

Public communication in two rural Kansas communities:  
A rhetorical analysis of local government messaging

by

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## **Abstract**

This study investigates the communication strategies employed by local government officials in two rural Kansas communities to foster development and build trust with constituents. Rural America faces unique challenges, including population decline and economic disadvantages (Radin, 2022). Effective communication is crucial for addressing these issues and promoting sustainable development.

The research examines two rural Kansas communities, comparing the communication patterns of their local governments. It explores the role of government messaging in addressing community development, collaboration, and resources. Using three different frameworks that address time and tone, community capitals, and communication roles, this study provides an analysis of social media and news releases from local governments in McPherson and Montgomery County, Kansas. McPherson County has a high score on the Community Health Rankings index, while Montgomery County has a low score. To better understand the differences in communication patterns in the two counties, a content analysis was performed.

By understanding the dynamics of communication in these two communities, this research provides valuable insights into how local government messaging supports community development efforts. Results show that there are both similarities and differences between the two communities' public communication, despite drastically different County Health Rankings. This study contributes to the literature surrounding rural community development, and to the literature on public communication, especially as it relates to local governments in Kansas.

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# Chapter 1 - Introduction

## Background

According to the United States Census Bureau (2016), 97 percent of the country's land mass is rural but only 19.3 percent of the population lives there. Urban areas are population centers that reap several benefits of collective living, including social networks, political organizations, and skilled workforce (Andrews, 2009). Based on the Census Bureau estimates (2016), one in every five Americans does not have daily access to these resources. Additionally, the American population continues to shift toward urban areas, with current models projecting that the United States' population will be 89% urban by the year 2050 (Center for Sustainable Systems, 2023). This means that nearly half of the existing population in rural communities will have moved to urban areas in less than three decades, potentially taking valuable assets with them.

In addition to the out-migration of population from rural to urban areas, rural America faces social and political problems that come from within their own communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, governmental dissatisfaction reached high levels in rural communities, a mistrust fueled by political polarization, an unwillingness to provide personal information, and unease towards messaging from the government (McCormick et al., 2023). This applies to federal agencies, as well as local officials and organizations. When there is an overwhelming level of mistrust towards governmental messages it can lead to instability in how governments and citizens interact and communicate. Government officials in rural jurisdictions must overcome these prejudices to effectively communicate and execute projects, plans, and policies while also focusing on potentially dwindling resources and the well-being of future generations.

This messaging has the potential to promote other community assets and enhance community development through successful communication.

The study of community development focuses on the role of existing resources with the goal of increasing resources and capitalizing on assets to benefit a population (Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer, 2016). These existing assets, or community capitals, are the resources that a community has at its disposal to achieve this development (Flora et al., 2016). Research identifies complex networks, with social and financial dynamics, at the core of urban development in interconnected cities (Shi, Wong, & Zheng, 2022). However, there is a lack of research that identifies the methods that local governments use in rural communities to improve connection and communication surrounding community development. Several questions exist on what communication processes are used by local officials in rural communities to achieve this development, what relationships exist between citizens and government, and how messages can be used to support long-term and sustainable development within a community. The goal of this research is to examine and compare the way that government officials communicate with their constituents about development in two rural communities in Kansas. These communities were selected because Kansas, an agrarian state in the heart of the nation, represents rural America.

Kansas lies in the heart of the contiguous United States, deep in the expanse of the Great Plains with heavy agrarian influence and sparse metropolitan activity. Rural, densely settled rural, and frontier counties make up 85 percent of Kansas (Center for Public Participation and Research, 2017). Development in rural communities across Kansas has been described as efforts of “considerable disillusionment and expense” (Gottschamer, 1974, p. 4) with varying to limited success. Gottschamer (1974) ties development initiatives in rural Kansas communities to key individuals whose attitudes and perseverance helped motivate communities; however, they were



not able to attract or sustain any meaningful long-term assets. More recent research also suggests that articulating plans is a critical part of sustaining development for local government (Lee et al., 2017). This research examines the construction of public attitudes through communication and its role in community development in rural Kansas.

### **Research Question**

The purpose of this study is to examine the role that communication has in a local government's ability to complete and sustain community and economic development projects. This study will address the public attitude through a rhetorical lens, seeking an answer to the research question "How do local governments use public communication to contribute to community development efforts in rural Kansas communities?"

This research highlights the rhetorical aspects of public communication in rural Kansas communities through the analysis of social media and online news announcements used by local governments with a focus on the complex network of relationships between local officials and the public, including the communication channels used to increase community trust and engagement. This study includes a rhetorical analysis of the timing and tone of communication used by local governments, the different community capitals referenced by these messages, and the type of role that communication plays in contributing to successful community development.

### **Research Approach**

To answer the research question, two communities were identified based on a set of similar horizontal characteristics, specifically on location factors that may affect the community's development (Gottschamer, 1974). The two selected communities reflect opposing ends of a County Health Ranking system, an index provided by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation that draws attention to the

differences in health across communities (County Health Rankings, 2023). One community ranks high on the index and the other ranks low. Distinguishing between the two using county health indicators helps to identify patterns in governance, narrative, and/or development that affect the community's development. The communities were chosen on the county level, yet the focus of the study is on both county government and all city municipalities within the respective counties, their coordination, and their relationship with the public.

The two communities were chosen with the expectation that their different County Health Ranking scores suggest different development trajectories. They were also chosen because their similarities provided comparable data that highlights factors within the intersection of local government and public narrative, as opposed to other development influences. Three horizontal factors provide a control for locational factors that may affect the community populations and their level of economic activity and development (Gottschamer, 1974):

- Similar Size
- Similar and Substantial Role of Government
- Proximity to an urban area.

These criteria were used in combination with the County Health Rankings to select the two rural Kansas communities for this study: McPherson County and Montgomery County.

Based on the population forecast made by the Center for Sustainable Systems (2023), the future of rural communities in America is extremely important to consider when making decisions that have long-term effects. Social and political capital are building blocks necessary for innovative ideas to be realized and successfully carried out (Flora et al., 2016). The findings of this research will identify the successful communication tactics used in rural Kansas communities that secure public trust and support for projects that determine the quality of life for

current and future residents. The findings will also identify failed communication tactics that may lead to mistrust and poor support for projects.

## Chapter 2 - Literature Review

The goal of this study is to identify and examine the communication strategies that local governments in rural Kansas use to ensure the success and sustainability of community development initiatives. Researchers have studied the growing field of community development (CD) with a variety of focuses that range from economic development to sustainable natural resource management. This breadth of study reflects the changes that have occurred as the field of CD intersects with other disciplines. Researchers continue to analyze different communities around the globe, each community representing a unique situation that contributes to the general knowledge and practice of CD. While these different examples help create an understanding of community development, it seems that fewer examples exist regarding rural communities found in Kansas, two of those which will be the focus of this study.

This review outlines the existing research surrounding sustainability, rural community development, rural local governments, and public communication, including development initiatives in these regions. Additionally, this chapter identifies rhetorical strategies to analyze public communication from local governments. Finally, this review identifies the gaps in research that this study seeks to address.

### Key Definitions

To provide a clear picture of the research, the following terms must be defined and considered within the context of the study: sustainability, rural community development, rural local government, and public communication.

#### Sustainability

Depending on the period in history, people have defined sustainability in a variety of ways, many of which Caradonna (2014) outlines in his work *Sustainability: A History*.

Caradonna explains that the definition of sustainability has shifted as science has developed a clearer understanding of how humans interact with each other, the economy, and their environment. Because of this, many current definitions of sustainability encompass a broad range of factors. To develop a refined study that addresses the specific policies and initiatives of rural local governments, sustainability will be considered through a lens that focuses on three pillars: 1. economic development, 2. environmental protections, and 3. social equity (Opp et al., 2013).

One of the potential issues surrounding the use of the word “sustainability” is the different political connotations associated with the buzz word. Opp et al.’s (2013) definition above outlines three clear areas that are commonly used to evaluate sustainability in a community. The three pillars provide broad categories for sustainability indicators, which are also reflected in the index that was used to select the two communities. They also provide layers to help understand development initiatives and their success in a community.

### Community Development

The above definition of sustainability aligns with the International Association of Community Development’s (IACD) definition of community development:

Community Development is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes participative democracy, sustainable development, rights, economic opportunity, equality and social justice, through the [organization], education and empowerment of people within their communities, whether these be of locality, identity or interest, in urban and rural settings. (IACD, 2018)

The IACD (2018) definition discusses equality, rights, and economics, all of which are a part of Opp et al.’s (2013) three pillars. The ideas shared between Opp et al. (2013) and the IACD’s (2018) language suggest an interconnected relationship between sustainability and community development. This definition of community development provides a broad understanding of the practice and alludes to many of the capitals that Flora et al. (2016) include

in their Community Capitals Framework, a major framework used in this study and defined later in this chapter.

### Rural

When considering the rural aspect alluded to in IACD's definition of community development, it is imperative to understand that resources and capital may in rural areas vary depending on how rural is defined and what region is being considered. The U.S. Census Bureau acknowledges that counties outside of metropolitan regions may have a combination of urban clusters, exurban (districts outside of cities), and rural land (Ratcliffe et al., 2016). This research relies on the Economic Research Service's (2024b) delineation between metropolitan counties and non-metropolitan counties as a basis for categorizing the latter as rural communities, including any small urban clusters that exist within these counties.

Communities included in this definition must be evaluated differently than urban areas because they do not have the resources found in metropolitan regions, making the process of developing rural areas look much different than in suburban and metropolitan areas. Researchers must approach issues in rural communities using a framework that ensures the appropriate use of these limited resources with future development in mind. Wheeler (2015) explains how communities can improve themselves while also improving long-term human welfare, noting the need for sustainable practices as the population of Earth and its communities continue to grow, even in rural areas. The management of limited capitals in rural areas is an important aspect of sustainable development, as CD practitioners must identify and mobilize economic, environmental, and social assets to lift up the rest of the community (Emery & Flora, 2006).

### Local Government

The organizational level at which community development occurs often depends on the role that local stakeholders play in the development of policies, programs, and initiatives. This study focuses on CD within rural local government, specifically in counties outside of urban areas (Ratcliffe et al., 2016). Rural local government is defined as the city and county municipalities in rural areas, which play a pivotal role in community and economic development. In Kansas, city governments are granted the ability to legislate local affairs through the City Home Rule, a state constitutional amendment limiting state level interference from imposing nonuniform restrictions (Crummett, 1969). This rule dictates that each Kansas community has the ability and responsibility to develop policies for their own community and region through legislative and political means. Within the context of Kansas counties, which are overwhelmingly rural, local governments are responsible for appropriately allocating resources, developing policies, and encouraging sustainability in ways that are unique to their communities (KACIR, 1972). One of the ways to encourage this development in rural communities is through the use effective public communication.

### Public Communication

Research shows that a fundamental understanding of communication processes is critical to successfully articulating plans about sustainability and community development in a local government setting (Lee et al., 2017). This study focuses on how local governments construct comprehensive and compelling messages that support development plans, defining public communication as social media strategies, news articles, and government website communications (Lee et al., 2017). Due to the potentially overwhelming influence of social

media, this study focuses on the years 2017-2024. This period is based on the use of social media platforms by the local governments, which mostly begins in 2017.

Ganz et al. (2023) recommends a three-fold analysis of public communication and provides dimensions to organize communication strategies: 1) engaging the audience with the leader, 2) engaging the audience with each other, and 3) engaging the audience with a call to action (Ganz et al., 2023). Additionally, research indicates that communication about vulnerabilities in a community can inspire trust and deliberation, increasing the success of sustainable development through resiliency (Hoch et al., 2012). The role that communication takes in engaging the audience appears to be central to these studies, which highlights the complex effect communication may have on CD.

Another method of analyzing public communication in CD is by examining the role that it plays throughout the development process. Aruma (2018) identifies eight roles of communication in community development: 1) conscientization (to make aware of a situation) of members of participating communities, 2) provision of relevant information, 3) provision of opportunities for dialogue and discussion, 4) provision of opportunities for sharing information and ideas, 5) communication as an indispensable tool in all stages of community development, 6) communication as a unifying factor in community development activities, 7) communication as an important factor for successful community development projects, and 8) communication motivates the target audience to promote community development.

These roles all identify the purpose of a message in creating an understanding between the sender and the receiver. This establishes the intention of the message, especially when discussing a desired outcome or response from the community. Aruma (2018) finds that communication helps community members understand and confront potential community



problems. This research outlines how messages in two rural communities are understood and confronts these problems using one of Aruma's (2018) roles of communication.

This study uses the previous definitions of sustainability, community development, rural, local government, and public communication and analyzes their relationship to the "capitals" outlined in the Community Capitals Framework (CCF). The CCF provides a good framework for examining communication from local governments.

### **Analyzing Community Capitals**

To identify the factors that lead to successful or failed community development in rural communities, assessing the existing assets in each community is paramount to fully developing this study. Community Capitals Framework (CCF) is a tool used by researchers and CD practitioners to identify assets and their role in the community. The CCF is a systematic approach to organize a community's assets and strategically invest those assets to create vibrant equitable and empowered residents, regional economies, and healthy ecosystems (Flora et al., 2016). Flora et al. (2016) divide community assets into the following seven capitals:

- Human Capital = individual people's skills, talents, abilities, education, training, physical health, mental/emotional health.
- Social Capital = communication, relationships, networks, trust, give-and-take.
- Political Capital = individual and social voice, inclusion, power.
- Cultural Capital = world view, language, traditions, rituals.
- Natural Capital = physical and biological environment.
- Built Capital = manufactured infrastructure, buildings, and housing.
- Financial Capital = income and wealth.

These categories or capitals help break down the community into digestible groups that can be analyzed individually, as well as collectively. While CCF provides a basic outline, further research analyzes the complex relationship between different assets in a community. Emery and Flora (2006) demonstrate how social capital is a critical factor in the development of the six

other capitals because it encourages communication and relationship-development, building networks that enable a community to develop the other capitals. Since communication is a part of social capital, this suggests that communication plays a pivotal role in community development. This study will use CCF to identify how often different messages from local governments address the seven capitals, and if there are any communication patterns with how these capitals are discussed to support community development.

### **Community Development in Rural Kansas**

Within rural America, there are realities that may limit the potential for development. Lusic (2018) identifies a dilemma between the desire for a certain lifestyle among residents who want the life, pace, and charm of country living but also experience a lack of resources. In his report on how to encourage educated and qualified people to live, work, and play in rural communities, Lusic (2018) identifies economic development tactics that encourages recruitment and retention, attracting economic activity that supports rural communities and their long-term success. However, despite his positive perspective on rural development, Lusic (2018) still suggests that rural communities need to rely on “urban allies,” or urban areas within an accessible range, to support downtown development initiatives.

Other studies highlight a dependence on urban organizations for rural community development projects. For example, Community Core, a nonprofit program in Soldier, Kansas was founded in 2013 to revitalize community buildings (Allen, 2013). In his case study, Allen (2013) identified several state-level partnerships such as Kansas Rural Economic Development, Kansas Rural Water Association, and Kan-Step as critical partners to make the project successful through financial and professional support. However, Allen (2013) additionally mentioned the

importance of continual communication with community stakeholders as a factor contributing to the sustainability of the project, suggesting both support and barriers within the community.

In a similar study, Lauer and Sanderson (2022) discuss the importance of sustained civic engagement in facilitating long-term, committed actors in a community. The authors use four components of the Community Capitals Framework to explain civic engagement. This includes interpersonal solidarity (social capital), sense of meaning and purpose (cultural capital), and effective leadership (political capital), all of which interact with human to create effective civic engagement (Lauer & Sanderson, 2022). The authors reference Ganz (2011), referring to his argument that community leaders use various tools to construct public narratives that sustain civic engagement, which provides a lens for understanding community groups in a positive feedback loop of engagement.

