

## **A Motion to Adopt Resolution 26-01 GAAP Waiver**

**Moved:** The Governing Body of the City of Benton adopt Resolution 26-01, GAAP Waiver (attached).

**RESOLUTION NO. 26-01**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A REQUEST THAT THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTS AND REPORTS  
WAIVE THE REQUIREMENTS OF K.S.A. 75-1120a(a)**

**WHEREAS** the City of Benton, Kansas, has determined that the financial statement and financial reports for the year ended 2025 to be prepared in conformity with the requirements of K.S.A. 75-1120a(a) are not relevant to the requirements of the cash basis and budget laws of this state and are of no significant value to the Benton City Council or the members of the general public of the City of Benton and

**WHEREAS** there are no revenue bond ordinances or other ordinances or resolutions of the municipality which require financial statements and financial reports to be prepared in conformity with K.S.A. 75-1120a(a) for the year ended 2025.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Benton City Council of Benton, Kansas, in regular meeting duly assembled this 20<sup>th</sup> day of January 2026, that the City Council requests the Director of Accounts and Reports to waive the requirements of K.S.A. 1120a(a) as they apply to the City of Benton, Kansas for the year ended 2025.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Council shall cause financial statements and financial reports of the City of Benton, Kansas to be prepared on the basis of cash receipts and disbursements as adjusted to show compliance with the cash basis and budget laws of this State.

**THIS RESOLUTION** adopted this 20<sup>th</sup> Day of January, 2026.

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Tyler Gottschalk, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Joyce Casady, City Clerk

## **A Motion to Adopt Benton City RHID Policy**

**Moved:** The Governing Body of the City of Benton adopt the RHID Policy submitted by city staff and consult (attached).

## RHID POLICY COMPARISONS

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1		<b>Augusta</b>	<b>El Dorado</b>	<b>Wellington</b>	<b>Ark City</b>	<b>Salina</b>	<b>Benton</b>
2	<b>Financing - Pay-as-you-go only</b>	✓	✓	Pay-as-you-go for homes above \$200,000.	Prefers Developer funded but may consider bonds for right project.	Pay-as-you-go for homes above \$200,000.	✓
3	<b>Housing Type Requirements</b>	Meets the housing needs from the 2020 Augusta Housing Study and as determined by the Governing Body.	Meets the housing needs from the El Dorado Housing Study and Kqansas requirements.	Meets the needs identified in the Wellington Housing Needs Study as well as specific types of owner-occupied housing with certain absorption rates.	Must address a documented housing shortage. Promote residential development, particularly affordable housing.	Must have a median price of units at \$250,000 or less; or 30% of all units priced below \$225,000.	Meets the housing needs from the 2025 Benton Housing Study and as determined by the Governing Body.
4	<b>Fees</b>	Subject to the adopted fee schedule for economic development.	Subject to the adopted fee schedule for economic development.	All proposals shall be accompanied by a \$750.00 non-refundable evaluation fee.	A non-refundable application fee of \$1,500.	Subject to the adopted fee schedule for economic development. Fees may be waived for certain low-income properties.	Application fee for an RHID shall be a non-refundable fee of \$1,500 with the formal submittal of any RHID application.
5	<b>Guarantees</b>	Pay-as-you-go funding only so no guarantees required.	Pay-as-you-go funding only so no guarantees required.	Pay-as-you-go funding only no guarantees required. Yes for city funded.	Pay-as-you-go funding only no guarantees required. Yes for city funded.	Pay-as-you-go funding only no guarantees required. Yes for city funded.	Pay-as-you-go funding only so no guarantees required.



# **CITY OF BENTON**

## **POLICY ON RURAL HOUSING INCENTIVE DISTRICTS (RHID)**

### **I. GENERAL**

K.S.A. 12-5241 *et seq.* (the “RHID Act”) authorizes most cities and counties in the State of Kansas (the “State”) to create special districts with the objective of encouraging the development and renovation of housing in areas of Kansas which experience a shortage of housing and assist in financing of public and some private improvements to support the special districts.

