



# The Kearney Connection

December 2009

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER FROM THE CITY OF KEARNEY

5th Edition

## Peterson Senior Activity Center Becomes a Reality



The Peterson Senior Activity Center is scheduled to open to the public on January 4, 2010 at the E.K. and Mary Yanney Heritage Park. It will provide space for recreational and leisure activities for citizens ages 50 and older living in Kearney and the surrounding area.

This beautiful and spacious facility is approximately 15,000 square feet and includes a multi-purpose/dining room, lounge, classroom/meeting space, fully equipped kitchen, restrooms on both floors, computer lab, office space, and a large walk-out basement area that will be used for a variety of different activities. The building is fully handicap-accessible. The building also features a large deck and windows on the south side, providing all who visit the facility great views of the lake and Yanney Park. Walkways from the building will provide easy access to fishing, walking trails, paddle boats, labyrinth, the observation tower, the flower garden, and Cope Amphitheater.

Initially the hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday, with expanded hours as programming and special events are developed. Noon meals will be served daily between the hours of 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. with a suggested contribution rate of \$3.50 for persons 60 and older and a set rate of \$5.00 for anyone under 60. Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska is the contracted meal service provider. A beverage bar will be available during normal operating hours.

The Center will provide a place for those who want to relax and socialize, it will also offer a wide range of programs and activities, exercise equipment, special events, and volunteer opportunities for active mature adults, ages 50 and above. An Advisory Board for the Peterson Senior Activity Center has been established. Board members are: Doris Maurer, Bob Kennedy, Carol Reed, Jackie Purdy, and Sue Wright.

The facility is made possible by Pete Peterson, former Kearney resident, with a gift of \$1.5 million and approximately \$656,000 in federal funding secured by Senator Ben Nelson. The remainder is funded by the City of Kearney ½ cent special sales tax and grants and donations in the amount of \$2,350,000.

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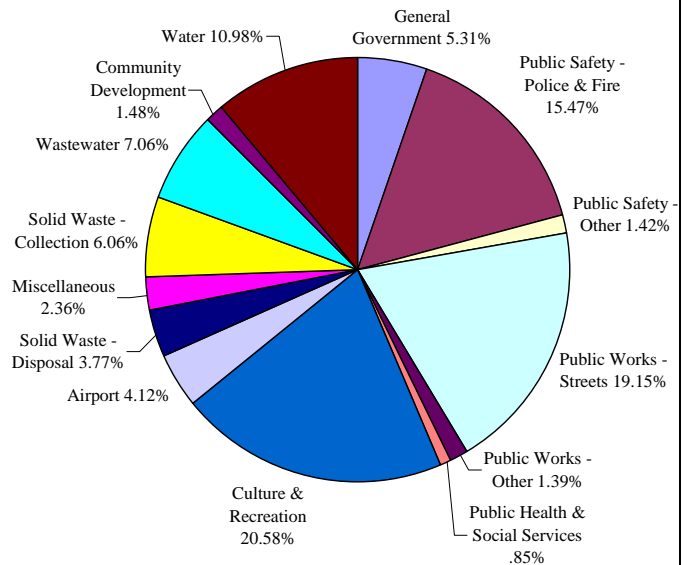


## No Property Tax Increase—Three Years in a Row

On September 8, 2009, after a public hearing, the City Council approved the City's budget document for the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

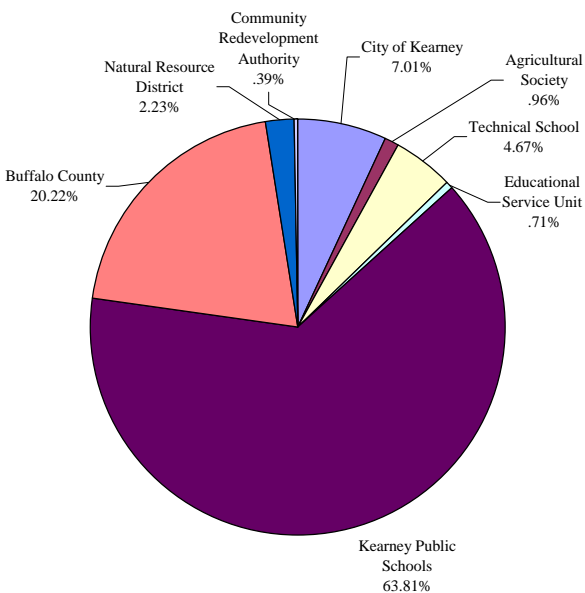
The City's budget for 2009-2010 includes budgeted expenditures totaling \$63,143,819. Budgeted expenditures include \$16,800,136 for personnel, \$17,929,716 for supplies, materials, and contractual services, \$22,909,018 for capital outlay, and \$5,504,949 for debt service.