Lauer and Sanderson (2022) apply their understanding of community capitals and public narrative to a case study of Wichita County, Kansas. Using a grounded theory approach, Lauer and Sanderson (2022) identified the impact of positive feedback loops, finding that positive feedback loops led to positive development outcomes. Lauer and Sanderson (2022) provide several approaches for including diverse perspectives into the communication process. Specifically, the researchers concluded that civic engagement sustained over several months with the consistent use of public narrative tools helped increase social, cultural, political, and human capital, giving a “renewed sense of hope for the community and their future” (Lauer & Sanderson, 2022). Supporting these various community capitals is one way that rural local governments can use public communication to better engage community members with local development efforts.

## **Rural Local Governments**

While many of the initiatives in the studies referenced above were managed by nonprofit organizations, local government also plays a pivotal role in sustaining relationships and managing narratives in a community. Existing research identifies the importance of public and private sector partnerships as both sectors work to achieve their individual missions. Brinkerhoff (2002) discusses the private sector, including corporate businesses and nonprofits, arguing that the work that public sector entities are attempting to accomplish is too much to achieve in isolation, and that a potential solution is the cooperation between government entities and corporations. According to Brinkerhoff (2002) this cooperation can be achieved through mutuality and organizational identity, both of which help form the basic framework to distinguish this partnership practice. These could be community interests that exist in both the public or private sector, where an overlap exists between their values, goals, and purposes. Other researchers have identified these same concepts and encouraged local governments to employ collaborative tactics to share the workload that the public sector faces. Another term used for these partnerships is “multijurisdictional collaborative efforts” (Radin 2022, p. 73) which researchers identify as rural partnerships that address the two common conditions that plague rural communities: limited local capacity and poor economic/political connections.

Research indicates that counties with high rates of economic growth have an organized system of local leadership and partnerships where stakeholders are responsible for collaboration during good times and bad times alike (John, 1988). The previously mentioned studies concerning public narrative identified a connection between successful community development and active local government. However, other research suggests that rural communities may face challenges with political involvement because there is a lack of anonymity in smaller, tight-knit

communities. Van Duyn (2018) suggests that rather than participating in local government and political discourse, rural residents turn to other organizations to avoid retaliation in their own community. For example, Van Duyn (2018) discusses a secret political group in rural Texas formed after the 2016 presidential election in the United States, as a place for women who voted against the 2016 candidate to discuss politics without backlash. This case of political minorities feeling unsafe in political and governmental affairs highlights the common concerns that residents feel when it comes to the overly homogenous identities of rural communities.

This sentiment is especially true when communication channels are limited, or a public narrative is extremely polarized. Stapper and Duyvendak (2020) highlight the profound impact this polarization has on residents and the way they are categorized within the context of the citizen participatory processes. As the authors point out, participatory processes often create a moral distinction between residents. For example, a good resident is active, flexible, and adept at negotiation while those who struggle to navigate the system or prioritize values not aligned with the dominant discourse risk being labeled as bad residents (Stapper & Duyvendak, 2020). This research suggests that when local governments use poor management during deliberation, these efforts can lead to moral distinctions that can polarize a community, fracture relationships, and have a negative impact on development.

## **Measuring Success and Sustainability**

### *Analyzing Rhetorical Strategies*

This study uses rhetorical analysis, a process that relies on the timing and tone of a message as identified by Johnson (2007). In this model of analysis, Johnson (2007) proposes using the duration, quantity, and frequency of a message for analysis, coupled with the tone. Johnson (2007) categorizes tone based on a positive, neutral, or negative connotation readers

may have when interacting with the message. Using rhetorical analysis as a lens for analyzing public messages can provide valuable insight into CD. For example, Paschen and Ison (2014) discuss the benefits of understanding how to address the narrative about climate change, and of shifting the message to improve research and community decision making. Similarly, other research discusses how the narrative surrounding “green growth” (Bowen and Fankenhouer, 2011, p. 1157), or environmentally sustainable growth, has both strategic and analytical merit. As this research suggests, when communities begin to address sustainable practices (economic, environmental, and social equity), the public communication surrounding these initiatives is nearly as critical as the development projects themselves.

#### *Analyzing Development Outcomes*

While the primary focus of this research is on the rhetorical aspect of public narrative in the communities of focus, using the data to analyze community development is also a critical component of distinguishing successful sustainable practices. Several of sustainability indicators have been developed to provide a comprehensive analysis of a community. Latawiec and Agol (2015) developed a set of criteria that rely on the quantity and quality of underlying community assets. Based on these criteria, indicators should be:

- a. Reliable through consistent quantitative data.
- b. Easy to communicate.
- c. Not objective.
- d. Assess dynamic and complex change in a community. (Latawiec & Agol, 2015).

The authors suggest that identifying specific measures is subjective even if objective data is used (Latawiec & Agol, 2015). Additional studies identify similar criteria, while highlighting the need for community-based outcome indicators that focus on dynamic and complex change rather than specific program output (Minich et al., 2006). This study relies on these standards to organize data from the County Health Rankings index, differentiating the two communities

chosen for this study with sustainability indicators. These indicators provide context for the findings from the rhetorical analysis portion of this research.

## **Summary**

This literature review highlights existing research surrounding community development, local government, and public narrative. While there is research that analyzes existing capitals in rural communities (Flora et al., 2016), there is a lack of research that analyzes the communication channels that affect the development of rural Kansas communities. Some research use Community Capitals Framework to analyze the importance of local governments communicating with the public (Ganz et al., 2023), but this discourse is limited to discussion of the processes for effective communication, rather than analyzing the existing communication channels themselves (Lee et al., 2017).

To expand on Ganz et al.'s (2023) theory that social, political, and cultural capitals are critical tools for local governments further research is needed to identify the communication channels used by local governments in rural areas to support development initiatives. The communication used by local governments is a major part of social capital. Social capital is often the starting point for community development, therefore the communication that enhances social capital also allows a community to “spiral up”, or develop other capitals (Flora et al., 2016). A more direct approach of analyzing public communication is necessary to identify the positive and negative factors that may affect sustainable development in these areas.

## **Chapter 3 - Methodology**

This thesis analyzes the public communication used by local governments in two rural Kansas communities, including their social media posts and online news releases. To provide context for these findings, this chapter discusses the methods used to identify a high-and low-ranking community based on the County Health Rankings index. This index provides economic, social, and health-related community data. This case study will demonstrate a relationship between the community's rank on the index and the public communication used by local government. A rhetorical analysis will highlight communication patterns and how these messages address the seven capitals outlined by the Community Capitals Framework. This chapter identifies the methodology behind the case study, community selection, data selection and evaluation, and ethical implications of the research.

### **Case Study Format**

This research is organized in a case study format that seeks to improve the understanding of a specific issue, building on the theories of Gottschamer (1974) who discusses the relationships between local leaders, public attitude, and community development. The case study format was chosen based on the approach developed by Yin (2013). Yin (2013) describes two necessary components for a case study: a complex phenomenon (case) and a real-world context. Additionally, Yin (2013) highlights that multiple cases provide a more robust set of findings, highlighting the need for two communities in this research. This study includes a qualitative, content analysis of messages from two cases, one with a high County Health Ranking score and one with a low score. This study focuses on the communication used by these two rural Kansas communities and their local governments, which are complex in their multifaceted communication styles and relationships to their communities.



The two Kansas communities that were chosen to best exemplify different cases of community development are McPherson County and Montgomery County. These two communities have contextual similarities such as population size, local government employment, and proximity to an urban area. To differentiate the two cases, various forms of data will be used as indicators of community development. Next in this chapter, the criteria used for community selection and evaluation will be clearly defined as they appear within the findings of this research.

### **Community Selection**

The two communities examined in this case study were decided based on three horizontal characteristics that provide a substantial comparison (Gottschamer, 1974). These three characteristics demonstrate factors that affect community development: 1) similar size, 2) substantial role of local government, and 3) proximity to urban areas.

The first measure, similar size, was based on Economic Research Service (ERS) Rural-Urban Continuum Codes. The two counties chosen for this study are in the same classification code. The Rural-Urban Continuum Code used for this study is Code 7 - Nonmetro - Urban population of 5,000 to 20,000, not adjacent to a metro area (ERS, 2024a). Both counties are within this range of population and are identified as non-metro, which is consistent with the definition of rural used throughout this report (ERS, 2024b).

The second measure, the substantial role of government, can be shown through local government employment as provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). The two counties were selected because the number of employees in local government was greater than 1,500 but did not exceed 2,500, which places them within a comparable ranking classification (BEA, 2023). This is to ensure consistency in size and range of government, as well as ensuring

that a substantial amount of research material is available concerning local government and public administration, while still being classified as a rural area.

The third measure, proximity to urban center, was decided based on two separate factors. The first factors included the ERS ranking that identifies a county as non-adjacent to a metro area, ensuring that there are no immediate economic benefits from urban centers (ERS, 2024a). Additionally, Google Maps (n.d.) was used to verify the distance between these two counties and the urban centers closest to them. Using the county seat of both counties, McPherson County is roughly 60 miles away from Wichita, Kansas by car, and Montgomery County is roughly 85 miles away from Tulsa, Oklahoma by car (Google, n.d.). These distances are similar enough to have the same access to urban assets, and far enough away to avoid professionals driving to these urban centers for work, based on the state's average commute of 19 minutes (Kansas Department of Commerce, 2024).

The two communities were finalized based on their polarized rankings in the 2023 County Health Rankings. These rankings are developed on an annual basis to assess the varying degrees of success across different counties in their quality of life for residents (County Health Rankings, 2023). This includes clinical, social, and economic factors. The two communities, McPherson and Montgomery Counties, represent the high (6<sup>th</sup>) and low (96<sup>th</sup>) tiers of these rankings, respectively (County Health Rankings, 2023). The basic similarities between these two communities are stark when considering the vast difference in ranking, a difference that will be considered through the analysis qualitative data concerning local government and public narrative in the two communities.

## **Data Selection and Analysis**

Qualitative data is used to compare communication patterns in McPherson and Montgomery County. The qualitative data included consists of secondary data that identifies consistencies and changes in the public communication used by local government officials. Seventy-two messages were selected from both communities and coded. Sources for this data include county and city publications, news releases, and social media. Each piece of media (post, news release, etc.) is considered a message.

A content analysis was performed to identify patterns in the recorded communication between the two communities. The study systematically included a collection and analysis of written communication. The findings from this content analysis include inferences about the purposes, messages, and effects of the communication content. The content analysis performed included quantifying the occurrence of certain words, phrases, and messages, as well as an analysis of the existing rhetorical strategies in the messages selected for this study. Each message is coded and analyzed based on three analytical frameworks: 1) time and tone, 2) Community Capitals Framework, and 3) role of communication in community development.

### *Time and Tone*

Each message is analyzed based on the time and tone of the messaging, as outlined by Johnson (2007). Johnson (2007) determined that time of a message included the duration, quantity, and frequency. Duration includes the original publication date. Quantity includes the word count of each message. Frequency includes the number of times a message is repeated. To determine tone, each message is sorted as either positive, negative, or neutral (Johnson, 2007). This study factors in word choice, syntax, and imagery to determine the tone of each message.

The purpose of this analysis is to identify any communication patterns used by the local governments in the two communities.

#### *Community Capitals Framework*

The Community Capitals Framework (CCF) is used to identify the Capital that each message is alluding to, social, political, human, cultural, built, natural, or financial (Flora et al., 2016). Each message is coded based on the community resources they are referencing, and what Capital the post is describing, affecting, or supporting. A single message may be coded with multiple Capitals, depending on the complexity of the message and if it intersects with several community resources. The purpose of this analysis is to identify what aspects of community development are targeted by local governments through their messaging.

#### *Role of Communication*

To analyze public communication's role in community development, this research codes the selected public messages based on the eight roles of communication identified by Aruma (2018), as defined in the literature review: conscientization, information provision, dialogue facilitation, idea sharing, indispensability, unification, successful facilitation, and motivation (Aruma, 2018). The messages are coded based on the tone and language used when addressing the audience, which identifies the desired reaction of the messages. By categorizing public messages into these roles, this study identifies the primary methods local governments are employing to engage their communities.

<b>Frameworks Used for Rhetorical Analysis</b>		
<i>Time and Tone</i>	<i>Community Capitals Framework</i>	<i>Aruma's Roles of Communication</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duration</li> <li>• Quantity</li> <li>• Frequency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Political</li> <li>• Human</li> <li>• Cultural</li> <li>• Built</li> <li>• Natural</li> <li>• Financial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conscientization</li> <li>• Information Provision</li> <li>• Dialogue Facilitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Idea Sharing</li> <li>• Indispensability</li> <li>• Unification</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Successful Facilitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Figure 1. Three Frameworks for Rhetorical Analysis**

**Ethical Implications**

During the research of these communities, it is important to note potential conflicts of interest with this research. The researcher spent several years living in Montgomery County, Kansas, but no longer has any familial, occupational, or close relational ties to the residents of the county. Additionally, the researcher had minimal interaction with any local officials, politicians, or city staff in the area before this study. As a researcher, the contents of this study will remain as objective as possible in the interest of providing an ethical, comprehensive, and unbiased depiction of Montgomery County and its local government.

## Chapter 4 - Findings and Analysis

This chapter presents an analysis of the qualitative data derived from public communication in McPherson and Montgomery Counties. The primary objective is to identify strategies and patterns of media content disseminated from local government in the two communities. By examining these messages through the three frameworks outlined in the previous chapter, this research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of public communication in rural Kansas communities, and its relationship to community development theories. Ultimately, this chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the social and political landscape in McPherson and Montgomery Counties through the study of public messages.

### **McPherson County**

The following sections provide an analysis of public messages in McPherson County. The two jurisdictions included in this research are McPherson County and the City of McPherson. Both jurisdictions have active Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter pages. However, due to the duplicative nature of posts between the three, most of the posts included in this research were sourced from Facebook. In addition to these social media sites, the News Flash archives from both the county and city websites were utilized to source news releases. From these sources, seventy-two messages were identified and coded into various categories. The following sections analyze these messages through three frameworks: Time and Tone, Community Capitals Framework, and Roles of Communication.

#### *Time and Tone*

The messages were coded based on their duration, quantity, and frequency, as outlined by Johnson (2007). Duration, or the original date the message was posted, highlights the activity of

the local government’s social media during each year. The number of posts included was determined by the amount of activity during each year, with more messages included in the research from the years with more social media activity. Quantity, shown as the word count of each message, also shows the level of activity during different time periods.

Table 1 identifies the number of messages posted during each year of the selected time period, as well as the average length (word count) of each message in McPherson County:

**Table 1. Time and Tone of McPherson County Messages**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Posts</b>	<b>Average Length</b>
<i>2017</i>	2	54
<i>2018</i>	2	53
<i>2019</i>	0	0
<i>2020</i>	8	131
<i>2021</i>	7	104
<i>2022</i>	15	100
<i>2023</i>	15	82
<i>2024</i>	23	76

The table shows an increase in messaging starting in 2022, with a limited number of messages during the 2017-2019 time period. While there appears to be a pattern of growth in the number of posts, the average length of each post appears to be decreasing since its peak in 2020. A number of posts that occurred during 2020 and 2021 were related to public health during the COVID-19 pandemic, potentially explaining this peak.

All messages were only shared once, except for a singular Facebook post from the McPherson County profile related to open jobs with the county government. Frequency, determined by the number of times a message is shared, was consistently nonexistent, except for

one Facebook post. This measure was a part of Johnson’s (2007) research that emphasized the size of role a message can play based on the number of times it is shared. There appears to be virtually no variation in the frequency of messages for McPherson County. Based on Johnson’s (2007) research, this suggests that none of the McPherson County messages had a greater influence due to the frequency of communication.

