in Community Development Block Grant, Community Facilities funds to complete a street project in the city. The Kansas Department of Transportation and the City of Girard contributed \$833,820.00 in matching funds.

The project addressed street improvements along a portion of K-47 ranging from the western City limits to the eastern City limits, excluding the intersection of K-47 and Summit St, and the railroad right of way. The project included mill and overlay of the entire stretch and radius minus the excluded areas. This entailed 2-inch mill and overlay for approximately 7,497 feet. The width of the project was from the toe of curb to toe of curb. The

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existing curb and gutter remained in place. The project handled the construction of ADA ramps at the intersections with sidewalks that had not had ADA ramps constructed. The curb and gutters for the radius of the intersections that have ADA ramp construction will be reconstructed. Additionally a trench drain located at the intersection of K-47 and Ozark that is part of the street was replaced with drain pipe that will discharge approximately 1200 linear feet north of K-47. There was an existing gas and water line that was adjusted to construct the storm drain. The project began in August 2019 and was completed around August of 2020.

Tourism Spotlight

Crawford County



Along an old military trail and old Jefferson Highway, Crawford County is the home of the nation's only gorilla mascot, the Chicken Wars, Kansas Crossing Casino, and a retired Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall replica that once toured the country.

Outdoor enthusiasts have recreational opportunities in a habitat unlike anywhere else in the state: old mining pits returned to nature throughout numerous Mined Land Wildlife Areas. Crawford State Park is one of the state's oldest man-made lakes, while Bone Creek Reservoir is one of the youngest.

A women's protest ("Amazon Army") and publications based in the area forced changes for worker rights. That pioneer, coal miner and bootlegger spirit is on display at Crawford County Historical Museum, Girard History Museum and Miners Hall Museum, and celebrated at numerous annual festivals including Little Balkans Days.



Photo Courtesy Katherine Spigarelli of Friends of Crawfordd State Park



Numerous event spaces are used to host national conferences, expos, intimate weddings, reunions, and touring performers. The largest location, the Plaster Center, is an indoor football arena that also hosts national indoor track & field championships, or can be converted to host a 1,000-person banquet space or a 400+ booth expo.

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Grant Opportunity Available

KDOT Cost Share Program



The KDOT Cost Share Program provides financial assistance to local entities for transportation projects that improve safety, support job retention and growth, improve access or mobility, relieve congestion and help areas across the state improve the transportation system.

The Cost Share program is one of KDOT's most flexible funding opportunities for communities, allowing communities to apply for assistance with a wide range of highway, local road, bridge, rail, airport, bicycle, pedestrian and public transit projects – as long as they can provide at least a 15 percent local cash match. KDOT funds are used exclusively to match construction costs for these projects.

The Kansas Joint Legislative Transportation Vision Task Force recommended the Kansas Department of Transportation look at ways to leverage state funding with local and private funding for projects related to job growth and retention.

The Cost Share Program provides financial assistance to local entities for construction projects that improve safety, leverage state funds to increase total transportation investment and help both rural and urban areas of the state improve the transportation system.

Requested funds must be within the range of \$35,000 (min) to \$900,000 (max).

Construction projects addressing important transportation needs such as promoting safety, improving access or mobility and improving condition or relieving congestion.

All transportation projects are eligible, including roadway (on and off the state system), rail, airport, bicycle/pedestrian and public transit.

Projects typically will be administered by a local unit of government. Non-governmental applications also will be considered.

A minimum of 15% non-state cash match is required. Additional consideration will be given to project applications that commit more than the minimum required match amount.

Candidate projects should include investments providing transportation benefits and are not eligible for other KDOT programs. Candidate projects may receive additional consideration if they support economic growth or aid in the retention or recruitment of business.

Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis beginning Monday, March 1, 2021 through Friday, April 9, 2021. General selection criteria includes: economic development, local contribution, safety, regional priority, and letting within the fiscal year it is awarded. Geographic distribution will also be considered during project selection.

The KDOT Cost Share Program opens twice yearly: in the spring and again in the fall. The SEKRPC would be a great tool in creating a strong application for your community for the KDOT Cost Share Program.

Contact Taylor Hogue at taylor@sekrpc.org or Amber Dean at amber@sekrpc.org if you are interested in applying or need more information.

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Visit our new website at www.sekrpc.org to see programs and services we offer, projects we have worked on, events in the area and more!

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