The City of Benton is authorized to designate a rural housing incentive district (a “District”) based on a Housing Needs Analysis, and subject to the adoption, publication and approval of the Housing Needs Resolution as described herein. Said Housing Needs Resolution, along with a copy of the Housing Needs Analysis, shall be sent to the Kansas Secretary of Commerce (the “Secretary”) for approval. After the City has received written approval from the Secretary, the Governing Body shall adopt a plan which may include one or more projects, for the proposed District. The length of any individual project cannot exceed 25 years.

The City may consider use of an RHID to reimburse Developers for eligible project costs, including acquisition of property, site preparation, sanitary and storm sewers, drainage improvements, street improvements, water mains and extensions, and residential improvements to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor or higher of structures greater than 25 years old used primarily for residential purposes and located in a central business district as approved by the Secretary. Revenues derived from the District will be used on a pay-as-you-go basis to pay for, or reimburse, the eligible project costs within the District.

The District is taxed in the same manner as if the property was not located within the District. The property tax revenues related to the difference in the assessed valuation at the date the District was established, and the current assessed valuation of the District are allocated to pay the eligible costs of the project.

### **II. POLICY**

It is the policy of the City to consider establishment of an RHID under the following criteria:

- a) Where the Developer pays for the cost of eligible RHID improvements (at no cost to the City) and agrees to be reimbursed on a pay-as-you-go basis for such costs from the City’s receipts of RHID revenues.
- b) Assures taxpayers that the City is not financing any already viable projects.
- c) Assures the taxpayers that the City is not financing an unreasonably high profit margin for developers.
- d) Assures taxpayers the development provides safeguards committing the developer to complete the project.
- e) Demonstrates a need for public financing.
- f) Promotes residential development.
- g) Focuses on projects that would otherwise not be financially feasible without the RHID.
- h) Expands the housing stock.
- i) Increases diversity in housing types.

- j) Contributes to the City's overall tax base.

### III. DEFINITIONS

Statutory definitions are essential in understanding the RHID Act. Certain significant definitions contained in the RHID Act are as follows:

**“City”** means the City of Benton: which has a population of less than 60,000, as certified to the Secretary of State by the Director of the Division of the Budget on the previous July 1 in accordance with K.S.A 11-201, and amendments thereto; which may have a qualified census tract within the City.

**“County”** means any county organized in accordance with K.S.A. 18-101 *et seq.*, and amendments thereto: (1) with a population of less than 85,000, as certified to the Secretary of State by the Director of the Division of the budget on the previous July 1st in accordance with K.S.A 11-201, and amendments thereto; or (2) for purposes of certain projects within a qualified census tract, “county” includes any county with a qualified census tract located within the county. For this policy, the “County” is Butler County.

**“Developer”** means the person, firm or corporation responsible under an agreement with the Governing Body to develop housing or related public facilities in a District.

**“District”** means a rural housing incentive district established in accordance with this act.

**“Governing Body”** means the Board of County Commissioners of any county or the Mayor and Council, Mayor and Commissioners or Board of Commissioners, as the laws affecting the organization and status of cities affected may provide. For this policy, the Governing Body means the City of Benton Mayor and City of Benton City Council.

**“Secretary”** means the Secretary of Commerce of the state of Kansas.

**“Qualified Census Tract”** means an economically distressed urban area that is a qualified census tract as defined and designated by the United States department of housing and urban development.

**“Real Property Taxes”** means and includes all taxes levied on an ad valorem basis upon land and improvements thereon.

**“Taxing Subdivision”** means the county, the city, the unified school district, and any other taxing subdivision levying real property taxes, the territory or jurisdiction of which includes any currently existing or subsequently created rural housing incentive district.