The tone of the messages also appeared to have a consistent pattern. Of the seventy-two messages, sixty-three (87.5%) were identified as having a neutral tone, based on the impartial, even-handed language used in the post. Of the nine that had a positive tone, seven were identified as having a Motivating or Unifying communication role, including spirited language that addressed the audience using supportive words. Additionally, five of the nine positive messages were categorized as describing/contributing to Social Capital in McPherson County, because many of the messages addressed relationships and connections (Social Capital) in the community and included language that was uplifting.

*Community Capitals Framework*

The messages were coded into the seven different community capitals as outlined by Flora et al.’s (2016) Community Capitals Framework. Each message had the potential to be classified as contributing to and/or describing multiple capitals, based on the complexity of the message. Table 2 shows the number of posts attributed to each Capital in McPherson County, starting with the highest number of posts:

**Table 2. CCF References in McPherson County Messages**

<b>Capital</b>	<b>Number of Posts</b>
Political	37
Financial	21



Social	19
Built	18
Human	13
Cultural	6
Natural	5

Political capital is referenced the most in the messages included for McPherson County. It is important to remember that political capital includes power systems and government, and these messages come from local governments and local authorities. The messages categorized within Political Capital are categorized as one of four roles of communication: dialogue facilitation, idea sharing, information provision, and successful facilitation. These messages include phrasing such as “important decision”, “roundtable discussion”, and “make your voices heard” to communicate responsibility and power to residents. These messages reference individual as well as collective power among community members, contributing to their Political Capital. Overall, this was the most dominant community capital in McPherson County.

Financial capital was also prevalent in the McPherson County messages, with twenty-one references. One interesting pattern that occurs with the financial capital messages is that only one message is categorized as financial capital alone. All other messages are a combination of financial and other capitals. Among these, the most common combinations are political (8) and built (10) capital, making up a majority of the latter. Among these messages, Community Development Block Grants are one of the most referenced items.

Social capital, with nineteen of the messages categorized under its scope, also had a substantial role in the public communication in McPherson County. Of these messages, the words “communicate” and “notification” were used often in reference to the established networks in the community. Additionally, several of these messages address the social cohesion

in McPherson County. For example, the following message from the City of McPherson uses the term “McPherson Proud” to project a message of solidarity:

*“Things that make us McPherson Proud. Thank you to everyone who came out Wednesday as we celebrated becoming a Purple Heart City. It’s such an honor to be a part of honoring those who serve, have been hurt or have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms. Signs will be placed at every entrance into the community. Shout out to the Vita Voce Choir from McPherson High School for an excellent rendition of our national anthem and the McPherson KS Police Department for presenting the colors. Never forget.”* (City of McPherson, n.d.).

By using language with emotional connotations, such as hurt, sacrifice, and freedom, the message draws on social capital to address the members of the community with sincerity and sympathetic appeal. The messages that allude to social capital in McPherson County appear to use rhetorical tactics like this to appeal to the reader and their sense of connection to the community.

Overall, Political, Financial, Social, and Built Capital are referenced the most in the McPherson County messages.

*Roles of Communication*

Finally, the McPherson County messages were coded based on the Roles of Communication, as outlined by Aruma (2018). Table 3 shows the number of posts attributed to each of the eight roles:

**Table 3. Role of McPherson County Messages**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Number of Posts</b>
<i>Information Provision</i>	44
<i>Successful Facilitation</i>	8
<i>Idea Sharing</i>	7
<i>Motivation</i>	6
<i>Conscientization</i>	3
<i>Unification</i>	3
<i>Dialogue Facilitation</i>	1

<i>Indispensability</i>	0
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Information Provision is the most common role of communication among McPherson County messages. The large gap between this role and the remaining seven highlights a trend of McPherson County jurisdictions using social media and news releases for disseminating information throughout the community, including topics such as events, government, processes, and construction updates. For a more granular look at these roles, Table 4 cross-tabulates the number of posts in each of the eight roles with the seven capitals from the Community Capital Framework:

**Table 4. Cross-section Analysis of McPherson County Messages**

	<i>Social</i>	<i>Human</i>	<i>Cultural</i>	<i>Political</i>	<i>Built</i>	<i>Natural</i>	<i>Financial</i>
<i>Conscientization</i>	1	0	1	1	0	2	1
<i>Information Provision</i>	11	7	1	28	9	6	8
<i>Dialogue Facilitation</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<i>Idea Sharing</i>	1	1	0	5	2	1	3
<i>Indispensability</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Unification</i>	3	3	3	0	0	1	0
<i>Successful Facilitation</i>	0	1	0	1	5	0	8
<i>Motivation</i>	3	1	1	1	2	1	1

This table identifies the number of times a message attributed to one of the seven Community Capitals was also coded as one of the eight roles of communication, allowing for an analysis of the patterns between the two frameworks as they exist in the messages from these two

communities. One of the distinct findings from this analysis shows that many of the messages that discuss Political Capital play the role of Information Provision.

Many of the Political Capital messages identify ways for community members to use their individual or collective power. This table highlights that many of the Political Capital messages also provide information to the audience, as twenty-eight were also coded as Information Provision. This indicates that the local governments in McPherson County predominantly use their messages to provide information about the processes and tools community members can use to build power, including references to voting and participatory processes. This suggests that McPherson County, which ranks as one of the healthiest counties in Kansas, uses their communication to help community members build Political Capital, which can be transformed into other capitals and promote development (Flora et al., 2016).

### **Montgomery County**

The three jurisdictions included in this research for Montgomery County are the Montgomery County Government, the City of Independence, and the City of Coffeyville. All jurisdictions have active Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter pages. Similar to the social media of McPherson County, most of the posts were sourced from Facebook. In addition to these social media sites, the News Flash archives from both the county and city websites were utilized to source news releases. From these sources, seventy-two messages were identified and coded into various categories. The following sections analyze these messages through three frameworks: Time and Tone, Community Capitals Framework, and Roles of Communication.

#### *Time and Tone*

The messages were coded based on their duration, quantity, and frequency, as outlined by Johnson (2007). Duration, or the original date the message was posted, highlights the activity of

the local government’s social media during each year. The number of posts included in the research was determined on the amount of activity from each year, with more messages included in the research from the years with more social media activity. Quantity, shown as the word count of each message, also shows the level of activity during different time periods.

Table 5 identifies the number of messages posted during each year of the selected time period, as well as the average length (word count) of each message in Montgomery County:

**Table 5. Time and Tone of Montgomery County Messages**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Posts</b>	<b>Average Length</b>
<i>2017</i>	5	168
<i>2018</i>	7	134
<i>2019</i>	8	138
<i>2020</i>	6	170
<i>2021</i>	5	117
<i>2022</i>	9	136
<i>2023</i>	12	139
<i>2024</i>	20	117

The table shows an increase in messaging starting in 2022, with a consistent number of messages during the 2017-2021 time period. While there appears to be a pattern of growth in the number of posts, there appears to be no consistent pattern in the average length of posts. Frequency, determined by the number of times a message is shared, was consistent at one occurrence per message for all Montgomery County messages.

The tone of the messages was mostly neutral, with a few exceptions. Of the seventy-two messages, forty-nine (67.1%) were identified as having a neutral tone. Of the twenty-two that had a positive tone, fifteen were identified as having a Motivating or Unifying communication

role. Additionally, there was one message identified as negative. This specific message was a Facebook post in response to “rumors” about community plans for annexation. This post addresses these rumors in a direct manner, as shown in the following excerpt:

*“The City of Independence is issuing a statement about recent rumors suggesting that the City is annexing properties several miles out into the County. These rumors aren’t true. The City does acknowledge a typographical error on one of the maps included in the draft plan, which incorrectly labeled the City’s Planning Boundary as City Limits. This error is being fixed by the consultant to ensure accurate representation, and it’s important to note that this is the only map out of dozens where that error occurred.”* (City of Independence, n.d.).

Words like “suggesting” and “rumors” have a questioning tone. One potential use for these words is to make any other sources of information on the topic less credible, and the remainder of the four-hundred-and-twenty-four-word post continues with various other arguments and reasonings, with an increasingly defensive tone. Beyond this sole example of a message with a negative, defensive tone, all other Montgomery County messages were identified as neutral or positive.

*Community Capitals Framework*

The messages were coded into the seven different community capitals as outlined by Flora et al.’s (2016) Community Capitals Framework. Each message had the potential to be classified as contributing to and/or describing multiple capitals, based on the complexity of the message. Table 6 shows the number of posts attributed to each capital in Montgomery County, starting with the highest number of posts:

**Table 6. CCF References in Montgomery County Messages**

<b>Capital</b>	<b>Number of Posts</b>
Political	29
Social	22
Built	21

Human	13
Natural	11
Financial	8
Cultural	6

Political capital is referenced the most out of the messages included for Montgomery County. Many of these Montgomery County messages in this category appear to be focused on information including dates and details of civic events. For example, the following message communicates the details of a public survey for the City of Independence’s Community

Development Plan:

*“Last call for public input related to the Independence Community Development Plan! The interactive engagement website is set to close its comment period on December 22nd, so be sure to share your thoughts and ideas for the future of Independence before then! Activities include a short survey, image voting, and a mapping activity.”* (City of Independence, n.d.).

This message contains no information regarding the intended audience of the survey beyond all residents, offering no cultural or social context. Instead, it offers information in a straightforward manner, similar to many of the other messages that were coded as Political Capital.

Social capital is identified as the second most common category in the Montgomery County messages. This category has some of the most diverse messaging when cross-examined with tone and role of communication. The previously mentioned Facebook post regarding rumors of annexation is categorized as social with a negative tone. However, there are messages where the opposite is evident, such as the following example from Montgomery County’s

Facebook page:

*"This week, the Montgomery County Courthouse has been illuminated green as part of Operation Green Light for Veterans, a nationwide effort by counties, the National Association of Counties, and the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers.*

*From November 6-12, county buildings and landmarks across the country will be illuminated green to show support for veterans and raise awareness around the resources available at the county, state, and federal levels to assist veterans and their families."*

(Montgomery County, n.d.)

This message is categorized as positive because it emphasizes support and awareness for a specific group in the community, compared to the negative tone identified in the annexation message from the City of Independence. Additionally, this message was identified as Social and Cultural, as it references landmarks that play a significant role in the community. Many of the messages from Montgomery County that were identified as Social Capital tended to fit into other capitals as well.

Built capital is categorized as the third most common capital among the Montgomery County messages. Many of the messages in this category are also categorized as information provision, as they are relaying information regarding construction. One notable pattern among the built capital messages is that several of them have high word counts, with five of the posts having greater than two-hundred-and-thirty words. One potential explanation for this could be that the information included in these posts needs greater explanation. These longer posts on social media include detailed plans for construction and infrastructure projects, including financial information and project timelines. Overall, the Montgomery County messages appeared to focus on Political, Social, and Built Capital.

#### *Roles of Communication*

Finally, the Montgomery County messages were coded based on the Roles of Communication, as outlined by Aruma (2018). Table 7 shows the number of posts attributed to each of the eight roles:



**Table 7. Role of Montgomery County Messages**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Number of Posts</b>
<i>Information Provision</i>	39
<i>Motivation</i>	13
<i>Successful Facilitation</i>	7
<i>Idea Sharing</i>	5
<i>Unification</i>	4
<i>Conscientization</i>	2
<i>Dialogue Facilitation</i>	2
<i>Indispensability</i>	0

Similar to McPherson County, Information Provision is the most common role of communication among Montgomery County messages. The large gap between this role and the remaining seven highlights a trend of Montgomery County jurisdictions using social media and news releases for disseminating information throughout the community, including topics such as events, government, processes, and construction updates. For a more granular look at these roles, Table 8 cross-tabulates the number of posts in each of the eight roles with the seven capitals from the Community Capital Framework:

**Table 8. Cross-section Analysis of Montgomery County Messages**

	<i>Social</i>	<i>Human</i>	<i>Cultural</i>	<i>Political</i>	<i>Built</i>	<i>Natural</i>	<i>Financial</i>
<i>Conscientization</i>	1	0	0	2	0	0	1
<i>Information Provision</i>	3	4	1	14	17	10	3
<i>Dialogue Facilitation</i>	1	0	1	4	1	1	1
<i>Idea Sharing</i>	2	0	0	2	0	0	0
<i>Indispensability</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

<i>Unification</i>	4	2	2	2	0	0	0
<i>Successful Facilitation</i>	1	0	1	4	3	0	3
<i>Motivation</i>	10	11	1	1	0	0	0

While the table from McPherson County had one cross-section with a higher number than the others, the messages from Montgomery County appear to be more diverse. Most of the messages play a role of Information Provision similar to McPherson County, but there is a more diverse representation of Capitals among these messages, specifically between Political, Built, and Natural Capital. There are also a high number of messages where Motivation intersects with Social and Human Capital. This suggests that Montgomery County governments may understand that the communities are struggling and are trying to use motivating messages to increase social and human capital. By doing this, they can strengthen relationships in the community to help increase development, changing the trajectory seen through their low County Health Ranking.

## **Chapter 5 - Conclusions**

Based on the findings from this research, there are several conclusions that can be made about public communication in McPherson and Montgomery County. Overall, there appear to be several similarities in the capitals being addressed by local government messaging, including the role of communication in this context. However, differences in their communication styles still exist. This chapter identifies six conclusions about public communication from local governments in McPherson and Montgomery Counties and summarizes the key findings of this research in relation to community development in these rural Kansas communities.

### **Conclusion #1: Communication is Increasing**

In both communities, the activity of social media and news releases from local governments has increased in recent years. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, social media use in both McPherson and Montgomery County has increased rapidly. The number of posts included in this research is proportional to the overall number of messages from each community per year. The trend for the messages selected in both communities suggests an increasing amount of activity, mostly on social media, for the two counties. Public communication from the local governments is a part of the social capital in both communities.

According to Flora et al. (2016), an increase in social capital begins the process of developing other community capitals. An increase in these messages that support social capital is seen in the community with a high ranking on the County Health Ranking index, but it is also seen in the community with a low ranking on the index. Improving communication within a community can improve social capital and create an environment of reciprocity and trust that will help develop other capitals in the future (Flora et al., 2016).

## **Conclusion #2: Communication is Neutral**

Another trend is a neutral tone among the majority of messages. Neutral messages can help create a platform for discussing community topics without emotional reactions from the audience, avoiding language that may be perceived as biased. Previous studies have identified that government agencies that use unbiased communication can benefit from both effective communication and social capital gains (Nelson, 2011). This unbiased platform may be viewed as trustworthy by community members, potentially aiding development efforts.

In McPherson County, the community with a high County Health Ranking score, sixty-three of the messages were categorized as neutral. In Montgomery County, the community with a low score, only forty-nine messages were categorized as neutral. In general, all local governments in both communities tended to use language that was neutral in the selected messages. However, the messages from the higher-ranked community were at a much higher level of neutrality. Additionally, the only message identified as having a negative, polarizing tone came from Montgomery County, the lower-ranked community.

This suggests that communities where the communication channel is more neutral may experience more success in developing social capital, as community members feel that their government is open to working towards common goals.

## **Conclusion #3: Political and Social Capital are Prevalent**

The majority of messages in both counties were categorized as Social or Political Capital. In McPherson County, thirty-seven messages referenced Political Capital while nineteen referenced Social Capital. In Montgomery County, twenty-nine messages referenced Political Capital while twenty-two referenced Social Capital. While McPherson County ranked much

higher than Montgomery County on the County Health Rankings index, both communities appear to use their messages to address Social and Political Capital.

Additionally, messages representing these two Capitals were categorized in terms of other Community Capitals. The communication that addresses Social or Political Capital referenced each of the other five capitals at least once. By including the other five Capitals in the messages that promote Social and Political Capital, the local governments are approaching development from a more holistic approach. Flora et al. (2016) notes that social and political capital can be transformed into other capitals when used to organize and build other community resources. This addresses community needs and contributes to sustainable growth, incorporating other Capitals into social and political efforts.