The City's budget for 2009-2010 includes budgeted revenues totaling \$53,728,646. The \$9,415,173 difference between budgeted expenditures and budgeted revenues will be paid by funds carried over from the prior fiscal year. Budgeted revenues include \$14,266,873 from taxes, \$53,700 from fines, \$325,800 from licenses and permits, \$17,000,679 from charges for services, \$6,063,472 from miscellaneous receipts, \$4,065,832 from bond proceeds, \$8,552,042 from grant proceeds, \$250,000 from special assessments, \$2,456,000 from intergovernmental receipts, and \$694,248 from interest income.



There are many different types of governmental services that the City of Kearney currently provides. The above graph indicates how much of the City's 2009-2010 budget is allocated to each of the City's governmental functions.

Each year, the City of Kearney levies property taxes as a revenue source to pay for a portion of its budgeted expenditures. The 2009-2010 budget includes a property tax requirement of \$2,374,382. This property tax requirement requires a property tax of .14887 cents on every one hundred dollars of taxable property within the City of Kearney. Therefore, the owner of a home valued at \$100,000 can expect to pay \$149 in property taxes to the City for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. This payment is the same amount paid on the same property to the City for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. The graph on the left shows that out of every \$100.00 of property taxes paid by taxpayers for the 2009-2010 fiscal year, \$7.01 is for the City of Kearney.



For more detailed information on the City of Kearney 2009-2010 budget, please visit the City of Kearney website at [www.cityofkearney.org](http://www.cityofkearney.org) or contact the Finance Division at (308) 233-3213.

# Kearney is a Fair Housing City





## Development Update

The City of Kearney has experienced significant development in the past year and will continue to do so in 2010. Cash-Wa Distributing, a food service and convenience store distribution company employing more than 380 individuals in Kearney, has completed a major expansion consisting of a 70,000 square foot cold storage distribution building and additional office space. Tax increment financing was used to extend 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue paving and wastewater infrastructure to serve the project.

The Buckle, Inc., a NYSE company founded in Kearney which has over 380 stores worldwide, approached the City of Kearney in the spring of 2009 with the possibility of constructing a new distribution facility within the city. Various sites were discussed, and the City of Kearney proposed a blend of financial resources to cover the expense of public infrastructure to serve the final site at 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Over \$4 million of water, sewer, and paving improvements are necessary to serve the site. All of these improvements were in the long-range plan for the City of Kearney, and would have been made as the city expanded over the next 5-10 years at the community's expense.



The infrastructure that will be constructed to serve The Buckle distribution center will benefit a large area in southwest Kearney, allowing development to continue in that area at a significantly reduced cost to taxpayers and developers. Substantial completion of the infrastructure is scheduled for July 1, 2010 to meet The Buckle's planned opening of the distribution center. Final completion of the project is expected by September 1, 2010.

The site is within a blighted and substandard area, making The Buckle project eligible for tax increment financing. The City of Kearney has also applied for state funding through a CDBG recovery grant, which has been received, and federal funding through an Economic Development Assistance grant, which is still pending. The City of Kearney and Buffalo County also committed significant resources from a local CDBG grant fund to assist this project. This project would not have been possible without the collaboration of the private and public sectors, as well as government at the local, state, and federal levels.