### IV. STATUTORY PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING AND FINANCING A RURAL HOUSING INCENTIVE DISTRICT

**Establishing a District.** Pursuant to the RHID Act, the Governing Body of Benton is authorized to designate one or more Districts within the City. Prior to making a designation, the Governing Body must conduct a Housing Needs Analysis to determine what, if any, housing needs exist in the City. After conducting the analysis, the Governing Body shall adopt a resolution (the “Housing Needs Resolution”) containing the legal description of the proposed

District, a map of the parcels of real estate in the proposed District, and a statement of the following findings and determinations (based on the housing need analysis):

- (1) There is a shortage of quality housing of various price ranges in the City despite the best efforts of public and private housing Developers;
- (2) The shortage of quality housing can be expected to persist and that additional financial incentives are necessary in order to encourage the private sector to construct or renovate housing in such City;
- (3) The shortage of quality housing is a substantial deterrent to the future economic growth and development of such City; and
- (4) The future economic well-being of the City depends on the Governing Body providing additional incentives for the construction or renovation of quality housing in such city.

The Housing Needs Resolution containing the above findings and determinations shall be published at least once in the official newspaper of the City. Upon publication, the Governing Body shall send a copy of the Housing Needs Resolution to the Secretary to approve the findings contained therein. If eligible residential improvements in a central business district are contemplated, a certification of the age of the structure shall be submitted to the Secretary by the governing body along with the Housing Needs Resolution. If the Secretary agrees with the findings, it will advise the Governing Body in writing and the Governing Body may proceed with establishment of the District pursuant to the RHID Act. If the Secretary does not agree with the findings, the Secretary will advise the Governing Body in writing of the specific reasons for the disagreement.

Once the Secretary's approval has been received, but prior to establishing the District, the Governing Body shall adopt a plan for housing and public facilities in the District (the "Development Plan"). The Development Plan may include plans for one or more projects, but no individual project shall exceed 25 years in length. The Development Plan shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (1) The legal description and map of the proposed District.
- (2) The existing assessed valuation of the real estate in the proposed District, listing the land and improvement values separately.
- (3) A list of the names and addresses of the owners of record of all real estate parcels within the proposed District.
- (4) A description of the housing and public facilities project or projects that are proposed to be constructed or improved in the proposed District, and their location(s).
- (5) A listing of the names addresses and specific interests in real estate in the proposed District of the developers responsible for development of the housing and public facilities in the proposed District.

- (6) The contractual assurances, if any, the Governing Body has received from the developer or developers, guaranteeing the financial feasibility of specific housing tax incentive projects in the proposed District.
- (7) A comprehensive analysis of the feasibility of providing housing tax incentives in the District as provided in the RHID Act, which shows the public benefits derived from the District will exceed the costs and that the income from the District, together with other sources of funding, will be sufficient to pay for the public improvements that may be undertaken in the District. If other sources of public or private funds are to be used to finance the improvements, they shall be identified in the analysis.

Before adopting the Development Plan and designating the District, the Governing Body shall adopt a resolution (the “Public Hearing Resolution”) stating that the Governing Body is considering such action. The Public Hearing Resolution shall provide notice that a public hearing will be held to consider the adoption of the Development Plan and the designation of the District. The notice information contained in the Public Hearing Resolution shall include the following:

- (1) The date, hour, and place of the public hearing.
- (2) The legal description and map of the proposed District, the existing assessed valuation of the real estate in the proposed District listing the land and improvement values separately, a list of the names and addresses of the owners of record of all real estate parcels within the proposed District, and a description of the housing and public facilities project or projects that are proposed to be constructed or improved in the proposed District, and their location(s).
- (3) A summary of the contractual assurances by the developer and comprehensive feasibility analysis.
- (4) A statement that the plan is available for inspection at the office of the clerk of the City at normal business hours.
- (5) A statement inviting members of the public to review the plan and attend the public hearing on the date announced in the resolution.

The date of the public hearing shall not be less than 30 days or more than 70 days following the date of the adoption of the Public Hearing Resolution. The Public Hearing Resolution shall be published at least once in the official newspaper of the City or county with the final publication not less than one week and not more than two weeks preceding the date fixed for the public hearing.

A certified copy of the Public Hearing Resolution shall be delivered to the board of education of any school district levying taxes on property within the proposed District. For this policy, the school district is USD 375. A certified copy of the Public Hearing Resolution shall also be delivered to the Board of County Commissioners of the County.

At the public hearing, a representative of the City shall present the proposed Development Plan, identifying and explaining each project in the District. The Developer(s) of the District shall be identified and present, either in person or by their representative. Following the presentation, all interested persons shall be given an opportunity to be heard.