#### **Conclusion #4: The Focus is Sharing Information**

In both McPherson and Montgomery County, messages were primarily used for disseminating information. An overwhelming majority of messages were categorized as Information Provision in both communities, underscoring the critical role of social media in conveying specific messages to community members. Aruma (2018) notes that governmental communication that provides information can stimulate people to take action in promoting community development, when the information is relevant to the target population.

For instance, in McPherson County, local government used their messages to discuss initiatives, community events, or emergency alerts during the COVID-19 pandemic. This information can empower individuals to participate in decision-making processes, stay informed about important developments, and access essential services. In Montgomery County, which is ranked low on the County Health Ranking index, the local governments used messages to communicate about job opportunities and infrastructural updates. This information can help

individuals improve economic circumstances and enhance their quality of life by increasing their awareness of important community information. Information must be precise and relevant to have the intended effect and actions among the participation communities (Aruma, 2018). This suggests that messages in McPherson County may be more relevant to community development efforts than the information provided in Montgomery County messages.

### **Conclusion #5: Financial Capital Differences**

One of the differences identified between the two communities is that the local governments of McPherson County discussed financial capital significantly more than Montgomery County. Items such as local tax proposals, community grants, and housing projects were included more often in McPherson County, the higher ranked county, while many of the other capitals were consistent between the two communities. The disparity in discussions of financial capital between McPherson County and Montgomery County highlights the critical role that financial resources play in shaping community development.

The Economic Factors used in the County Health Rankings index are better in every area for McPherson County than Montgomery County, which corresponds with the pattern seen in the two communities' messages. The indicators include unemployment, children in poverty, income inequality, and median household income. For example, one of the messages from the City of McPherson discusses a First Time Homebuyer Program that is directed at aiding and assisting community members with down payments and loan forgiveness. This message was coded as promoting Financial Capital because it encourages home ownership which may lead to poverty reduction. Montgomery County had a lower number of these messages that correspond to the financial indicators.

Nearly all communities rely on financial capital in some capacity, and rural areas must constantly work to retain wealth and reduce the risk of local investments (Flora et al., 2016) Discussions about financial capital, such as tax proposals or community grants, often involve public input and engagement, fostering a sense of ownership and investment in the community's future.

### **Conclusion #6: Montgomery County has Diverse Communication**

When comparing the cross-tabulations between community capitals and communication roles, there is a clear difference in the variety of communication between the two communities. Communication in Montgomery County appears to be more diverse in its references to different community capitals while McPherson County is still focused on Political and Social Capital. Diverse and complex approaches to community development topics can be linked to resilience within a community (Lerch, 2017). In essence, a community that engages in diverse discussions is more likely to be adaptable to different challenges in the future.

Similar to the analysis of Community Capitals Framework in the previous chapter, this seems to contradict the County Health Ranking scores for Montgomery County. Social and economic factors are included in the County Health Ranking indicators, including metrics such as income inequality and poverty rates. For example, Montgomery County has a child poverty rate of 22 percent compared to the 14 percent in Kansas (County Health Rankings, 2023). The diverse communication used by Montgomery County could be the local government's strategy for addressing the poor development outcomes in the community. Further study is needed to address if these diverse types of messages are engaging the community members of Montgomery County.

## Summary

This thesis analyzes public communication within two rural Kansas communities through three different frameworks. By examining various communication channels, including social media platforms and news releases from local governments, the study aims to understand the unique dynamics of information dissemination and public engagement in these often-overlooked regions. Several conclusions can be made about the role communication plays in addressing the existing capitals in rural Kansas communities, including the importance of social and political capital as it relates to the messages from governments in these communities. Similarities and differences exist between the communication coming from McPherson and Montgomery County, despite the vastly different County Health Ranking scores. The patterns that explain these different rankings include neutral communication and an emphasis on social, political, and financial capital in McPherson County messages, compared to the lower number of these types of messages in Montgomery County. However, further study is necessary to identify if there is any correlation between communication strategies and development efforts.

While this research addressed cultural capital within the context of the Community Capitals Framework, it did not expand on the demographics or cultures within the two communities. Lauer and Sanderson (2022) explain that interpersonal solidarity is a critical factor in sustaining development. Different demographics and cultures may have varying levels of solidarity within their community, as well as other factors that may enhance or limit their ability to receive and understand messages. Further research could expand on this relationship.

Future research can also address other forms of communication in rural Kansas communities, such as interpersonal dialogue and or privately owned news sources. One major factor in this study is that the communities were both rural and small in population. If similar



research were to be performed on different communities, there would need to be an acknowledgment of the economy of scale, as urban areas have access to more communication outlets and news sources that may affect the methodology used in this research. Additionally, future research could look beyond the message creator and analyze the feedback and response to public messages from the community. By analyzing how communication amplifies community capitals, needs, and challenges, the community development profession can work to create effective messaging tools and strategies to aid local governments in creating sustainable, resilient communities.

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## Appendix A - McPherson County Data

Message	Source	Time			Tone	CCF	Role
		Duration	Quantity	Frequency			
Pre-applications are now being accepted for available funds for new homes in Deerfield Estates South. During the course of the next two years, 40 new homes (20 in the next year) will be built and can be owned with substantial savings after a grant through the Kansas Housing Resource Corp. Go to <a href="https://www.mcpcity.com/839/Deerfield-Estates-South">https://www.mcpcity.com/839/Deerfield-Estates-South</a> to learn more and fill out a pre-application to see if you qualify. Or reach out to City Administrator Austin Regier.	FB, City of MP, MP.	9/6/2024	74	1	Neutral	Financial, Built	Success Facilitation
Did you know? You can get news releases, meeting & financial notifications and other messages sent directly to your inbox or text message? It takes just a few minutes to sign up. Get the important information right at your fingertips. Just go to mcpcity.com and set your notification preferences.	FB, City of MP, MP.	8/20/2024	50	1	Neutral	Social, Political	Information Provision
Thank you to Kansas Gas Service for the support of the McPherson Park Department Tree Master Plan. The generous donation of 15 Sugar Maples will make a nice addition. #TreeCityUSA	FB, City of MP, MP.	8/15/2024	30	1	Positive	Natural	Motivation
A chance to address your questions. The City of McPherson will host a meet and greet session later this month at the McPherson Community Building, 122 E. Marlin. McPherson Mayor Tom Brown and Commissioners Gary Mehl and Larry Wiens, along with several department heads, will be on hand Aug. 19 from 4 to 6 p.m. in Citizens Hall. The gathering will provide an opportunity to learn about current and upcoming City projects and services from the commission, City Administrator Austin Regier, departments heads and others. This could include, but is not limited to, updates on Fire Station No. 2, street repairs or the replacement of park structures. Light refreshments will be provided. Stay up-to-date with City information straight from the source by signing up for alerts through CivicReady at <a href="http://www.mcpcity.com">www.mcpcity.com</a>	FB, City of MP, MP.	8/8/2024	129	1	Neutral	Social, Political	Idea Sharing
A huge shoutout to Ginger and the team at the McPherson Sonic Drive-in, 910 E. Kansas. Yesterday, they donated a coupon for a free limeade for all City of McPherson full-time employees for their birthdays throughout the year. Thank you for your generous contribution.	FB, City of MP, MP.	7/12/2024	45	1	Positive	Social, Human	Motivation
McPHERSON — The Union Pacific railroad crossing at Centennial Drive between First Street and Kansas Avenue will be closed July 9 and 10, 2024. The closure is necessary while railroad crossing signal upgrades are made. Motorists are advised to detour west on Kansas to Maxwell Street, then north to First Street. The upgrades require the crossing to be closed around the clock until complete. All of UP's railroad crossings throughout the community are receiving upgrades, but only Centennial requires closure. All others will be flagged. Those with questions or concerns can reach out to the City of McPherson Public Works Department at 620-245-2535.	FB, City of MP, MP.	7/9/2024	103	1	Neutral	Built	Information Provision

When you sign up for alerts from the City of McPherson, you aren't waiting to see the information elsewhere. It is sent directly to you, with language and communication preferences built in. Choose how you want to receive it and what you want to see.	FB, City of MP, MP.	6/20/2024	46	1	Neutral	Social, Political	Information Provision
Please note, the City is scheduled to spray for Mosquitos on June 4 and 6. Residents, especially those with asthma or respiratory sensitivity, should remain indoors during spraying. To reduce indoor exposure, residents should close windows, doors, and vents and turn off fans and window-unit air conditioners (or set them to recirculate). They should also remove children's toys and outdoor furniture from the outside, wash them before using them again, wash all produce, and wash skin and hair if exposed to the pesticide. Times should be between 8 p.m. and Midnight on those dates. Read more here:	FB, City of MP, MP.	5/29/2024	97	1	Neutral	Natural	Information Provision
Things that make us #McPhersonProud. The McPherson Park Department has been diligently working to hang the new McPherson Veterans Banners this week along various routes and in Memorial Park. This program is incredible and wouldn't be possible without the hard work of all involved in putting it together. The banners will remain through Veterans Day.	FB, City of MP, MP.	5/24/2024	55	1	Postive	Social, Human, Cultural	Unification
As a recognized Tree City USA for more than 45 years, the City of McPherson hosts the Arbor Day Tree Poster Contest in conjunction with its Arbor Day activities. Local fifth-grade classes are invited to participate with supplied lesson plans and submit a themed tree poster. This year's winner came from Eisenhower Elementary School. Hayden Vogelsberg was selected as the winner among nearly 50 entires. Hayden was honored by the City Park/Tree Board and the McPherson City Commission at Tuesday's regular commission meeting. With the first-place finish, Hayden's class also is invited participate Friday morning in an Arbor Day activity — this year at Lakeside Park, which includes planting a tree. #TreeCityUSA. You can also check out a presentation of every entry this year:	FB, City of MP, MP.	4/23/2024	125	1	Neutral	Natural, Social, Human, Cultural	Unification
Project information: Beginning at Noon on Thursday, April 11, Conco Construction — the contractor working on the Lakeside Park bank restoration project — will host a meet-and-greet. The company will be sharing information and supplying refreshments to park patrons interested in the ongoing project. Employees will be on hand near the staging area near the McPherson Water Park and be available until 3 p.m.	FB, City of MP, MP.	4/10/2024	64	1	Neutral	Built	Information Provision
For those who put flowers or other decor out on Christmas Day or New Year's Day at the City of McPherson Cemetery and want to retain them, those items need to be removed by March 1, 2024. Cemetery Sexton Jeff Rife would like to remind everyone that items not removed by March 1 will be discarded by staff in order to clean up for spring. Anyone with questions can reach out to Rife at jeffr@mcpcity.com or by calling the cemetery at 620-245-2568.	FB, City of MP, MP.	2/21/2024	82	1	Neutral	Social, Political, Cultural	Information Provision



<p>NEWS RELEASE — Beginning with its Feb. 6, 2024, meeting, the City of McPherson will reorganize its weekly City Commission and Commission Study Session meetings. The format will resemble its operation in 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic warranted temporary changes.</p> <p>During that time, a need for more space and a digital attendee option required the use of the commission chambers to conduct all business. And in order to limit meeting time, the commission and study sessions were conducted as one. The re-visited format — as it was prior to 2020 — will see the Commission meet for its regularly-scheduled 8:30 a.m. meeting each Tuesday, where action items will be presented for Commission vote and/or discussion. The meeting is broadcast live via the City’s Facebook page.</p> <p>The Commission then will adjourn for a short break and reconvene in the City board room for a weekly work session, presentation and/or roundtable discussion of non-action business or budget items to be brought forward later for Commission approval.</p> <p>All meetings where more than one commissioner is present are open to the public, and those wishing to bring up topics for discussion at either are welcome. The weekly agenda for the Commission meetings and study sessions are published prior to each meeting and the minutes of each City Commission meeting are published upon approval the following week. Agendas and minutes are available by following the link through the City’s website</p>	<p>FB, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>1/16/2024</p>	<p>235</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Idea Sharing</p>
<p>You’ll probably see the street department out today treating roads. When significant inclement weather is forecast, city crews treat major roadways within city limits, then follow with snow removal if needed. The latest report from the National Weather Service forecasts McPherson getting 1-3 inches of snow Friday with the possibility of a wintry mix ahead of it overnight tonight.</p>	<p>FB, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>1/4/2024</p>	<p>60</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built, Natural</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>From Dec. 25, 2023, to Jan. 15, 2024, those wishing to drop off their natural holiday trees for disposal and chipping will be able to so.</p> <p>The drop off area will be in a designated area in the parking lot at the McPherson Water Park, 511 W. Lakeside Drive, near Lakeside Park.</p> <p>The trees will be chipped every Friday and mulch can be taken from piles in the southeast corner of the parking lot.</p> <p>Trees taken to this site must be clear of all decorations and any plastic before being placed in the bin.</p> <p>For more information about the disposal, contact the McPherson Park Department at 620-245-2565 during normal operating hours. The Park Department is closed until Tuesday, Dec. 26.</p>	<p>FB, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>12/22/2023</p>	<p>120</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natural</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>

<p>Grant applicants needed immediately!</p> <p>The City of McPherson seeks 6 applicants for a CDBG housing rehabilitation grant.</p> <p>The grant supports rehabilitation of owner and renter occupied homes up to \$25,000 to encourage neighborhood revitalization in a specific target area.</p> <p>Homes eligible are located at Avenue A to the North, South Walnut Street on both side of the street to the East, West Avenue F to the South if not in a flood zone or having a Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA), and Railroad tracks to the West. A Map of the target area is below. The Household must meet the low-to-moderate-income category (see link below for income guidelines) and can be used to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roof replacement</li> <li>• Electrical &amp; Plumbing repair or replacement</li> <li>• Heating &amp; Air Conditioning repair or replacement</li> <li>• Window repair or replacement</li> <li>• Siding repair or replacement</li> <li>• Minor foundation repair</li> <li>• All Weatherization measures</li> <li>• Etc., everything to meet minimum Housing Quality Standards (typically no indoor finishings)</li> </ul> <p>For rental units, the renter must be income-qualified. If the owner of the rental unit is income-qualified, the City will pay 85 percent of the rehabilitation and the Owner will be responsible for 15 percent. If the owner is above income guidelines, he/she must contribute 25 percent of the rehabilitation cost. The owner of the unit must also sign a rent-freeze agreement for a three-year period.</p> <p>Interested persons should contact Interim City Administrator Daniela Rivas at <a href="mailto:danielar@mcpcity.com">danielar@mcpcity.com</a> or Assistant Finance Director Richard Miller at <a href="mailto:richardm@mcpcity.com">richardm@mcpcity.com</a> or call 620.245.2535 no later than Thursday, December 28, 2023.</p> <p>Find more information and a map of the project area on the City's website at</p>	<p>FB, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>12/5/2023</p>	<p>288</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Financial, Built</p>	<p>Success Facilitation</p>
<p>Things that make us McPherson Proud. Thank you to everyone who came out Wednesday as we celebrated becoming a Purple Heart City. It's such an honor to be a part of honoring those who serve, have been hurt or have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms. Signs will be placed at every entrance into the community. Shout out to the Vita Voce Choir from McPherson High School for an excellent rendition of our national anthem and the McPherson KS Police Department for presenting the colors. Never forget.</p>	<p>FB, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>11/16/2023</p>	<p>88</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Postive</p>	<p>Social, Human, Cultural</p>	<p>Unification</p>
<p>In case you haven't seen it, don't be alarmed. FEMA will be testing its nationwide alert system Wednesday, Oct. 4, at 1:20 p.m. (Central Time). This is only a necessary test sent out to cellular devices, TVs and radios. Here is more information from FEMA.</p>	<p>FB, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>10/3/2023</p>	<p>45</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natural, Built, Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>

