

# City Mission and Budget Priorities

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In February and March of 2002 the City Council conducted a series of work sessions to review the City Mission and determine if any changes should be made. Council members looked at the current mission statement and the mission statements for several other cities and governmental agencies. In the end, the City Council developed a new City Mission, along with a Vision Statement and Citywide Goals. The City Council believed that a Vision Statement would give citizens and employees an idea of the long-term directions the Council wished to steer the City of Topeka. The Council believed it was important to communicate not only the current mission, but what the City of Topeka could be and look like in the future. The Community Goals are broad statements of direction for City Departments and employees to work towards. They also provide insight into the value system of City government. Together, these three elements provide a cornerstone from which City Departments can make their strategic plans. The Mission, Vision, and Community Goals are stated below. The Mission, Statement and Goals were reviewed, but not officially revised in 2006.

## **Mission**

To provide excellent city services so that our citizens may thrive in a safe and healthy community.  
(February 19, 2002)

## **Vision Statement**

The City of Topeka will serve as the regional center for economic development, recreation, health care, and education while providing a highly livable City for all. (February 19, 2002)

## **Community Goals**

(March 26, 2002)

1. Develop a vigorous, strong economy and stimulate growth in the city.
2. Provide safe, stable and vibrant neighborhood environments for Topeka citizens.
3. Provide excellent cultural and recreational opportunities for the region.
4. Provide the highest quality municipal services at a reasonable cost.
5. Encourage progressive community development by both the public and private sectors.
6. Value diversity and ensure fair treatment for all.

## **Council Priorities**

The City Council is to set budget priorities by the third Tuesday in May. The City Manager is to submit the budget based on those priorities by the first Tuesday in July. Since 2000, the Council has followed a process of each member ranking a set of separate priorities, and then aggregating the scores for an overall ranking. For the 2007 budget, the City Council followed a different methodology to arrive at priorities. In May of 2006, the Mayor and Council members participated with a facilitator in a consensus building session to discuss priorities for the community. The following core goals were identified for the next three to five years:

- Reducing Crime
- Improving Quality of City Services
- Stabilizing the City's Tax Base and Reducing the City's Debt Burden
- Promoting Economic Development
- Managing Growth

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- Recognizing and Promoting Equality in the Community

The group also identified investment priorities for the City. The four top investment priorities over the next three to five years include:

- Infrastructure Improvements (including street, gutter, curb, sidewalk, stormwater drainage, and bioengineering projects)
- Police and Crime
- Economic Development Initiatives (including Downtown Revitalization and Arts and Culture)
- Code Enforcement

Other investment priorities identified by not ranked as highly as the above were traffic flow improvements, beautification enhancements, fire department, mental health, and parks and recreation. Initiatives for city staff were the final area for which the group established priorities. These priorities were grouped into four major areas:

- Improving the quality of customer service provided by City employees
- Improving communication by City staff
- Reviewing the efficiency of city government to ensure tax payers are getting the most value for their taxes and fees
- Improving the City's planning process

Although the City Council never formally adopted the above items, they served as the priorities for the development of the City Manager's proposed budget.