Additional development will be taking place in south central Kearney in 2010 with the construction of the Younes Conference Center at 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Talmadge Road. This project includes the construction of a 50,000 square foot convention center, which will employ approximately 30 people, and additional parking and landscaping to serve the hotels in the area. A large convention center will help maintain the groups and events that already come to Kearney each year but are outgrowing existing facilities, as well as attracting new events. The conventions that come to Kearney are a significant economic resource for the community. The Community Redevelopment Authority has approved this project for tax increment financing to assist with development costs.

The City of Kearney continues to work with developers, the Kearney Community Redevelopment Authority, Buffalo County, and the State of Nebraska to encourage development which provides jobs, increases the economic vitality of the community, and fits with the long-range vision of the City of Kearney.

## Kearney Regional Airport News

The past year has seen significant changes at the Kearney Regional Airport. The year began with a change of the fixed base operator, which provides charter service and fuel sales for general aviation. Otis Air Service opened their doors in October 2008 and immediately began a renovation of their space. Charter customers and passengers on private flights now enjoy an updated space, complimentary ground transportation, and quick, professional service by Otis staff.



A new entrance to the Airport has also been under construction in 2009. The State of Nebraska and Buffalo County completed a new Airport Road in the fall and landscaping by the City of Kearney followed. New signage to designate the Airport and Business Park is currently under construction.

2010 will bring the renovation and a substantial addition to the Airport Terminal. Expansion of the secured waiting area, a new baggage claim, new restrooms, and a retooled traffic pattern will modernize the Terminal and make flying to and from Kearney Regional Airport a smoother experience. Renovation is expected to be completed in fall 2010.



### ADA Update

In accordance with the Transition Plan ordinance adopted by City Council in October 2008, the City of Kearney continues to evaluate and update policies, programs, and facilities to ensure compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). The most notable improvements this year have been the installation of handicap parking at Harvey Park, Pioneer Park, and Memorial Field; installation of new handicap signage and parking lot striping; and additional curb-cuts along Highway 30, in conjunction with the Nebraska Department of Roads road improvement project. Additionally, collaboration between the City of Kearney and the American Legion Baseball Board will result in the installation of handicap accessible seating at Memorial Field.

The City of Kearney values the citizens of Kearney and welcomes your input and feedback. If you have questions concerning compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, or would like additional information, please contact Shawna Erbsen, Human Resources Director/ADA Coordinator, at (308) 233-3212 or by email at [serbsen@kearneygov.org](mailto:serbsen@kearneygov.org).

## City Website Enhancements

Did you know that you can subscribe to receive notifications involving sanitation, recycling, yard waste, and landfill information including changes in the collection date due to holidays, landfill hours, and compost pickup schedule? Did you know that Council meetings aired on Channel 6 are now available on our website subsequent to the meeting?



There are several other e-services available through our web page which include utility inquiry and e-payment, purchasing accident reports on-line, receiving notification of meeting agendas, job openings, and snow emergency alerts, and submitting code violations. Check out our website at [www.cityofkearney.org](http://www.cityofkearney.org).



## Special Sales Tax Update

In November of 2005 the citizens of Kearney overwhelmingly approved a ½ cent special sales tax increase for the purpose of funding capital improvements and equipment. The special sales tax became effective April 1, 2006. The City received \$3,193,053 during the fiscal year ending September 30, 2009. A list of all the special sales tax projects can be found on our webpage under Finance. The City included special sales tax collections of \$3,200,000 in the 2009-2010 budget for the purpose of funding the following projects:



- RYDE Bus — \$35,000
- Nebraska Firefighters Museum — \$50,000
- Dump Truck for Public Works — \$125,000
- ADA Curb/Ramp/Sidewalk Replacements — \$50,000
- Miscellaneous Street Improvements — \$220,000
- 30th Street, 6th Avenue to Pony Express — Debt Service — \$336,323
- Asphalt Street Replacement Projects — \$110,000
- Gravel Street Program (50% of cost) — \$100,000
- CDBG Revitalization Grant Match (Phase I) — \$150,000
- Library Expansion — \$4,000,000
- Peterson Senior Activity Center — \$1,050,000
- Memorial Field Scoreboard — \$40,000
- Turkey Creek Pedestrian Bridge/Trail Extension — \$175,000
- Kearney Area Children's Museum Building — \$435,000
- Yanney Park Maintenance Building — \$200,000