Today will wrap up the three-day KATE Active Transportation Summit at the McPherson Community Building. Event-goers had the opportunity to listen to multiple speakers, participate in various activities throughout the community and hop aboard the Visit McPherson trolley. We hope you enjoyed your experience downtown and thank you for coming!	FB, City of MP, MP.	9/22/2023	50	1	Neutral	Social, Human	Information Provision
Congratulations to the McPherson Housing Coalition and the Oak Harbor Cottage Project for being recognized at the Kansas Housing Conference by the Kansas Banker's Association with the "Show Your Service Award". They were recognized by their peers at the conference for the award and received a \$2,000.00 check for their innovation and commitment to community service in the area of housing. We are proud of your efforts and service to the McPherson Community!	FB, City of MP, MP.	8/23/2023	73	1	Postive	Financial, Built	Motivation
Don't forget. The City still is looking for local businesses interested in this grant opportunity. The deadline to submit our application is looming. Read the details. If you think your business might qualify, but aren't sure, it's worth a phone call to find out.	FB, City of MP, MP.	7/26/2023	45	1	Neutral	Financial, Political	Success Facilitation
In case you missed it. The City of McPherson is now on SeeClickFix, a citizen reporting tool complete with mobile app. Residents can use the portal to report things like broken swings in the park or traffic signs that are damaged, among many other categories.	FB, City of MP, MP.	6/28/2023	46	1	Neutral	Social, Political	Information Provision
McPherson voters in May will face an important decision whether or not to fund facility improvements with a bond put forth by McPherson Public Schools. Officials from the district were on hand this morning to address the McPherson City Commission. Forward to the five-minute mark of today's meeting. To get more information, visit	FB, City of MP, MP.	3/28/2023	53	1	Neutral	Financial, Political	Information Provision
Happy #InternationalWomensDay to the incredible women who are dedicated to service with the City of McPherson and all the women who strive to make our community great!	FB, City of MP, MP.	3/8/2023	27	1	Postive	Social, Political, Cultural	Conscientization
NOTICE: Bidders submitting for the CDBG Grant Walnut Street project. Special conditions apply. Reach out to the Public Works Department at 620-245-2535 for more information.	FB, City of MP, MP.	12/27/2022	25	1	Neutral	Financial, Built	Success Facilitation
The McPherson Mayor's Cup was played out Tuesday night with McPherson College winning the crosstown matchup against Central Christian College. The Bulldog women won 67-44, while the Bulldog men captured an 85-65 win. Pictured are McPherson Mayor Tom Brown and McPherson College's Dy'mond McElrath. Thank you to everyone for a great night of basketball.	FB, City of MP, MP.	11/9/2022	54	1	Postive	Social	Motivation
A very important matter is ahead of the citizens of McPherson and it's crucial you make your voices heard. USD 418 is hosting a trio of Community Vision sessions for a potential school bond. These sessions are meant to inform and gather input from the public on the issues. Two of them are in person — Oct. 4 and 13 at the McPherson Community Building and one of them — Oct. 12 — a virtual option.	FB, City of MP, MP.	9/29/2022	76	1	Neutral	Financial, Human, Political	Idea Sharing

Just a reminder, the City of McPherson is hosting a public meeting at 10 a.m. Thursday regarding the potential Lakeside Park bank restoration project. The meeting will take place near the Rotary International Garden. Several representatives from the City along with engineers as well as representatives from the Kansas Forest Service will present information. There will be time allotted at the end for input from other attendees.	FB, City of MP, MP.	8/24/2022	67	1	Neutral	Natural, Built	Idea Sharing
Today (July 28) is the last remaining scheduled public meeting with the City of McPherson to discuss the second half-cent sales tax renewal election on the Aug. 2 ballot. This is another chance to view the proposal and ask questions of city officials in person so you can make an informed decision come Tuesday. Come out to the McPherson Community Building at 122 E. Marlin at 5:30 p.m. Can't make it? All the information is right here:	FB, City of MP, MP.	7/28/2022	77	1	Neutral	Financial, Political	Idea Sharing
The City of McPherson is hosting a series of public meetings discussing the upcoming special election regarding the second half-cent sales tax. Public input is a vital part of future project prioritization. Attendants at the various public meetings (Next: July 7 at 5:30 p.m. at the Community Building) have been asked to fill out a short project survey, which is now available online. Visit mpcity.com for more information and a list of frequently asked questions. Fill out the survey here:	FB, City of MP, MP.	7/6/2022	80	1	Neutral	Financial, Political	Idea Sharing
Some might have received the attached letter regarding the 2022 CDBG Grant project. If you own homes in the target area (see photo), your property might be eligible for funds for improvements. The City will host a pair of informational meetings Thursday in the City Commission room at 400 E. Kansas. The 5:30 p.m. meeting will focus on owner-occupied properties, while the 6 p.m. meeting will focus on landlords/rentals in the area. Both sessions will be live in person, but also will be broadcast on Zoom. You can find more information at mpcity.com. If you would like the Zoom invitation, reach out to Community Information Coordinator Nick McQueen at nickm@mpcity.com. prior to 5 p.m. Thursday.	FB, City of MP, MP.	6/6/2022	115	1	Neutral	Financial, Built	Information Provision
Tuesday morning, the McPherson City Commission officially proclaimed Friday, April 29, 2022 as Arbor Day in McPherson. City Forester Kody Kraemer and the city Tree Board will host an activity from 10 a.m. to noon Friday morning for local fifth-graders to celebrate the 150th anniversary of #ArborDay #TreeCityUSA	FB, City of MP, MP.	4/26/2022	48	1	Neutral	Natural, Social	Information Provision
On Tuesday morning, the McPherson Community Building hosted the Center for Economic Development and Business Research Economic Outlook Conference presented by Jeremy Hill. McPherson Mayor Tom Brown, Go McPherson (MIDC) Executive Director Kasi Morales, McPherson Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Debbie Hawkinson and McPherson Main Street Executive Director Ann Engel also presented to a room of area business leaders. The McPherson stop was part of a series by the CEDBR.	FB, City of MP, MP.	2/1/2022	70	1	Neutral	Financial, Human	Information Provision
KHRC's First Time Homebuyer Program provides down payment and closing cost assistance for Kansans purchasing their first home. Homebuyers partner with our participating lenders to navigate the process. The program allows homebuyers to apply for a 0% interest loan for 15 or 20% of the home's	FB, City of MP, MP.	10/17/2021	63	1	Neutral	Financial	Success Facilitation

<p>purchase price. The loan is forgiven if the buyer remains in the home for 10 years.</p>							
<p>McPherson Area Solid Waste Utility will have construction work done on the scale at the transfer station at 1431 17th Avenue, McPherson, KS the week of September 20 – September 25. Customers should plan for congested traffic and an alternate traffic pattern. Delays should be expected. The facility will be open for normal hours Monday – Friday, 8am – 5 pm and Saturday, 8am – 4pm.</p>	<p>FB, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>9/14/2021</p>	<p>66</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natural</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>Mayoral Candidate Forum</p> <p>The Civic Awareness Committee of the McPherson Chamber of Commerce is hosting a Mayoral Candidate Forum on Thursday, September 16th. The forum is an opportunity for the community to hear directly from the candidates about important topics.</p> <p>The City of McPherson mayoral candidates, Tom Brown and Luke Aichele, have both confirmed their attendance. The public is invited to attend on September 16th at 7:00 pm at KMU, 2090 East Ave. A., McPherson.</p> <p>The format will be question-and-answer as opposed to debate. Attendees will have the opportunity upon arrival and during the forum to submit questions for the candidates. All questions from the audience will be screened for duplication, legibility, and suitability for both candidates. The candidates will draw numbers to determine who will speak first, and both candidates will have 3 minutes for an opening statement. Candidates will then address the submitted questions, taking turns on answering first. Each candidate will also be given the opportunity for a 2-minute closing statement.</p> <p>For those unable to attend, the McPherson Chamber of Commerce has partnered with McPherson Radio to broadcast the Mayoral Candidate Forum live on FM 96.7 KBBE. The forum will also be available on the McPherson Chamber of Commerce Facebook Page. Questions will not be monitored on Facebook during the forum, so please contact the candidates directly, to have your questions answered prior to election day.</p> <p>Important dates to remember: Voter Registration Deadline- October 12. Advance Voting Begins- October 13. General Election Day- November 2, 2021</p>	<p>FB, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>9/14/2021</p>	<p>250</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Dialogue Facilitation</p>
<p>MCPHERSON COUNTY COMMISSION NOTIFICATION:</p> <p>County Commissioner Keith Becker (Chairman) has canceled the Regular Meeting of the Board of County Commissioners for Monday, August 26, 2024.</p> <p>The Next regular Meeting will be held Monday, September 9, 2024 as County Offices will be closed September 2, 2024 in observance of the Labor Day holiday.</p>	<p>FB, County, MP.</p>	<p>8/22/2024</p>	<p>48</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>

ROAD CLOSURE: Due to work being done on the Inman Ditch project east of Inman, the contractor is planning to close Cherokee Road for 3 weeks beginning September 3rd thru September 20th, 2024. The closure could be several days shorter, or several days longer, depending on how weather conditions affect the work schedule. Cherokee Road will be closed to through traffic from 10th Avenue to 11th Avenue.	FB, County, MP.	8/9/2024	65	1	Neutral	Built	Information Provision
McPherson County is Hiring!! See full job descriptions at the link below!	FB, County, MP.	7/31/2024	13	25+	Neutral	Human	Information Provision
There have been some residents that recently purchased homes receiving letters from this company. They are not associated with McPherson County or any of our offices, and obviously if you read this example we are not "Polk County" Please call and verify documents requesting money as this is not something required by us.	FB, County, MP.	7/10/2024	53	1	Neutral	Political	Information Provision
In Observance of Independence Day, McPherson County Offices will be closed Thursday July 4th and Friday July 5th. Have a safe and happy Holiday!!	FB, County, MP.	7/3/2024	24	1	Neutral	Political	Information Provision
Our Online Real Estate and Tax Portals are currently down due to an Internet outage with our software provider. We do not have an estimated time of restoration yet. We apologize for the inconvenience!	FB, County, MP.	7/3/2024	33	1	Neutral	Political, Financial	Information Provision
The McPherson County Clerk and Elections Office would like to assist County constituents with valuable information leading up to the 2024 elections. Residents can find voter information including filing forms, polling locations, voter registration information, and information on applying for advance ballots by mail by going to the following page. <a href="https://www.mcphersoncountyks.us/946/Elections">https://www.mcphersoncountyks.us/946/Elections</a> Additional Resources for Elections can be found at the Secretary of State Elections page below: <a href="https://sos.ks.gov/elections/elections.html">https://sos.ks.gov/elections/elections.html</a> The McPherson County Clerk and Elections office will not contact you by text message. If you feel you have been subject to fraudulent activity. Please call the Clerk and Elections Office at (620) 241-3656.	FB, County, MP.	1/19/2024	96	1	Neutral	Political	Information Provision
All County Offices with the Exception of Law Enforcement and Emergency Services are Closed Today due to weather. Please stay home if you do not need to be out.	FB, County, MP.	1/9/2024	29	1	Neutral	Political	Information Provision
Today's Board of Planning, Zoning, and Appeals meeting has been moved to Wednesday 1/10/24 at 7pm	FB, County, MP.	1/8/2024	16	1	Neutral	Political	Information Provision
There will be a delay in the reporting of unofficial results from McPherson County. Paper ballots are coming in from our poll places now. Our central count tabulator is experiencing a mechanical issue and a replacement will be in place after midnight to count approximately 5000 votes. We expect unofficial results by morning.	FB, County, MP.	11/7/2023	53	1	Neutral	Political	Information Provision

Today at 8:30 am McPherson County Commissioners will canvas votes and certify the election in the McPherson County Clerk and Elections office. Official results will be posted at that time.	FB, County, MP.	11/22/2022	30	1	Neutral	Political	Information Provision
For those seeking grants with US Department of Housing and Urban Development please see the following notice.	FB, County, MP.	4/11/2022	17	1	Neutral	Financial, Built	Information Provision
The McPherson County Republican Precinct Committee will convene in the 1st Floor Conference Room at 122 W. Marlin this evening at 7pm to elect the next County Attorney. The elect will then need to be confirmed and appointed by the governor within 7 days.  The public is welcome although seating is limited. You can also view the proceedings on the McPherson County Website via the following link.	FB, County, MP.	3/3/2022	66	1	Neutral	Political	Information Provision
We would like to apologize for the inability to communicate via our County telephone system effectively. There is an issue with our providers transport and we are experiencing one way audio or not able to hear at all. We are working with the to address the issue as quickly as possible and will post an update when things have returned to normal operation.  Alternatively if you have questions that are urgent to you for answers our offices are open so we would love to talk to you in person if able.  Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter!	FB, County, MP.	9/27/2021	101	1	Neutral	Social, Political	Information Provision
We are excited to let people know that the Online Real Estate and Tax Portals are back up!  Due to issues with the hosting vendor we were limited in ability to get them up and running in a quicker manner however usability has been restored.  We absolutely appreciate your patience and understanding in the matter. You can find the sites in the below links, or by searching the "How Do I" section on our main website at	FB, County, MP.	4/4/2021	77	1	Postive	Political, Financial	Information Provision
McPherson County will be undergoing a change of phone service providers today. During that time county offices will be unable to make and receive calls but we expect the interruptions to be temporary and short in duration.  This change will not affect the joint Law Enforcement Center Administrative lines or 911 calls.  Thank you for your patience with this transition.	FB, County, MP.	12/16/2020	58	1	Neutral	Social, Political	Information Provision
1ST HALF TAXES UPDATE  There is an error with the original 2020 tax statements county wide. Adjusted statements will be sent out, please wait until you receive these to pay. 1st half due date has been extended to 12/31/2020.	FB, County, MP.	12/9/2020	38	1	Neutral	Political, Financial	Information Provision
County Offices are currently experiencing Phone outages due to a Cox Service issue. They are working on the issue however we do not have a specific time frame when service will be restored. We apologize for the inconvenience and will post when service has been restored.	FB, County, MP.	7/17/2020	46	1	Neutral	Social, Political	Information Provision
Please see the latest COVID-19 update released earlier today by the McPherson County Health Department. There are 3 new cases which now puts the County at 33 total Confirmed Cases. 25 of the 33 cases have met recovery guidelines and 1 case is currently hospitalized. You can read the full release at the link below.	FB, County, MP.	6/6/2020	55	1	Neutral	Human	Information Provision

<p>McPherson County has begun taking appointments for the Phase 1 Re-Opening of Departments within the Courthouse location. You must call ahead to the respective department to make an appointment in advance. You will be asked a series of general COVID-19 health questions as well as your name and phone number.</p> <p>At that point a representative from the department will provide you with a time and date for your appointment as well as instructions where to enter.</p> <p>The Tag Department will begin taking appointments May 11th for title work only. Renewals should continue to be mailed or completed online using the instructions on your renewal notice.</p> <p>Passport applications will not be taken until June 1st and will be re-evaluated at that time.</p> <p>All contact info for County Departments can be found on the main website page under "County Directory" on the McPherson County Website at <a href="https://www.mcpcoks.us">https://www.mcpcoks.us</a></p> <p>Please find the Phase 1 Courthouse Re-Opening Departmental Appointment Policy link below.</p>	<p>FB, County, MP.</p>	<p>5/4/2020</p>	<p>154</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>We wanted to post a graphic of our Website Main Page that shows both where to find the latest COVID-19 Update at the which is at the top of the left navigation column, and then also publicly available COVID-19 resources which are in the News Flash section also on the main page of our County website at <a href="http://www.mcpcoks.us">www.mcpcoks.us</a></p> <p>If you have questions or concerns regarding COVID-19 that are not in these resources please contact the McPherson County Health Department at <a href="mailto:machd@mcphersoncountyks.us">machd@mcphersoncountyks.us</a> or call them during normal business hours.</p>	<p>FB, County, MP.</p>	<p>4/13/2020</p>	<p>87</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Social, Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>Due to Governor Kelly's statewide stay at home order we would like to pass on information for Employers and Employees regarding "Essential Businesses" and "Essential Employees".</p> <p>First of all if you are an employee not clear on if you are considered "essential" or not. Please do not contact our Health Department or Emergency Services with these questions. Every Situation is different and they are not aware of every situation. These questions will be interpreted and answered by your employer. You should contact your Supervisor or Management and they will be able to properly instruct you and give you information regarding this matter.</p> <p>For Employers, if you have questions regarding your classification as an "Essential Business" you should email the State at <a href="mailto:keff@ks.gov">keff@ks.gov</a>. If you would like approval as an "Essential Business" please go to <a href="https://governor.kansas.gov/keff">https://governor.kansas.gov/keff</a> and complete the online form.</p> <p>Additionally the State of Kansas Stay at Home order supersedes all local Stay at Home orders in their entirety. Please familiarize yourself with this order. The link is provided below for your convenience.</p>	<p>FB, County, MP.</p>	<p>3/30/2020</p>	<p>173</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Human, Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>