After the completion of the public hearing, the Governing Body may adopt the Development Plan for the District and may establish the District by ordinance (the "RHID Creation Document"). The area of the adopted District must be the same as the area designated in the Public Hearing Resolution. Any addition to the District or substantial change to the Development Plan requires the same procedure for notice and public hearing as the original District. The RHID Creation Document establishing the District shall be null and void if, within 30 days following the conclusion of the hearing:

- (1) The Board of Education levying taxes on the property determines by resolution that the proposed District will have an adverse effect on the school district; or
- (2) the Board of County Commissioners of the County determines by resolution that the proposed District will have an adverse effect on the County.

**Acquisition of Property.** Any Governing Body that has established a District may purchase or otherwise acquire real property. However, property may not be acquired by eminent domain, but relocation assistance payments shall be provided in accordance with K.S.A. 12-1777 to any tenants required to be relocated as a result of a project in the District. Any property acquired by a city or a county under the RHID Act may be sold or leased to any Developer under conditions agreed to prior to the adoption of the Development Plan. The City and the Developer may agree to additional terms, but if the developer requests to be released from any obligations agreed to and embodied in the Development Plan, the release shall constitute a substantial change and is subject to the notice requirement.

**Taxing of the District.** All the taxable tangible property in a District is assessed and taxed in the same manner that the property would be assessed and taxed if located outside of the District with all ad valorem taxes paid to and collected by the county treasurer in the normal manner. Each District constitutes a separate taxing unit for the purpose of the computation and levy of taxes. Beginning with the first payment of taxes which are levied following the date of the approval of a District shall be divided as follows:

- (1) ***Taxes on base value:*** From the taxes levied each year by or for each taxing subdivisions on property located within a District, the County Treasurer first shall allocate and pay to each such taxing subdivision all of the real property taxes collected which are produced from the current assessed valuation of the real property located within the District which is equal to the total assessed value of the real property on the date the District is established (i.e. on the effective date of the RHID Creation Document).
- (2) ***Taxes on incremental value:*** Any real property taxes produced from the portion of the current assessed valuation of real property within a District in excess of an amount equal to the total assessed value of such real property on the effective date of the establishment of the District shall be allocated and paid by the County Treasurer to the treasurer as follows: The amount shall be paid to the treasurer of

the city and deposited in a special fund of the City to pay the cost of housing projects in the District including the payment of principal of and interest on any special obligation bonds issued by the City to finance, in whole or in part, the housing project.

- (3) If the District costs have been paid before the completion of a project, the City may continue to use the money for any purpose authorized by the RHID Act until the project is completed, but not exceeding 25 years from the date the District was established (i.e. on the effective date of the RHID Creation Document).

The purpose of ad valorem taxes levied for the District is to pay the cost of a project including principal and interest.

**Transmission to the Clerk.** After adoption of the plan, the Clerk of the City shall transmit a copy of the description of the land in the District, a copy of the RHID Creation Document adopting the Development Plan, and a map indicating the boundaries, to the clerk, appraiser, and treasurer of the County and to any taxing subdivision which levies taxes on any property in the District. The county appraiser shall certify the amount of increase in the assessed valuation of the property within the District to the County Clerk yearly, on or before July 1.

## **V. FUNDING METHOD**

The Governing Body will consider creation of a RHID where eligible costs will be financed on a pay-as-you-go basis from incremental ad valorem tax revenues generated within the RHID. The City will not issue special obligation bonds for RHID improvements.

Under pay-as-you-go, the Developer finances any and all approved costs of the District and will be reimbursed as the tax increment is received. The City will reimburse the Developer on a pay-as-you-go basis for such costs from the City's receipt of RHID revenues.

## **VI. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT FEES**

RHID funds may not be used to pay development fees. Project management fees may be financed through RHID revenues only if the need for such financing is established through analysis of financial information showing that private funding is not available to pay such costs based on a market rate of return on investment. If allowed, project management fees paid through RHID revenues must be documented as actual costs incurred.