The City Council and staff are committed to following the Capital Improvement Sales Tax Guidelines and encourage you to participate in the process by submitting capital improvement project suggestions or attend the **Listening Session on February 9, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.**

## 2009-2010 Major Capital Improvements

The City's Capital Improvement Program is a very important tool for local government and citizens to prioritize and plan major capital expenditures for the coming year. These expenditures reflect a commitment to the infrastructure of our community and our ongoing efforts to make Kearney an even better place to live and work. Below are just a few examples of the projects that are scheduled for the upcoming year:

Street	39th Street from Pony Express to Avenue M	\$4,079,000
Street	Central Avenue South of U.P.R.R.	\$600,000
Street	Southwest Kearney Project	\$872,496
Sanitary Sewer	Southwest Kearney Project	\$1,435,661
Water	Southwest Kearney Project	\$1,073,701
Airport	Terminal Parking Lot Resurfacing	\$390,000
Airport	Terminal Renovation	\$750,000

If you have questions regarding any of the above projects or have suggestions for future projects, please contact the City Manager's office at (308) 233-3214 or by email at [citymanager@kearneygov.org](mailto:citymanager@kearneygov.org). You can also visit our website at [www.cityofkearney.org](http://www.cityofkearney.org) to see the monthly update of the Capital Improvement Projects as they progress.



## Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

The City of Kearney and Buffalo County have been working together to build a new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to serve the 50,000 citizens in Buffalo County. The City of Kearney and Buffalo County took the opportunity at the conclusion of the 2008 storm season to assess the overall operations of the current EOC. Local officials focused on the inadequacies of the current EOC and its inability to adequately handle situations the City and County were managing. In January of 2009, a committee of City and County officials was created to plan and design a new facility.

The new facility is partially funded by a Federal Emergency Management Agency grant. The EOC will be located in the basement of the new Buffalo County Justice Center and will consist of state-of-the-art equipment. The EOC will also consist of a new Backup 911 Dispatch Center, Amateur Radio Room, Resource Center, Elected Officials Room, and a Public Information Room for the media to send out information to the public in a more efficient manner. The Emergency Operations Center will be interoperable to state and regional networks and could serve as a regional operations center for any emergency. The anticipated completion date is February 2010.

## On-line Accident Reports

Have you ever had a vehicular accident and needed the police report, but just don't have time to stop by the Law Enforcement Center to get a copy? Now you can get it on-line through the City of Kearney website at [www.cityofkearney.org](http://www.cityofkearney.org). The Police Department recently began using [PoliceReports.com](http://PoliceReports.com) to make accident reports available on-line. The cost is the same as if you picked it up at the Law Enforcement Center and the access is 24/7. Every effort is made to upload the reports within 24 hours after the incident. There can be delays on weekends; however, the reports are readily available in a day or two. Go to [www.kearneyne.policereports.us](http://www.kearneyne.policereports.us).

## CrimeReports.com Provides Information on Activities in the Community

Would you like to be informed of crimes in your neighborhood? You can now get this information on-line by signing up through the City of Kearney webpage. The Kearney Police Department has added [CrimeReports.com](http://CrimeReports.com) as a place you can get information on police activities in the community. Reported incidents are available and posted on a map of the community for the public's information. To get the information, simply go to the [CrimeReports.com](http://CrimeReports.com) web site, click on the State of Nebraska, and select Kearney. Enter the location you are interested in and the crime types.

The information posted on [CrimeReports.com](http://CrimeReports.com) is different from that provided on the City of Kearney web page in that the information on [CrimeReports.com](http://CrimeReports.com) is uploaded daily and deals with the activities that generate a report. The material on the web site is historical and deals with all dispatched activities.