<p>From the McPherson County Health Department regarding business Hours and Operation.</p> <p>During the COVID-19 pandemic, McPherson County Health Department (MCHD) will continue to operate until further notice. MCHD is taking a proactive approach to protect our clients and our community.</p> <p>Effective March 24, 2020, McPherson County Health Department will implement services by appointment only. Our front entrance will be locked during operating hours in order to keep gatherings less than 10-persons. If you have an appointment scheduled with us from March 25th to April 5th, please expect to hear from our staff soon. We will assess each client's situation and will make the necessary changes to keep you safe. If you plan to utilize a walk-in service, please call ahead and we will further instruct you. When you arrive to MCHD, please stay in your vehicle or space yourself 6 feet apart from others and call our office phone for instruction.</p> <p>McPherson County Health Department WIC Program is now available without physical presence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current participants will continue to receive WIC benefits and new applicants will be assessed, certified and issued benefits.</li> <li>• Clinic operating hours and staff availability will be subject to local and state orders related to the pandemic. Currently, the MCHD WIC Program is in operation at the following days and times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:00 – 12:00 PM, 1:00 – 5:00 PM Wednesdays 9:30 – 12:00 PM, 1:00 – 5:00 PM</li> <li>• Normally, participants and applicants of the program must be physically present to receive services. A physical presence waiver is now in effect, allowing WIC appointments to occur using telephone, computer and other technology. Clinic staff will assess and certify applicants for eligibility and will issue food benefits remotely to those determined eligible.</li> <li>• If you have an appointment already scheduled, please call us at that appointment time and we will further instruct you.</li> <li>• Additional details about the Kansas WIC Program can be found here: <a href="http://www.kansaswic.org/families">www.kansaswic.org/families</a></li> </ul> <p>McPherson County Health Department Family Planning Program will also continue to be available during the pandemic until further notice. If you are due for an annual exam, need to pick up or receive your contraceptives, or need to schedule a problem visit, please call our office. We are happy to answer your questions and work towards keeping you safe, while also supporting your health needs.</p> <p>McPherson County Health Department will schedule essential Immunization Appointments at this time. If you are scheduled for an appointment, please only bring the patient and necessary parent/legal guardian. Screening at the front door will take place to ensure everyone's safety.</p> <p>Thank you for working with us during this challenging time. We are thankful to have such a great, supportive community!</p>	<p>FB, County, MP.</p>	<p>3/24/2020</p>	<p>435</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Human, Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
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<p>Advance Voting is now Open for the Primary Election August 7th!</p> <p>You can Vote now by visiting the County Clerk's office in the Basement level of the McPherson County Courthouse.</p> <p>Advanced Voting ends at noon August 6th.</p>	<p>FB, County, MP.</p>	<p>7/19/2018</p>	<p>36</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>The McPherson County Courthouse, at Kansas and Maple, will be closed for all business and court activities on Tuesday, February 6th until 10:30 a.m., to allow for staff safety education training. All other McPherson County departments located throughout the city, including the County Sheriff, Emergency Communications, County Health Department, County Public Works, and the County Attorney Offices are not affected and will maintain regular business hours.</p>	<p>FB, County, MP.</p>	<p>2/2/2018</p>	<p>69</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Human, Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>We encourage everyone to participate in the Annual Millfest activities at the Old Mill Museum in Lindsborg this coming weekend! Take a tour of the Mill and see it operate as well as Music, Food, and Arts and Crafts. Sat. May 6th 9am -5pm and Sun. May 7th, 12-5 pm. Enjoy part of McPherson County's History!</p>	<p>FB, County, MP.</p>	<p>5/1/2017</p>	<p>56</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Social, Political, Cultural</p>	<p>Motivation</p>
<p>Currently our Dispatch Center is having problems receiving Administrative calls from Reno and Harvey County. We believe that this is a Cox Communications problem and are working with them to resolve the issue. If you have an emergency please dial 911.</p> <p>IT Staff is working to resolve this as quickly as possible.</p>	<p>FB, MP County, MP.</p>	<p>3/23/2017</p>	<p>52</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Social, Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>The City of McPherson is excited to announce its successful application for an MIH-ARPA (Moderate Income Housing-American Rescue Plan Act) grant through the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation. McPherson's successful proposal — submitted by Twinland II, LLC — was among 20 awards announced Friday by the KHRC.</p> <p>The proposed South Deerfield Homes project was awarded \$1.65 million in MIH-ARPA funds for the completion of 40 new moderate-income houses over the course of the next two years.</p> <p>"This is an exciting time for McPherson, which is taking major steps toward adding much-needed workforce housing," said McPherson City Administrator Nick Gregory. "We would like to thank the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation for recognizing the needs of McPherson to continue its housing growth to keep up with continued industry expansion."</p>	<p>Web, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>12/14/2023</p>	<p>128</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Postive</p>	<p>Financial, Built</p>	<p>Motivation</p>

<p>The City of McPherson is in the process of preparing an application to receive grant funds from the Community Development Block Grant COVID Resiliency Category (CVR).</p> <p>In order to fulfill the application requirements, the City also is actively seeking qualifying businesses that have an interest in having access should it be successful in attaining these funds.</p> <p>To be eligible, businesses must meet the following criteria:</p> <p>Be open on or before March 1, 2020.</p> <p>Retain between 1 and 50 employees.</p> <p>At least 51 percent of the business' employees must meet low-to-moderate income standards.</p> <p>The purpose of the program is to aid businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic that are in need of improvements and enhancements to stay competitive in today's market and to stay resilient should a future pandemic be felt.</p> <p>A more specific list of eligible activities that might be eligible for consideration are as follows:</p> <p>For upgrades allowing businesses to remain open to prevent future closures due to community illnesses and health emergencies. May require a Preliminary Architecture Report depending on the scope (Any projects that include construction will need to include Davis-Bacon wage rates and potentially an environmental review).</p> <p>Technology, hardware, and software upgrades including infrastructure, devices, and applications.</p> <p>E-commerce updates including online inventory management and website enhancements.</p> <p>Professional development and training for business enhancements.</p> <p>Other updates that can be directly related to resiliency improvements.</p> <p>Businesses with five or fewer employees might be eligible for funds up to \$30,000 and those with six to 50 employees could receive up to \$50,000 should the City's application be successful.</p> <p>Qualifying projects might include facility or technology upgrades, e-Commerce updates, professional trainings or any other updates that can be directly related to resiliency.</p>	<p>Web, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>9/14/2023</p>	<p>269</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Financial, Human</p>	<p>Success Facilitation</p>
<p>On Tuesday, June 27, 2023, the railroad crossing on Centennial Drive — between Kansas (U.S. Hwy 56) and First Street in McPherson — will be completely closed for repairs.</p> <p>The necessary maintenance is expected to be completed in one day. Those with</p>	<p>Web, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>6/26/2023</p>	<p>61</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>

<p>questions or concerns can contact the City of McPherson Public Works Department at 620-245-2535 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.</p>							
<p>In its continued effort to help fulfill an immediate need for workforce housing in the community, the City of McPherson released a request for proposals for Moderate Income Housing projects in 2023.</p> <p>The deadline for the next round of grant funding provides a short window, therefore interested developers need to submit by May 12.</p> <p>The City will choose to submit proposals it feels can be finalized within the time available to be given consideration by the State of Kansas.</p>	<p>Web, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>4/25/2023</p>	<p>79</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Financial, Built</p>	<p>Success Facilitation</p>
<p>As the weather continues to cool, the City of McPherson is warning the community to stay off lakes and ponds. Cold temperatures do not guarantee that ice on the lakes and ponds is safe. With the warm and cold temperatures, we experience in the fall, it is important that residents stay off lakes and ponds until it is safe to do so, the ice may look solid, but that does not necessarily mean it is safe to skate or walk on. Please obey all posted signs on the city owned LAKES and WATERWAYS. Please contact the Public Lands and Facilities department with any questions or concerns at 620.245.2535.</p> <p>If you or anyone you know ventures onto the ice and experiences trouble – keep the following in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always keep your pets on a leash if walking near a partially frozen waterway. If a pet falls through the ice do not attempt to rescue your pet, go for help.</li> <li>• Reach-Throw-Go. If a companion falls through the ice and you are unable to reach that person from shore, throw them something (rope, jumper cables, tree branch, etc.). If this does not work, go for help before you also become a victim. Get medical assistance for the victim immediately.</li> <li>• If you fall in, try not to panic. Turn toward the direction from which you came. Place your hands and arms on the unbroken surface, working forward by kicking your feet. Once out, remain lying on the ice (do not stand) and roll away from the hole. Crawl back to your tracks, keeping your weight distributed until you return to solid ice.</li> </ul>	<p>Web, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>12/20/2022</p>	<p>271</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natural</p>	<p>Conscientization</p>

<p>The City of McPherson is excited to announce it has received a fifth Transportation Alternative grant for completion of Phase II of the Northview 10-foot trail project.</p> <p>The grant award — in the amount of \$856,351 — was announced Thursday by Kansas Governor Laura Kelly. The grant is administered by the Kansas Department of Transportation and provides funding for a variety of projects. It was one of 32 grants awarded Thursday across the state.</p> <p>“This funding will make it easier for Kansas to get outside and get moving no matter where they live,” Kelly said in a statement. “By investing in our infrastructure, we are making our communities safer, stronger and more attractive for generations to come.”</p> <p>Phase I of the Northview project, which already is completed, was partially funded through a separate award from the program.</p> <p>“We are extremely excited that the Kansas Department of Transportation has chosen to fund the East Northview Phase II Trail Project as part of the Transportation Alternative program,” City Administrator Nick Gregory said. “This goes a long way to assuring accessibility for biking, hiking and walking opportunities in and around the East Northview neighborhood and providing connectivity to rest of our trail system. It will be a great addition to our network of sidewalks and trails across the community.”</p> <p>“I want to thank Jeff Woodward (Public Works Director) and McPherson Public Works Department for their efforts obtain this grant and the many other related trail grants that the City of McPherson has successfully received,” Gregory added.</p> <p>The grant will be used to complete the 10-foot hiking, biking and walking trail from Main Street to East Veranda Circle along Northview Road. It will tie into Phase I, which was constructed from Meadowlark Trail to Main. The TA Grant covers 80 percent of the total construction cost.</p> <p>In May, McPherson Mayor Tom Brown, Commissioner Larry Wiens and Commissioner Gary Mehl unanimously adopted a resolution of support and administration for the grant application and agreed to match the 20-percent requirement, showing a continued willingness to prioritize these valuable projects.</p> <p>“These grants provide an excellent opportunity to provide walking, jogging and biking trails that fit into the City’s master plan,” Woodward said.</p> <p>It’s the fifth TA Grant awarded to the City of McPherson.</p>	<p>Web, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>10/6/2022</p>	<p>374</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Financial, Built</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
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<p>The City of McPherson is pleased to announce its most recent award of a Community Development Block Grant — in the amount of \$500,000 — from the Kansas Department of Commerce.</p> <p>The newest grant, the fourth to include housing and sixth overall to the City since 2016, is the largest received by McPherson. Presented by Gov. Laura Kelly, and Lt. Gov. David Toland, McPherson City Administrator Nick Gregory and Mayor Tom Brown accepted the grant award at a ceremony Thursday in Topeka, along with Sen. Rick Wilborn, R-McPherson, and Rep. Les Mason, R-McPherson.</p> <p>This particular grant, in the Neighborhood Development category, is aimed at improvements in a target location in the area of Avenue A going South on the east and west sides of Walnut and Chestnut Streets in McPherson.</p> <p>Specific projects to be discussed are substantial rehabilitation to approximately 12 houses occupied by low to moderate income families, approximately six of which will be rental units and six owner-occupied within the target area. This is the fourth area the City has targeted for CDBG rehabilitation.</p> <p>In addition, this grant will partially fund street updates in three blocks of South Walnut Street (from Avenue A to D). The updates will include widening the roadway to 32 feet as well as adding new curb and guttering to improve surface drainage. Ramps and sidewalks requiring ADA updates also are included along this same route.</p> <p>The project is estimated at \$1,140,470.56 with the grant accounting for \$500,000. The local match of the remaining \$640,926.56 will come from the City of McPherson, landlord contributions and the Kansas Weatherization Program.</p> <p>Of that \$1.1 million, \$795,970 is put toward updating the roadway with \$200,000 coming from the CDBG fund. The remainder will be used from the half cent sales tax proceeds dedicated for streets.</p> <p>The housing rehab portion has been budgeted at \$309,500, with \$275,000 coming from CDBG funds and the remaining \$34,500 coming from matching landlord funds, waived fees and matching weatherization money. Projects include upgrades such as roof replacement or other weatherization methods.</p> <p>The remaining \$25,000 is for grant administration.</p> <p>Within the grant received in 2020, the City still is in search of two eligible properties for rehabilitation funding. That target area is bounded by South Main Street to the east, East Avenue A to the south, South Elm Street on both sides of the street, and East Avenue F on both sides of the street.</p>	<p>Web, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>2/10/2022</p>	<p>454</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Financial, Built</p>	<p>Success Facilitation</p>
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<p>For more information about the CDBG program, contact City Administrator Nick Gregory at 620-245-2535 during business hours 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.</p> <p>In a separate grant award Thursday, McPherson County received \$250,000 for projects aimed at rural water improvements. County Commissioners David O'Dell and Keith Becker accepted the award.</p>							
<p>Concrete wont grow! Make sure you are adjusting your sprinkler heads so they are facing your lawn and not your sidewalks, driveways or roadways.</p>	<p>X, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>8/4/2021</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natural</p>	<p>Conscientization</p>
<p>LAKESIDE DISC GOLF COURSE CLOSING FOR RENOVATION - McPherson Park Department has released the latest plans for a renovated disc golf course redesign and is asking for community feedback. Please send suggestions to wayneb@mcpcity.com &amp; lauren@mcpcity.com</p>	<p>X, City of MP, MP.</p>	<p>1/15/2021</p>	<p>36</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built</p>	<p>Idea Sharing</p>