Once an RHID is established, ongoing monitoring will ensure compliance with development plan, developers' agreement and RHID policy. The City will ensure adherence to project timelines and conditions, maintenance of property and infrastructure, proper use of RHID proceeds, compliance with zoning and city codes. The City is allowed access to the work site during reasonable times to inspect construction of projects as well as review engineering and architectural plans.

The City may require the Developer or Applicant, to reimburse the City for out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the City for expenses related to review of application, legal counsel, financial advisor, consultants, engineers to ensure compliance the this policy.

**Administrative Fees**

In addition to any other RHID development and petition costs, an application fee for an RHID shall be a non-refundable fee of \$1,500 with the formal submittal of any RHID application.

**VII. TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

In granting an RHID, the City Council may impose any terms or conditions as deemed necessary to fulfill the purpose and intent of this policy.

**Inaccuracies or Misstatements by Applicant During Process**

Any inaccuracy, misstatement of, or error in facts by the applicant during any part of the application, review, or approval process may render the project proposal null and void and may cause repeal of any development assistance provided by the City.

**Representatives not Personally Liable**

No elected or appointed official, agent, consultant or representative of the City shall be personally liable to the Developer in the event of any default or breach by any party.

**Insurance**

Developer will provide proof of all insurances required in the State of Kansas and City of Benton for their company as well as anyone doing work in the development upon creation of the RHID.

Adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026 by the Benton City Council.

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Tyler Gottschalk, Mayor

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Joyce Casady, City Clerk

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_

REPORT DATE	MEETING DATE	PREPARED BY
1/14/2026	1/20/2026	M. Engels

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## NOTES:

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### Administration:

Continue working on RHID policy. Trying to get this cleared with Rob and delivered to you this meeting. We have modeled after other local RHID policies in order to be competitive. The next step after policy approval is to let potential developers/landowners know of the new financing option.

Caught up on inspections and 2025 permit organization. 55 permits in 2025 with 7 new build/remodels. This is staying on track with previous years.

The first week of the month included update calls with the contractors that work on our equipment/streets/sewer/pumps. This was outlining our yearly schedule.

Beginning of the year staff meeting. Touching base on projects, plans, and a chance for me to get feedback from the crew.

Scheduled a meeting with Dustrol to find out about where they buy dump trucks. I'll get some more research done before I bring you an acquisition request.

In office I will spend the next few weeks analyzing 2025 budget performance and dissecting line items to look for improvement opportunities in 2026.

### Maintenance:

We have our contractors scheduled to continue our sewer and street repair.

Drainage work at QuikShop will be coming up. We have locates in and will be making a mess for a few days.

I will be bringing you options for water tower maintenance. This may include painting, lighting, hatch and hinge repair.

We will be working with Automation Designs to keep our telemetry system updated. We feel like there is some more potential within our infrastructure that we can utilize when it comes to lift station tracking and notifications.

The utility flags all over town are for the drainage study.

We are around 40% done with our pond table project. The deadline to submit expenses for the grant on this is March of 2027 so we will be way in front of it. I will also submit another grant request for the 2026 round.

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# Sales/Use Tax 2025 Report





# Legislative Update

January 12, 2026 | Report from KMU Legislative Liaisons Kimberly & Joshua Svaty

## At A Glance

Kansas Legislature returns with budget, property tax relief and affordability as top issues.

OBBA compliance and rural health care will also be key session issues.

Supreme Court hearing oral arguments on an issue that will likely drive legislative action this session or next clarifying the power of the Governor's office.

## Looking Ahead

### January 12

Legislative Session begins

### January 13

Governor Kelly delivers the State of the State speech

### January 21

KMU Day in Topeka

### January 26

First legislative deadline – last day for individual legislative bill requests

### Kimberly & Joshua Svaty

KMU Legislative Liaisons

Gencur Svaty Public Affairs

[gencursvaty.com](http://gencursvaty.com)

[@gencursvaty](https://twitter.com/gencursvaty)

Kimberly

913.486.4446

[kimberly@](https://twitter.com/kimberly@gencursvaty)

[gencursvaty.com](http://gencursvaty.com)

Joshua

785.472.7794

[joshua@](https://twitter.com/joshua@gencursvaty)

[joshuasvaty.com](http://joshuasvaty.com)



## Week One

### The Legislative Session Opens

Ferris Bueller is quoted as saying, “Life moves pretty fast.” He then goes on to say, “If you don’t stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.” The first part of this quote is an accurate description of what the Legislative session will be like in 2026. It will definitely move “pretty fast”. In fact, the weeks leading up to the start of the 2026 Legislative Session, which begins today, Monday, January 12, have moved “pretty fast”. As for the second part of the quote, it will likely be a consequential legislative session that will leave its imprint on the State.

