

2022 Local Agenda

Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce

Organizational Priorities

- **Growth and Taxes** – The Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce believes quality growth in population, jobs and wages should be a top priority for local governing bodies. In addition to a robust economy there must be an emphasis on keeping a tight rein on increasing local taxes and adding to local debt. The goal of the corresponding priorities below should slow the rate of local tax increases and show constrain on new capital investments. Consideration of increases in local budgets and tax rates should only be contemplated in cases when they promote long-term growth and demonstrate a measurable outcome for creating growth in population, jobs, and wages.
- **Strategy Alignment** – The Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce believes Manhattan’s No. 1 asset is the continued strategic alignment between the business community, local government, and Kansas State University. As such, the Chamber believes the strategies of these entities for growth and economic prosperity should be in alignment, so all organizations are working in the same direction for successful outcomes.
- **Entrepreneurship** – The Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce believes the community must prioritize entrepreneurship to maintain long-term economic success. As such, the organization supports the development of a facility to serve as the “front door” for the community’s entrepreneurial efforts in a walkable district that can house the community’s entrepreneurship support organizations. Additionally, the Chamber supports the creation of funds including loans, equity, and grants from private and public sectors to encourage more start-ups. The Chamber supports the City’s DEI Task Force’s recommendation that a percentage of these funds should be earmarked for disadvantaged businesses, as well as support organizations to assist entrepreneurs through all phases of development.
- **Housing** – The Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce supports the completion of the City of Manhattan housing study. The Chamber supports the use of workforce housing funds from the 2022 economic development sales tax be used for its intended purpose of workforce housing, which can include a variety of market rate solutions. To impact the workforce housing challenge with as much resources as possible, those funds should not be used for housing solutions where other public funds may be available or are being deployed.
- **Child Care** – The Manhattan Area of Chamber of Commerce believes childcare to be one of the biggest hinderances to citizens entering/reentering the workforce. The Chamber support the efforts of the childcare task force that has been established and their efforts to develop unique solutions by private and public sector partners to address the issue in the community.
- **Business Park Expansion** – The Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce believes lack of available commercial and industrial property are hindering our ability to attract new jobs and private commercial investment. As such, a plan to expand industrial parks in both west and east Manhattan should be created and acted upon by the local governing bodies.

Growth Initiatives

- **Infrastructure** – The City of Manhattan should prepare a conceptual framework for long-range public infrastructure and services plan to accommodate new development and growth within the Urban Service Area and Blue Township Urban Growth Area. The plan should evaluate alternative growth scenarios to accommodate 10–20-year growth, as well as creating a current inventory of land with adequate public facilities and services for 5-10 year growth. Strategic infrastructure improvements and extensions should be identified and placed in the City’s Capital Improvement Plan to provide new areas of the region for housing and commercial development.
- **Annexation** – The Chamber believes that the City of Manhattan should create a clear path for property owners in the Urban Service Area and Blue Township Urban Growth Area to request annexation, even in cases of island annexation. The process should be done in collaboration with the Riley County and Pottawatomie County Commissions. Additionally, the City of Manhattan should have a clear plan or guidance policies identifying financing mechanisms to pay for additional infrastructure and service costs incurred as part of annexation agreements which could include annexing additional property.

Growth Initiatives continued

- **Infill Housing Development** – The Chamber supports developing and implementing various strategies to encourage the redevelopment of housing in the core of Manhattan to create more inventory and encourage the retention of young professionals. This includes considering options such as rehabilitation, reconstruction, and up zoning.

Economic Development

- **Sales Tax Funds from 2002 and 2012 Economic Development Sales Tax** – The City of Manhattan should set aside any funds left at the end of FY 22 from the 2002 and 2012 economic development sales taxes for economic development projects as described in the Chamber Core Principles document.
- **Sales Tax Funds 2022 Economic Development Sales Tax** – The proceeds from the 2022 economic development sales tax should be used in a manner consistent with the ballot language including 20 percent of proceeds being for jobs. Additionally, the 70 percent allocated to infrastructure should be prioritized for projects that promote growth in population, jobs, and incomes.
- **Incentives** – While the Chamber encourages and supports all private investment in the community, the use of incentives in attracting or expanding non locally owned businesses should not be considered an economic development activity unless there would be clear unrefuted evidence from an independent third party that more than 50 percent of its activity would be new to the community or that there is a clear enhancement to the community's quality of life.
- **Flint Hills Regional Council** – The Chamber has partnered with the Flint Hills Regional Council in a manner that encourages that organization to implement the regional components of Region Reimagined. The Chamber supports continued support of the FHRC by governing bodies to implement this economic development strategy as well as the organization's mission to create a place that communities can collaboratively support and add vitality to Fort Riley.
- **Military Relations** – The Chamber will support the ongoing good will with leadership of Fort Riley to allow for seamless integration into the community for both service members and families.
- **Inter-Governmental Support Agreements (IGSA)** – The Chamber supports the development of IGSA's that add value to both local government entities and Fort Riley.

Special Projects

- **Aggieville** – The Chamber supports continued implementation of the Aggieville Vision and supports unique developments that make the district viable as a full-time commercial district with activity and opportunities throughout the day.
- **Edge Collaboration District** – The Chamber supports completion of the North Campus Corridor to allow the newly branded district to grow into a major economic development asset and job generator.
- **Art and Light Museum** – The Chamber supports the use of STAR bonds for the Art and Light Museum and the development of the facility as an anchor for tourism and talent attraction/retention in Manhattan.
- **MATC Expansion** – The Chamber supports continued growth of the Manhattan Area Technical College including expansion of technical education for high school students and programs to support local employers.

