



2024 Business Symposium: City Update

The Leavenworth City Commission has hired Scott Peterson as the next City Manager. Peterson begins his new role November 4. The City Manager oversees the day-to-day management of staff and reports directly to the City's five elected City Commissioners. Peterson is a 2011 K-State graduate and holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Kansas. Peterson comes to the City of Leavenworth with more than 10 years of leadership positions at municipal governments including his most recent role as City Administrator of the City of Knob Noster, Missouri. His experience encompasses the management and oversight of public works, public safety, utilities, parks and recreation, budgeting and finance, grants management, planning and zoning, code enforcement, public affairs and other government functions.

Construction of Fourth Street/Kansas Highway 7 through downtown Leavenworth is scheduled to be complete by mid-November. The roughly \$3.1 million project will improve infrastructure along Leavenworth's downtown thoroughfare from Choctaw to Seneca streets. Work included is a 2-inch milled removal of existing pavement replaced with two inches of asphalt and reconstruction of intersections in concrete. The project will have all new curbs and sidewalks, storm sewer and three new traffic signals that comply with accessibility guidelines.

This year, the City invested \$1.8 million into Leavenworth streets for the 2024 Pavement Management Program, completed in April and May. There were 23 sites including Shrine Park Road from McDonald Road to Eisenhower Road, 10th Avenue near Walmart, and repaving of the Richard Allen Cultural Center Parking lot. The program used a mill and overlay process in which the top 2 inches of driving surface is milled and repaved.

In 2025, the City of Leavenworth has budgeted \$130,000 for a street corridor study along Seventh Street that will identify uses and business types that are appropriate for this area and engage business owners to gather their opinions. The study was funded partly through a grant from the Mid-America Regional Council and the remainder will come through sales tax.

The City of Leavenworth added to the quality of life and health for those who live and work in the City. In 2024, the City opened its first courts dedicated to pickleball at Cody Park. Eight new courts are available for public use. The project also included a new basketball court. In addition, the skate park at Sportsfield was renamed the Cody James Clark Skatepark and a project to add a bowl feature is underway.

The Leavenworth Convention and Visitors Bureau launched a website dedicated to dog-friendly places for owners and their pets to visit the City. A list of local businesses that welcome furry guests is available on the page, along with hotels open to canine travel. Businesses that would like to be included in the list can contact the CVB. Website available:

<https://www.visitleavenworthks.com/visitors/page/dog-friendly-businesses-and-adoptions>

The CVB also provides grants for events that will bring tourism to the City. Grants up to \$5,000 are available. Applications are reviewed February 1 and August 1 of each year. For an

application and further information, see the CVB website:

<https://www.visitleavenworthks.com/visitors/page/tourism-grant-application>

The CVB also provides the only curated, tourism-activity focused calendar for Leavenworth, coordinating with local organizations and partners regularly on everything from newly-announced VIVO karaoke to Gators and Games Open Board Game Day. Contact the CVB to include your tourism-related event on this vital resource:

<https://www.visitleavenworthks.com/visitors/page/calendar-events>

As part of the City's Camp Leavenworth festival, the City coordinated with Leavenworth Main Street to launch the cell phone-friendly web-based app directory. This was the upgraded alternative to the business bulletin board as an effort to bring Camp attendees into local businesses. Main Street reported that this effort was a success that will continue to be built on during the year. The City's CVB Office and Main Street will work together to coordinate available online information and maximize coordinated efforts to grow downtown activity. It will remain available via QR code for mobile devices and on the website:

<https://leavenworthmainstreet.com/main-street-digital-shopping-guide-and-map/>

The City of Leavenworth Economic Development Grant Program provides funds for new and existing commercial, retail, or industrial businesses to develop and redevelop their building. Owners may be eligible for a dollar-for-dollar matching grant up to \$5,000 for single unit locations and up to \$15,000 for multi-tenant locations. Grant monies are awarded to encourage building updates and/or renovations to new and existing businesses. Information available on the City's economic development website: www.LeavenworthKS.org/ed

A pilot program providing grants up to \$30,000 still has funding available. The Business Improvement and Expansion Grant covers eligible expenses to increase ADA accessibility and add a fire sprinkler system to existing buildings. The City of Leavenworth created this program in response to feedback from local businesses. This program ends December 31, 2024 to comply with federal funding regulations with funding first-come, first-serve. Further details and staff contact information available on the website: <https://www.leavenworthks.org/ed/page/arpa-pilot-program-business-improvement-and-expansion-grant>

Up to a dozen site selectors will visit the Leavenworth Business and Technology Park November 1 as part of a Kansas Department of Commerce event. The Kansas City Area Development Corporation (KCADC) will provide tours and key information to promote the Park. LCDC coordinated Leavenworth's involvement and will share Park information with companies after the tour during one-on-one meetings and a group event afterwards. LCDC maintains a website with available Leavenworth industrial and commercial properties for companies considering the City: <https://lvcountyed.org/>

City of Leavenworth partner Grow Leavenworth County Development Corporation re-launched the availability of low-interest loans through Network Kansas. Loans provide gap financing for business start-ups with minimum rates between 4-6%. GLC also provides helpful resources to entrepreneurs through programs and information. GLC will host the upcoming Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge February 25, 2025 for high school students to share their business plans and earn scholarship funds. Leavenworth business owners can serve as competition judges or mentors. Contact the City's Economic Development Office to participate.