This is the second year of the biennium for the legislature so bills that were introduced in the 2025 Legislative Session can carry over to the 2026 Session if they were not defeated or passed last session. There were 415 bills introduced last year in the Kansas House and 301 bills introduced in the Kansas Senate. At least eleven different constitutional amendments on a wide range of topics from property taxes to filling Supreme Court vacancies were proposed last session.

While prefiling bills can happen, unlike some other states, pre-filing a bill is more symbolic than strategic. Thus far ten bills have been pre-filed for the 2026 session, but when the gavel comes down it is likely that another 500-plus bills will be introduced. There will be fewer than the 715-plus bills from last session but still enough to create challenges for bill drafting, scheduling hearings in committees, debating bills, and moving them to the other Chamber. The number of bills that move in the legislative process will be limited by the number of hours in the day and days in the legislative calendar.

### Framing the Session

2026 is a significant election year. All five constitutional offices are up for election as are all 125 members of the Kansas House of Representatives. There will be a few Senate seats up for election as the seats are now represented by someone other than the person elected in the 2024 election. This is due to retirements or position changes. The four Congressional offices are also up for election, as is the U.S. Senate seat currently held by Dr. Roger Marshall. The forthcoming election is driving the speed of the session and will drive the session agenda as lawmakers look to demonstrate their ability to deliver on their promises to constituents and Governor Kelly, who is in her final year of office, looks to firm up her legacy.

Governor Kelly is scheduled to deliver her final State of the State address Tuesday, January 13 at 7:00 p.m. before a Joint Session of the Kansas House and Kansas Senate. Major themes of the speech are expected to include the fiscal situation of the State, encouraging legislators to continue to focus on balancing the budget, maintaining a lean but effective state workforce, and advancing sound tax policy. It is also expected that the Governor will focus her remarks on an issue that has been a cornerstone issue since she was a State Senator, “The Office of Early Childcare” which is supposed to be a wraparound agency dedicated to the youngest Kansans. In addition, the Governor will speak to advancement of a long-term water plan and associated

# DAY AT THE CAPITOL

JANUARY 21, 2026

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funding will be addressed that will dovetail with the work of the Legislatively created Water Taskforce. Its first report is due to the Kansas Legislature by the end of the month. It is also likely that a listing of economic development wins during the Kelly Administration. This will include securing the Kansas City Chiefs stay in the Greater Metropolitan area of Kansas City for at least the next thirty years.

The State of the Judiciary will be delivered this week by the newly installed Chief Justice Eric Rosen. With the retirement of the former Chief Justice Marla Luckert, there is a vacancy on the Kansas Supreme Court that will be filled through the Judicial Nominating Process. The final selection will be made by the Governor. Going forward it is possible that the system of selecting Supreme Court Justices could change pending the outcome of the August Primary Election in Kansas which will see a ballot initiative to elect Kansas' Supreme Court Justices.

## Legislative Priorities

Legislative leaders have framed a legislative agenda for the session. Affordability issues have been the defining topic in Fall 2025 elections in other states. Kansas will be no different. Below is an outline of some of the topics that will be put forward by Republican leaders in the House and Senate:

- Increasing affordable housing stock, be it single family homes or improving rentals
- Further reduction in State spending by at least another \$200 million from last year's approved budget
- Property Tax relief
- Last year, there was a significant change to the State's income tax structure. Lawmakers will be watching the impacts closely to ensure the planned flat tax and ultimate march to zero can continue.

Social issues will also be addressed ranging from the highly publicized ban on smart phones in schools, to anti-DEI initiatives, to transgender matters, and to further review the foreign ownership concerns as a follow-on to last year's ban on foreign ownership and investment in Kansas.