## Appendix B - Montgomery County Data

Message	Source	Time			Tone	CCF	Role
		Duration	Quantity	Frequency			
Buckeye Street between 5th Street and 8th Street will be closed tomorrow - Tuesday, September 10th when Bettis Asphalt & Construction will be laying asphalt. They will mill Buckeye Street between 8th Street and 11th Street so it will be down to one lane with flaggers. Mill and asphalt overlay on Buckeye Street between 1st Street and 5th Street is finished! It will be striped when the mill and overlay on Buckeye is complete.	FB, Coffeyville, MG.	9/9/2024	74	1	Neutral	Built	Information Provision
The deadline for Water Service Line customer surveys has been extended to September 15th, 2024. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced changes to drinking water regulations requiring water supply systems to identify all materials used in the construction of the systems. The goal of these regulations is to reduce the public's exposure to lead. Accordingly, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment is requiring that all public water systems complete an inventory of the water distribution system. This includes the public distribution lines and private service lines. The City is collecting information about the privately-owned section of the service line by conducting this customer survey. Completed paper surveys can be mailed to PO Box 1629, Coffeyville, KS or brought to the City Clerk's office at 102 W. 7th.	FB, Coffeyville, MG.	7/31/2024	129	1	Neutral	Built, Natural	Idea Sharing
Due to drought conditions improving with the recent precipitation events and rise in the Elk City Reservoir water level, the Coffeyville City Commission voted at the meeting Tuesday, February 13th to officially end the Water Warning, which was implemented in August of 2023. The end of the Water Warning will take effect upon publication of Resolution R-24-04 in the Coffeyville Journal tomorrow Saturday, February 17th. Thank you to all the residents and businesses that made an effort to conserve during the Water Warning!	FB, Coffeyville, MG.	2/16/2024	83	1	Neutral	Natural	Information Provision
UPDATE 4:25 pm - We have distributed all the water we have and the Water Distribution is closed. Bottled Water Distribution - Sunday, January 28th, 2024 The City of Coffeyville will be distributing cases of water, 1 per household at the Grandstand/Rodeo Arena at Walter Johnson Park (401 Hargis) today - Sunday, January 28th from 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. This is for any resident in any water district affected by the Boil Water Advisory. Please enter on Park Street (by the train), pull up facing south, and exit on 8th Street. A huge THANK YOU to Walmart for donating 20 pallets of bottled water to disperse to those affected by the Water Boil Advisory! Your generosity to our community and the surrounding affected communities is amazing! Another huge THANK YOU to Rick Whitson with Montgomery County Emergency Management for coordinating the Walmart donation as well as donating 10 pallets! And another huge THANK YOU to	FB, Coffeyville, MG.	1/28/2024	154	1	Neutral	Natural	Information Provision



<p>As part of the City of Coffeyville's ongoing plan to maintain safe and dependable drinking water to our customers, the City Water Department will be performing a system-wide flushing program to remove chemical and biological build-up in the water distribution system lines. With guidance from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, the City will be temporarily modifying the chemicals applied to the drinking water and systematically flushing lines throughout the system.</p> <p>To achieve the long-term benefits of improved chlorine residual and reduced build-up in the lines, short-term inconveniences may occur in some areas of town. These inconveniences may include poor taste, odor, and a cloudy or discolored appearance of the drinking water, as well as reduced water pressure. These possible results will begin in some parts of the system on Friday, September 8, 2023 and may occur in various areas of the system for a period of approximately four weeks, depending upon effectiveness of the flushing plan. Although the appearance, taste and odor may be unpleasant, the water will continue to meet the requirements of KDHE for safe drinking water.</p> <p>The City will endeavor to minimize the short-term inconveniences that may occur as we continue to pursue the long term goal of a safe and reliable water system. If residents have any questions they may call the Municipal Water Treatment Plant at 252-6150 between 7:00 am and 3:00 pm Monday-Friday.</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>9/6/2023</p>	<p>237</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built, Natural</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>ATTENTION: From: City of Coffeyville Customer Service Department Regarding: Cycle 1 Utility Accounts: (Electric) Accounts Beginning 04 through 19</p> <p>The Customer Service Department discovered an error in our cycle 1 billing for electric customers after billing statements were issued. The monthly Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) was incorrectly input into the billing system, at a rate of \$0.07144/kWh, rather than the correct PCA for the month of April, which was calculated at a rate of \$0.0054/kWh.</p> <p>We apologize for our error and will be issuing impacted customers new corrected billing statements. The corrected billing statements will have an extended due date of June 15, 2023.</p> <p>Again, we sincerely apologize for this human error, and will be implementing processes to better prevent such mistakes in the future.</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>5/22/2023</p>	<p>121</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built, Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>The Coffeyville City Commission will have 3 positions up for Election in Fall 2023. A person is eligible to file for a Commissioner seat if they are registered to vote and live in the City of Coffeyville. Candidates will file with the Montgomery County Clerk at the Courthouse located at 217 E. Myrtle in Independence. The filing fee is \$70 and the deadline is 12:00 pm on Thursday, June 1st. For questions, contact the Montgomery County Clerk at 620-330-1200.</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>2/7/2023</p>	<p>80</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>The Housing and Community Development Department is set up at the Library today until 7:00pm. Make sure to stop by and talk to them about the city's new housing program.</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>12/6/2022</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Social, Political</p>	<p>Dialogue Facilitation</p>
<p>The City of Coffeyville has declared a Water Watch that will take effect this Saturday, October 1st, 2022 (upon publication in the Coffeyville Journal). At this time, the city is asking for voluntary reductions in water use. For example, curtailing some outdoor water use, washing full loads of laundry, taking shorter showers and not allowing faucets to run. Customers are asked to make efficient use of the water being used. This Water Watch was enacted due to the lowering of local area rivers and drought conditions that are forecast to continue the next few months. The Water Watch will continue until a resolution is passed ending the event.</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>9/28/2022</p>	<p>110</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natural</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>

<p>Beginning next Friday (7/29/2022) the City of Coffeyville Water Department will be conducting its annual flushing project on the City's water distribution system. This flushing was recommended by the Kansas Department of Health &amp; Environment to be conducted by the City to help maintain the best possible condition of the system and quality of water delivered to our customers. The project consists of temporarily stopping the addition of ammonia to the drinking water at the water treatment plant, beginning on Friday, July 29, 2022 which will allow the chlorine to more effectively disinfect the lines. The lines will then be flushed by opening fire hydrants in various locations around the system, beginning on Monday, August 1, 2022. Although the appearance, taste, and odor may be unpleasant, the water will continue to meet KDHE requirements. The project is expected to last approximately four to five weeks, depending upon the results of the line flushing. The effects of the line flushing will begin to be seen mainly in areas north of 1st Street, and then spreading systematically across town as the flushing crews move to other areas. The inconveniences are temporary, will only affect a given area for a short time, may not affect some areas at all and are necessary to reach the long-term benefit of a safe and reliable water system. Any questions or concerns may be addressed by calling the Water Treatment Plant at 252-6150 between 7am and 3:30pm, M-F.</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>7/19/2022</p>	<p>241</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natural, Built</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>Today we celebrate International Women's Day! This is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. Coffeyville is proud to have three women whom have served as mayors: Marjorie Read, Mayor 1980-1981; Pam Jones, Mayor 2011-2012; Ann Marie Vannoster, Mayor 2021 – Present.</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>3/8/2022</p>	<p>48</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Social, Political, Cultural</p>	<p>Unification</p>
<p>The City of Coffeyville is seeking contractors for "finish mowing" and "brush hog mowing" of overgrown yards and lots and City-owned lots during the 2022 growing season. Contractors will tend overgrown lots, including the adjacent parking (area between curb and sidewalk) and alleyways. The contractor shall use his/her own equipment consisting of heavy-duty commercial or industrial grade mower and string trimmer (weedeater) along with backup equipment in case of mechanical problems. The prospective contractor's equipment must be listed and made available for visual inspection prior to signing a contract. The work will consist of mowing the lots to less than 3" in height and all grass and/or weeds not cut with a mower must be trimmed with commercial or industrial grade trimmers. All loose trash must be gathered and properly disposed of prior to mowing. To see a complete list of responsibilities or receive a copy of the contract contact City of Coffeyville Code Enforcement. The contractor(s) to whom the work is awarded will be required to furnish a commercial general liability insurance policy issued by an insurance company authorized to do business in the State of Kansas with a minimum amount of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and in the general aggregate. In addition, any employing contractor will be required to carry workman's compensation insurance or sign an affidavit of exempt status. The City of Coffeyville will pay the contractor \$20 per individual lot (standard lot is 50x140) or part thereof. Those interested in contracting to mow for the City of Coffeyville shall contact, Code Enforcement, 620-252-6006, 102 W 7th, Coffeyville, Kansas, in order to be considered.</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>3/2/2022</p>	<p>266</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Human, Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>

<p>The contract to rebuild Highland Road was awarded to J. Graham Construction, the notice to proceed was issued on March 2nd, 2021 and work began on March 8th, 2021. The project was given 190 working days to substantial completion, with 20 additional days to finalize the project. From March 2nd, 2021 through September 10th, 2021 a total of 114 working days have been utilized, leaving 76 working days remaining to substantial completion. As of the end of the day September 10th, 2021, the project is 38.89% complete, with the contractor still being in his contract limits. The City of Coffeyville is scheduling regular, on-site progress meetings with J. Graham Construction to obtain weekly schedules of the work to be performed.</p> <p>Note: working days are 5 days a week excluding major holidays and weather related days. Weather related days include precipitation, freezing temperatures or extreme heat (extreme heat delays the project due to restrictions pouring concrete).</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>9/16/2021</p>	<p>155</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>The Coffeyville City Commission will have 3 positions up for Election in Fall 2021. A person is eligible to file for a Commissioner seat if they are registered to vote and live in Coffeyville. Candidates will file with the Montgomery County Courthouse at 217 E. Myrtle in Independence. The filing fee is \$70 and the deadline is 12:00 pm on Tuesday, June 1st. For questions, contact the Montgomery County Clerk at 620-330-1200. Link to information and filing packet:</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>3/31/2021</p>	<p>80</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>2021 City Funding Request for Community Based Programs</p> <p>It has been the practice of the City of Coffeyville to allocate funds to contribute to community-based programs and activities which provide valuable services to the community of Coffeyville. In order to ensure that a uniform process is followed, the City of Coffeyville has implemented a new application process. Applications are due on or before July 13, 2020. You can contact the City Clerk's Office during business hours, if you have any questions. Applications and guidelines are available at the City Clerk's Office, 102 W. 7th Street, Coffeyville, Kansas or at the following link:</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>7/19/2020</p>	<p>102</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Financial , Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>A reminder the Coffeyville Police Department is participating in the 2019 Click It or Ticket campaign, and they are writing tickets. There are 180 other law enforcement agencies in Kansas participating.</p> <p>In Kansas, the overall adult seat belt compliance rate in 2018 was 84%. In Montgomery County, however, the rate is only 69%. According to KDOT, occupants in rural counties are generally less likely to buckle up than in urban counties. This difference is especially problematic because rural roadway conditions are, in general, less forgiving. Almost two-thirds of Kansas' fatality crashes occur on rural roadways while those roads account for only one-third of all crashes.</p> <p>Seat belts are the best defense against impaired, aggressive, and distracted drivers. Air bags are designed to work with seat belts and not to replace them. Click It or Ticket runs through June 2.</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>5/22/2019</p>	<p>144</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>

<p>CMLP Honored with National Award for Outstanding Safety Practices - Coffeyville Municipal Light &amp; Power has earned the American Public Power Association's (APPA) Safety Award of Excellence for safe operating practices in 2018. The utility earned first place in the category for utilities with 60,000 to 109,999 worker-hours of annual worker exposure.</p> <p>"Coffeyville Municipal Light &amp; Power is proud of its safety record," said Mike Shook, Director of Electric Utilities for CMLP. "This award is a testament to the hard work that goes into ensuring that our team members go home safe to their families every day."</p> <p>According to APPA, more than 325 utilities entered the annual safety awards, which is the highest number of entrants in the history of the program. Entrants were placed in categories according to their number of worker-hours and ranked based on the most incident-free records during 2018. The incidence rate, used to judge entries, is based on the number of work-related reportable injuries or illnesses and the number of worker-hours during 2018, as defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).</p> <p>Congratulation to all CMLP employees. We are proud of you! Pictured are electric utility employees along with Mayor Bauer, Commissioners Williams, Doane, Taylor and Vannoster and City Manager Mark Hall.</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>4/18/2019</p>	<p>206</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Postive</p>	<p>Human, Social</p>	<p>Unification</p>
<p>Coffeyville Public Schools USD 445 is carrying on their tradition of having the FKHS seniors walk the halls of CE and the ELC. Lots of hand clapping, signs and hugs for the 2018 seniors.</p> <p>Commencement for FKHS is at 10 a.m. on Saturday in the gym. Coffeyville Community College also has their graduation at 10 a.m. on Saturday in Nellis Hall. Congratulations to all the graduates!</p>	<p>FB, Coffeyville, MG.</p>	<p>5/11/2018</p>	<p>70</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Postive</p>	<p>Human, Social, Cultural</p>	<p>Unification</p>
<p>The Main Street project could impact parking in front of the Courthouse and Judicial Center. Please use caution during this time. A map of alternative public parking is accessible from the link below.</p>	<p>FB, County, MG.</p>	<p>8/30/2024</p>	<p>34</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>Important Notice:</p> <p>We've recently learned that some of the 2024 Revenue Neutral Rate Notices were mistakenly mailed out in Wingdings font, making them unreadable. If you've received one of these notices, please reach out to the County Clerk's office at 620-330-1200. Provide your name and address so they can send you a corrected notice.</p>	<p>FB, County, MG.</p>	<p>8/22/2024</p>	<p>53</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Financial , Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>In December, Montgomery County received a generous \$5,000 grant from Montgomery &amp; Labette Blue Cross Blue Shield Pathways to promote a healthier workplace. We've put this grant to excellent use by purchasing new water fountains for the Courthouse and Judicial Center!</p> <p>Thanks to this grant, we were able to replace five of our old water fountains and install a brand new one with a convenient water bottle filler attachment. These upgrades mean clean, refreshing water for everyone, helping us eliminate the need for water coolers in our offices.</p> <p>A huge thank you to Marci Roberts for her invaluable assistance with this grant! Your efforts are helping us create a healthier, more sustainable environment for our staff and community. Stay hydrated and enjoy the new fountains!</p>	<p>FB, County, MG.</p>	<p>8/9/2024</p>	<p>124</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Postive</p>	<p>Financial , Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>Here are some important dates related to the primary election on August 6, 2024.</p> <p>The last day to register to vote or update your voter registration information is Tuesday, July 16th, 2024.</p> <p>Advanced voting will begin Wednesday, July 17th, 2024.</p> <p>Registered voters may vote in person at the Montgomery County Clerk's Office, 217 E Myrtle, Independence, KS 67301, Monday-Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm.</p> <p>The last day to early vote will be Monday, August 5th, 2024 at 12:00 pm.</p> <p>For questions, please contact the Clerk's Office at 620-330-1200 or by visiting their website.</p>	<p>FB, County, MG.</p>	<p>7/12/2024</p>	<p>91</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>