The mission of the Code Enforcement Division is to promote and maintain a safe and desirable community in which to live and work. We help maintain and improve the quality of our community by responding to concerns from citizens. Visit our website and click on **Access Kearney** to report any concerns regarding unsightly and unhealthy nuisances such as weeds, junked or abandoned vehicles, parking violations, etc.



## Kearney Technology Park

Governor Heineman announced September 9, 2009 that Kearney is one of three preferred sites in Nebraska that will be developed “as potential locations for data centers, high tech industries and companies with significant power needs”. In collaboration with the State of Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NEDED), the City of Kearney has selected a site northeast of Kearney at Antelope Avenue and 56<sup>th</sup> Street to develop as a technology park. Towards this end, the City of Kearney has received a grant from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development to assist in planning and marketing efforts. On October 19, 2009 the Kearney City Council confirmed Gensler Architects of New York as their partner, along with NEDED, in this process. The City of Kearney, NEDED, and the Gensler team will collaborate to establish a site master plan and marketing strategy for the technology park by February 1, 2010. The site will then be intensely marketed to data centers and technology industries.



Gensler Architects employs more than 2,100 architects, designers, planners, and consultants, networked across 32 locations, to develop more than 3,000 projects every year. They have offices in North and Central America, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. For the Kearney Technology Park project they have partnered with: HP Critical Facilities, MEP engineers; CMX Engineering, civil engineering services; CB Richard Ellis, real estate consultants; CS Technology, information technology consultants; and SCORR Marketing, marketing and branding team.

The economic development focus of the City of Kearney has always been primarily supporting and retaining existing business and industry and secondarily to promote growth in targeted industries which complement existing businesses and fit into the long-range vision of the community. A technology park can achieve both of these goals. Existing businesses in Kearney have needs for data center sites and will benefit from any additional skilled workforce that will move to the community. The types of businesses that would build in a technology park will not be in direct competition with the core industries in Kearney; expanding the community’s business portfolio to include tech industry as well as education, healthcare, manufacturing, hospitality, and financial services will strengthen the local economy.

### 2008-2009 Building Statistics

Single-Family	68	\$12,124,600
Multi-Family	12	\$3,030,000
Commercial	16	\$28,928,664
Industrial	0	\$0
Commercial/Industrial	6	\$93,000
School	0	\$0
City/County/State	6	\$12,723,000
<b>Total Permits</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>\$56,899,264</b>

(Oct. 1, 2008 thru Sept. 30, 2009)

### Federal Fair Housing Act

The Federal Fair Housing Act protects your right to live where you want. In fact, in any decision regarding rental, sales, or lending, it is against the law to consider race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or family status.

If you think you’ve been denied housing, please call the City of Kearney for information on how to file your claim. You can contact the City of Kearney at (308) 233-3222 or by mail at P.O. Box 1180, Kearney, NE 68848.





The Kearney Connection

### Kearney City Council

Stan Clouse, Mayor  
236-6193

Randy Buschkoetter  
234-5553

Don Kearney  
237-3225

Bob Lammers  
236-5273

Bruce Lear  
234-5354

We're on the web!  
[cityofkearney.org](http://cityofkearney.org)

## Become a Volunteer Firefighter or Fire Explorer

The **Kearney Volunteer Fire Department** is always looking to add more Volunteer Fighters to their department. If you are looking for a way to help the Kearney community, become a Volunteer Firefighter. Following are the basic requirements:

- Citizen of the United States
- Legal resident of the KVFD district for at least 6 months and live within 2 miles of the city limits
- Possess a valid Nebraska State Driver's license
- Must be at least 21 years of age



KVFD also has a **Fire Explorer** program of the Boy Scouts of America for boys and girls between the ages of 14-21 who are interested in a career as a firefighter. As an Explorer you decide what aspects of firefighting you would like to experience. Some possible activities include participating in a Firefighter I course, helping volunteer firefighters at fire scenes, learning how to use ropes, ladders, and other fire/rescue equipment, assisting with fire prevention and safety education programs, and a lot of other hands-on activities and firefighter training.

Applications for Volunteer Firefighters and Fire Explorers can be picked up at Fire Station 1, 2211 Avenue A or call (308) 233-3226 for more information.

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