House and Senate Democrats will strive to drive home affordability concerns while working to advance or protect Governor Kelly's fiscal policies and legislative agenda. They will have a push to support state social programs such as SNAP, childcare, housing, and healthcare under the affordability umbrella as well as property tax relief for Kansans, similar to Republican leaders.

There will be a package of a dozen bills introduced in the Committee on Government Efficiency in the Senate and House that will ensure State laws comport with federal laws that were changed after passage of the federal One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBA). OBBA also created a federal rural health care funding initiative. In the first of two buckets of federal funding, Kansas will be sent \$222 million with up to \$1.5 billion over five years to support rural health care initiatives. The Kelly Administration has a working group that applied for the funding and seeks to direct the disbursement. The Legislature wants to create a Legislative task force to direct funding and program compliance.

With more than 1200 bills being introduced by the end of the two-year biennium, most every topic will have an associated bill with many topics having several related bills such as STAR Bonds. Other issues that will be high on the agenda this session include:

- Energy affordability - ensuring low-cost energy rates and ensuring that data center growth will not artificially inflate electric rates

- Methods to reduce or eliminate certain drivers of property tax increases which went up in many Kansas communities in 2025 by 15-20%
- Changes to Right-of-Way statutes concerning reimbursement for certain infrastructure relocation and addressing franchise fee parity.
- Clarification of railroad right of way and utility infrastructure deployment.
- The STAR Bond program expiring this year driving the need for program review.
- The Kansas City Chiefs announcement along with the further wooing of the Kansas City Royals to Kansas will likely need legislative action to create a Sports Authority similar to Jackson County, Missouri.
- Sports wagering and online gaming continue to grow at exponential rates. Lawmakers will review the statutes to ensure fairness to the state. Kansas' take is minimal by comparison to other states.
- FEMA changed its state grant program causing a \$5 million dollar gap in funding. The Adjutant General will ask for the State's assistance to cover the funding hole.

Although this may not be a legislative issue this session, the Kansas Supreme Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments this Friday, January 16 at 9:00 a.m. on a case brought by Governor Kelly against the Kansas Attorney General. The question is whether the Governor can bring an action against the Federal Government independent of the Kansas Attorney General. There is a lot to this question. The case at hand stems from the Governor seeking to challenge the Federal Government's halting the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) if the State didn't turn over the personal information of SNAP recipients. A similar order was issued to the Kansas Secretary of State to turn over to the federal government the personal information of those registered to vote in Kansas which was ultimately done. Whether the Governor can take an independent action against the federal government has become an issue in the Gubernatorial campaign as other state elected officials, who are also running for Governor, are challenging the Governor's ability to do so. The outcome of this case will likely be the subject of clarifying legislation later this session or next year.

## Budget

The budget is the only constitutionally required act the Legislature must undertake each session. The Legislature is retaining the process it began last session of crafting the State's budget. In prior sessions, the Governor crafted the budget and the Legislature made adjustments to

it. However, this session, both Chambers will work their respective versions of the budget in tandem rather than as was done last year when the budget started in the House and then it was worked by the Senate.

The fiscal year in Kansas begins on July 1. Generally, revenues are meeting projections. Some areas of revenue are coming in higher than projected and others lower areas are lower than projected (like corporate income tax). The State was projected to be in the red by FY 2028, but federal health care money coupled with a reduction in school children going through Kansas schools has pushed out the budget deficit a year or two. That said, the budget deficit still looms, and all lawmakers are urging restraint and tightening of the belt. \$200 million in state spending reductions were enacted last year, and legislative leaders have targeted a similar reduction for this coming fiscal year.

## Campaign Finance

Kansas lawmakers passed legislation in the 2025 session that doubled campaign contribution limits for all officeholders and in some cases removed limits. The impact was immediate with the House Republican Campaign Committee bringing in nearly \$1 million in campaign contributions since the end of last legislative session. This is double the amount of the previous best fundraising year. Other caucuses saw similar fundraising increases.

By January 10, 2026, the candidates running for statewide office had to file their campaign finance reports. Candidates want to demonstrate strong fundraising success to project campaign and candidate viability. Four of the many candidates for Governor successfully raised nearly \$1 million for their race. While state budgets may be tightening, campaign contributions amounts are pushing to new heights.

## Closing

The Senate will begin the session with a redistricting push. The House does not have the necessary votes to pass a new Congressional district map; therefore, it will not take up the issue. The budget will be a primary driver in addition to the various bills to provide property tax relief.

Communication will be frequent and regular, but don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Dwight D. Eisenhower State Office Building  
700 S.W. Harrison Street  
Topeka, KS 66603-3745

Calvin E. Reed, P.E., Secretary  
Cheryl Cadue, Chief



Phone: 785-296-3566  
Fax: 785-296-8168  
KDOT.PublicInfo@ks.gov  
<https://www.ksdot.gov>  
Laura Kelly, Governor

Dear Stakeholder,

On behalf of the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), we are pleased to invite you to participate in the K-254: Rock, Webb & Greenwich Road Interchange Study.

The study is the continuation of work done along K-254 and will take a focused look at analyzing alternative improvements to address the need for an interchange, overpass, and/or connector roads on K-254 at the intersections of Rock, Webb & Greenwich Roads. It will also explore potential modernization improvements related to capacity, current and future development, and safety. As a stakeholder interested in this study, we would like you to complete this survey: [tinyurl.com/k254-RWG](https://tinyurl.com/k254-RWG), by **February 19, 2026**.

Your input will help the study team to better understand the history of the corridor and to identify the community's vision for the future. Throughout the study, your feedback will be useful as KDOT works to select improvement recommendations for the study area.

The first open house will be held from 5:00-7:00 p.m. on February 5, 2026, at Wichita Northeast Magnet High School, 5550 N Lycee St, Bel Aire, KS 67226. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jeff Sims, at [Jeff.Sims@ks.gov](mailto:Jeff.Sims@ks.gov) or 785-296-2093, or Alicea Thompson, [KDOT.Engagement@ks.gov](mailto:KDOT.Engagement@ks.gov) or 785-296-6044.

We appreciate your input on the survey and look forward to your feedback to continue improving K-254.

Sincerely,

K-254: Rock, Webb & Greenwich Interchange Study Team



Mr. Engels,

I would like to thank you and Benton for your participation in the K-254 Corridor Management Plan. It was my pleasure working with you, our partners, and project team toward the goal of a safer and better K-254.

I recently received some exciting news about the plan. The plan was selected for a 2026 ACEC KS Engineering Services Award in Studies, Research and Consulting Engineering Services category.

It was a real team effort to deliver the plan and we could not have done it without you. Please share the good news about the award winning plan for K-254.

Thank you for everything!

Sincerely,

David Seitz

**2026 Benton Day**

# **CORNHOLE** *Tournament*

**Sponsored by the Benton Police Department**

**April 25, 2026**

Made with PosterMyWall.com

Getty Stock



**Prizes for 1st and 2nd Place**  
**Prizes based on entry fees collected**

**Registration \$20 per team double elimination**

**Pre-registration required. Contact Chief Kichler to register.**  
**Onsite registration and fee payment begins at noon on day of event.**  
**Event limited to 25 teams.**

**CALL 316-778-1818 | [kkichler@bentonks.org](mailto:kkichler@bentonks.org)**



3rd Annual

# KID'S FISHING DERBY

@ The Benton Pond



Reel in the  
Big One!

Saturday  
May 30th

**OPEN TO KIDS AGES 16 YEARS & YOUNGER**

**Prizes for Biggest and Most Fish Caught**

**Watch Facebook for Updates and More Information**

**Fishing Starts at 9 am**

**Winners announced around 11:30**

**Our FB page Police Department Benton Kansas**

## Executive Session motion

Moved:

That the governing body recess into executive session IAW K.S.A. 75-4319(b) to discuss non-elected personnel matters/attorney client privilege. Further, required to attend this session is the Mayor, City Attorney, City Administrator and the City Council. Further, that the governing body return to open session at \_\_\_\_\_PM