<p>Last month, the County Commissioners recognized the service of their employees who achieved milestones in the 2023 calendar year. Service awards were given in increments of five years and the employees received a certificate and pin as recognition of their service.</p> <p>In addition to the County's service awards, the Kansas Association of Counties also issued service awards at the ceremony. These awards were given in increments of eight years.</p> <p>The Montgomery County Board of Commissioners wishes to express their gratitude to all employees for their commitment to serving the county.</p>	FB, County, MG.	5/13/2024	89	1	Postive	Human, Social	Motivation
<p>Let's take a moment to extend our warmest wishes to Sue Thompson as she embarks on a new chapter in her life - retirement! Sue has been a dedicated public servant for over 22 years, serving the county with distinction in the Appraiser's Office. Her most recent role as the Deputy Appraiser has been invaluable to the success of the department. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors.</p>	FB, County, MG.	4/30/2024	71	1	Postive	Human, Social	Motivation
<p>This week, the Montgomery County Courthouse has been illuminated green as part of Operation Green Light for Veterans, a nationwide effort by counties, the National Association of Counties, and the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers.</p> <p>From November 6-12, county buildings and landmarks across the country will be illuminated green to show support for veterans and raise awareness around the resources available at the county, state, and federal levels to assist veterans and their families.</p>	FB, County, MG.	11/9/2023	75	1	Postive	Social, Political, Cultural	Unification
<p>Last week, Montgomery County employees participated in our annual health and wellness fair. Labette Health was on site performing lab draws and the Montgomery County Kansas Health Department was administering flu shots. We would like to extend a big thank you to these organizations, as well as our sponsors, for making this event a success!</p>	FB, County, MG.	11/1/2023	55	1	Postive	Human	Motivation
<p>Today, employees from various county departments participated in CPR and AED Certification training to prepare for the installation of AED machines in the Montgomery County Courthouse and Montgomery County Judicial Center. Through donation, Montgomery County received six AED machines to equip all levels of each building with these life-saving devices. Montgomery County would like to thank Labette Health for the donation of the AED machines and the City of Independence Kansas and Captain Keith Copithke from the Independence Fire Department for the training.</p>	FB, County, MG.	9/20/2023	83	1	Neutral	Human	Motivation
<p>Due to building construction, the County offices in Independence, will close at 4:30pm on Wednesday, May 31st. We apologize for any inconvenience the closure may cause. Offices will reopen on Thursday, June 1st at 8:00am.</p>	FB, County, MG.	5/30/2023	35	1	Neutral	Built	Information Provision
<p>Commissioners would like to extend their greatest appreciation to those Public works Employees here at the county that worked over the Christmas weekend to make sure those county roads are safe! Thank you so much to those guys for sacrificing their family time to make sure the county roads are safe.</p> <p>Thank you to those law enforcement employees who worked over the weekend as well.</p>	FB, County, MG.	12/27/2022	65	1	Postive	Human, Social	Motivation
<p>Congrats to our employee of the week Tim Hersh! Time is the Director of Noxious Weed for Public works and has been with the county for 2 years. You can't talk to Tim without smiling!</p> <p>Thank you for all your hard work Tim!</p>	FB, County, MG.	11/23/2022	43	1	Postive	Human, Social	Motivation

<p>Did you know there are loan forgiveness programs for individuals that move to a rural area like Montgomery County? Working for the county you are also eligible for the PSLF loan forgiveness plan as well!</p> <p>If you know an Attorney that will soon be graduating college and would love to move to a rural area and have their loans paid off, Have them apply with us!</p> <p>See a list of open positions and apply in the link below.</p>	<p>FB, County, MG.</p>	<p>9/22/2022</p>	<p>78</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Human</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>Merry Christmas from all of us here at Montgomery county!</p> <p>The court house will be closed Thursday, December 23rd &amp; Friday the 24th, so our employees can enjoy their families.</p> <p>We will also be closed December 30th noon-5:00pm and closed all day December 31st.</p>	<p>FB, County, MG.</p>	<p>12/22/2021</p>	<p>44</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Postive</p>	<p>Social, Cultural</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>We hope you've had a blast at the Central Park Sports Complex this summer!</p> <p>Make sure to follow the Central Park Sports Complex page for all the latest news and updates on Phase 2. Exciting things are coming, and you won't want to miss out!</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>9/5/2024</p>	<p>45</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Postive</p>	<p>Social, Built</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>City of Independence - Weather Update Tuesday, August 13th - 06:53 am.</p> <p>A line of strong thunderstorms is approaching the northwest corner of Montgomery County and moving east to southeast. These storms are capable of producing heavy rainfall, lightning and wind gusts up to 30 mphs.</p> <p>Please be weather-aware. Turn around and don't drown if water is covering a roadway.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>8/13/2024</p>	<p>62</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natural</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>Join the Independence Park Board!</p> <p>Are you passionate about our community's parks and zoo? Do you want to make a difference in the way our city maintains and enhances these treasured spaces? The Independence Park Board is looking for dedicated individuals to join our advisory board!</p> <p>Application Deadline: July 19, 2024</p> <p>The Independence Park Board acts as an advisory board to the City's governing body, providing valuable input on all matters related to our municipally owned zoo and parks. As a member, you will have the opportunity to influence decisions and help shape the future of our beloved parks and zoo.</p> <p>The Park Board meets at 5:30 PM on the first Monday of the month at Riverside Park and Ralph Mitchell Zoo.</p> <p>What We're Looking For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enthusiastic individuals who love nature and animals</li> <li>Community-minded people with a vision for our parks and zoo</li> <li>Those who are ready to contribute time and ideas for the betterment of our city</li> </ul>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>7/9/2024</p>	<p>156</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Idea Sharing</p>
<p>NORTH PENN WIDENING PROJECT BEGINS NEXT WEEK</p> <p>Construction work is anticipated to get underway Monday, July 8, for a street widening project on North Penn Ave., from Morningside Drive north to the Independence city limits. The street will remain open for travel during construction, but slowdowns should be expected, and the roadway will at times need to be reduced to a single lane with use of a pilot car to guide traffic.</p> <p>The project is expected to be completed in early September and will allow for improved safety and traffic flow upon entrance to the city on U.S. Highway 75.</p> <p>Please exercise caution and patience in the work zone.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>7/5/2024</p>	<p>106</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>We were privileged to accept a Merit Award presented by the Kansas Preservation Alliance during its annual awards ceremony Friday at the Kansas Historic Preservation Conference in Newton. The award was presented in recognition of the preservation and renovation of historic 1916 Independence City Hall.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>5/20/2024</p>	<p>45</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Postive</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Motivation</p>

<p>The City of Independence is issuing a statement about recent rumors suggesting that the City is annexing properties several miles out into the County. These rumors aren't true.</p> <p>The City does acknowledge a typographical error on one of the maps included in the draft plan, which incorrectly labeled the City's Planning Boundary as City Limits. This error is being fixed by the consultant to ensure accurate representation, and it's important to note that this is the only map out of dozens where that error occurred.</p> <p>The City has a history of providing services to industries beyond its City limits as part of its economic development initiatives to support job growth in the region. For instance, the City provides water and sanitary sewer services to Textron, and it is providing water to Rural Water District #6 to serve the new Bartlett Soy Bean Plant. These efforts benefit not only the City, but the entire area. Both of these facilities are outside the City limits, but are within the City's Planning Boundary.</p> <p>The proposed future land use plan map included in the City's proposed Community Development/Comprehensive Plan outlines a Planning Boundary around the City that is currently being served or could potentially be served by the City in the event of future growth. This comprehensive plan forecasts potential growth areas and their respective land uses through the year 2050, aiming to support sustainable development and infrastructure planning. The Planning Boundary is not a mass annexation plan.</p> <p>Page 5 of the plan explicitly states, "The planning boundary intentionally extends past the existing city limits to plan for future growth and development." This approach aligns with previous comprehensive plans, including the 1982 Comprehensive Plan, which also included a General Development Plan map extending beyond the City limits, which included a three mile boundary around the City.</p> <p>It is crucial to clarify that while the City has the authority to initiate annexations of properties adjoining the City limits, most annexations occur at the request of property owners seeking City services for development purposes or to address service-related issues. Any annexations not adjacent to the City limits require approval from the County, even if initiated by property owners.</p> <p>Additionally, it is important to clarify that zoning authority outside the City limits lies with the County, while the City's zoning authority is confined to areas within its limits.</p> <p>The City invites citizens to participate in the public hearing before the Planning Commission on May 7, 2024, at 5:30 PM in the Veterans Room of Memorial Hall to discuss and consider adopting the Community Development/Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>4/30/2024</p>	<p>424</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Negative</p>	<p>Social, Political</p>	<p>Conscientization</p>
<p>At its Thursday evening regular meeting, Independence City Commission approved a significant land purchase as a first step toward a mitigation solution for neighborhood flash flooding that has plagued Independence since early development of the city. This project would also include street and infrastructure improvements that would support the schools and new housing development. Please note the houses in the graphic are just a sample and are not the actual designs or concept for the project. The City is working with engineering and planning firms to develop potential concepts for the layout of this future development that are aesthetically pleasing, but also purposeful in achieving the desired flood protection for downstream properties.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>3/28/2024</p>	<p>113</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built, Natural</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>Another Arctic blast will move into Southeast Kansas tonight, bringing a forecast low of 9 degrees and a wind chill of -9 for Friday morning and high in the 20s. Saturday morning's wind chill will be -10 degrees, with highs continue to be in the 20s. A warm-up is expected to begin on Sunday, and there are chances of rain in Southeast Kansas from Monday through Wednesday of next week.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>1/18/2024</p>	<p>70</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natural</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>

<p>Last call for public input related to the Independence Community Development Plan! The interactive engagement website is set to close its comment period on December 22nd, so be sure to share your thoughts and ideas for the future of Independence before then! Activities include a short survey, image voting, and a mapping activity.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>12/7/2023</p>	<p>53</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Idea Sharing</p>
<p>To celebrate the completed Phase I and II renovation of the historic 1916 Independence City Hall at 120 N. 6th, the City of Independence will host a "Welcome Home Housewarming" Friday, November 3. Drop-in public tours of the renovated building will be offered from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., followed by a ribbon cutting ceremony at 5:30 p.m. The Independence Mid-Continent Band is scheduled to play during the ribbon cutting event, reminiscent of a similar performance by the long-standing organization when the original City Hall was christened in 1916. City of Independence services returned to the building in September, following more than two years of renovation work to improve and modernize the facility to provide ADA accessibility, accommodate updated technology and create more efficient work spaces. Other major building enhancements include new energy efficient windows throughout, a storm-hardened facility for emergency 9-1-1 dispatch services and significant water-proofing efforts to avoid moisture-related environmental concerns, which prompted the relocation of City offices in 2016. Independence Mayor Louis Ysusi, who served on the community steering committee which was engaged to evaluate City Hall facility options and ultimately championed the renovation project, said much of the building's historic character has been painstakingly preserved, but important updates and redesign will allow the City to use the space and serve its customers more efficiently and effectively. "We're eager to welcome the community back into the new 'old' space," Ysusi said. "I think longtime residents will appreciate the nostalgia that has been maintained, and I'm thrilled this historic building can continue to serve our citizens for generations to come." The approximate \$9 million investment brings the building up to modern safety and accessibility standards and accommodates all City services previously located there, with the exception of Fire/EMS services, which now operate from a recently constructed facility more centrally located in the community at 900 W. Myrtle. While the building's traditional west/6th Street entrance at the top of the front steps is open, an ADA-accessible entrance and parking is now available on the building's south side. Guests are welcome to use either entrance, and staff will be stationed to assist with tours and answer questions.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>10/24/2023</p>	<p>351</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built, Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>



<p>The public is invited to attend a community discussion about blight and beautification in Independence on Tuesday, March 21, at 6 p.m. at the Independence Civic Center.</p> <p>Championed by the City's Blight &amp; Beautification committee, the event will be designed to gather input from residents and property owners from throughout the community to identify concerns and barriers to beautification as well as solutions for alleviating blight. No registration is required for this meeting. A meal will be provided, and all interested citizens are invited to attend.</p> <p>Rev. Charles Barker and Steve McBride, long-time Independence residents and members of beautification committee, recently presented information about the event at the monthly First Friday speakers forum.</p> <p>"Whether you are a property or business owner, renter, homeowner, it doesn't matter, all of us can play a part," Barker said. "We want to create a place where people want to live, visit, come to and enjoy and say, 'That's a nice city.'"</p> <p>McBride explained the March 21 solutions-focused meeting will feature a facilitated discussion where neighbors can share concerns and ideas for enhancing community aesthetics and, in turn, boosting community pride, safety and desirability among visitors and potential new residents and businesses.</p> <p>"We're not here to condemn anyone, we are all part of the same community," he said. "There's not another city in Kansas that I can say compares to us."</p> <p>The Blight &amp; Beautification Committee was established in 2018 after the City's community based strategic planning process revealed beautification was a key priority among residents. The committee includes Independence business owners, pastors, lifelong and newer residents, along with the City's senior leaders and code inspector. The committee meets monthly to review progress on managing blight concerns - such as dilapidated and unsafe structures and junk accumulations - and to discuss opportunities to make meaningful improvements.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>3/10/2023</p>	<p>297</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Social, Political, Cultural</p>	<p>Dialogue Facilitation</p>
<p>An Independence native and one of a handful of female officers on the force, Sgt. Christina Johnson has been a part of the Independence Police Department for 18 years. The most rewarding aspect of her job, she says, is having the opportunity to make a positive impact in the community.</p> <p>"The thing I love about my job is helping the community in any way I can, such as making people feel safe in their community and letting them know they can call the police department at any time day or night, and we are there to help."</p> <p>There is one particular motto that Sgt. Johnson lives by in her daily work in the field.</p> <p>"When I was in high school, a teacher once told me a quote which has stuck with me, 'You never get a second chance to make a first impression.'"</p> <p>"I think of that quote often, and when I talk to youths, I tell them this quote to help guide them along the way and help them make good decisions. I hope I have impacted them in a positive way."</p> <p>We're looking for more team members with a heart for their hometown like Sgt. Johnson. We currently have open positions for patrol officers in the IPD. If you'd like the opportunity to make your own positive impression on the community, we offer a competitive benefits package, great work schedule, education scholarships and the excitement and rewards of doing meaningful work.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>2/1/2023</p>	<p>241</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Social, Human</p>	<p>Motivation</p>

<p>Maple Street improvement work to begin this month</p> <p>A major road improvement project will soon get underway on west Maple Street in Independence. The project will include street widening; the addition of curb, gutter and storm sewer from 21st Street west to 28th Street; and milling and overlaying the street from 17th to just west of the Whiskey Creek Bridge.</p> <p>According to City Engineer John Garris, traffic control devices will be set along the street beginning on Monday, January 18, and construction work could begin as early as January 31.</p> <p>The project was originally announced in July 2020, when the City was awarded nearly \$1.6 million from the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) to assist with improvements to a stretch of Maple Street from 17th Street west to Peter Pan Road.</p> <p>The funding is part of KDOT's Cost Share Program, which supports transportation-related projects and requires a percentage of matching investment by the local entity. The proposed Maple Street project is estimated to cost \$2,635,452, she said, with KDOT providing \$1,594,089 and the City matching at \$1,041,363.</p> <p>Garris explained the project will include widening the street to 24 feet of driving surface from the Whiskey Creek Bridge to Peter Pan and moving ditches away from the edge of the pavement. This section of Maple Street is currently narrow and plagued by ruts, failing pavement and immediate deep ditches and requires nearly constant repair, he said. He also noted that with multiple heavy industries located along the street, as well as its function of connecting south Independence with Walmart and Labette Health's Independence Health Care Center, the street is highly traveled, and improvements are critically needed to optimize safety and commercial operations.</p> <p>Completion of the project is anticipated in the third quarter of 2022, Garris said.</p> <p>"We appreciate the community's patience and understanding as we regulate traffic along Maple Street for the next several months in order to provide a much-improved, safer driving experience," he said.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>1/12/2022</p>	<p>339</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>Last night the City Commission recognized Officer Daniel Bowers who was presented with a meritorious award. On 10-03-2020 at 12:18 AM, Officer Daniel Bowers recognized a wanted person. During the arrest, the man resisted Bowers. A passing citizen stopped to help. Bowers declined the help but had the presence of mind to request the person remain as a witness. Once restrained, the man continued to resist and refused to follow instructions. Bowers exercised patience and demonstrated exceptional professionalism through the contact. The award is presented to Officer Daniel Bowers for exhibiting superior professionalism during a difficult confrontation. Photo courtesy of Taina Copeland, Independence Daily Reporter.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>1/29/2021</p>	<p>113</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Social, Human</p>	<p>Motivation</p>
<p>TKAAM's 2020 Trailblazer Tribute to Sam Ford's hometown community. Ford, born in Coffeyville, graduated from Independence High School and Kansas University. He and 43 other journalists founded The National Association of Black Journalists in 1975. The ABC News Washington, D. C. Bureau Chief will be honored along with Carla Eckels, Wichita's KMUW 89.1 Director of Cultural Diversity as Broadcast Journalism Trailblazers. Other TKAAM Trailblazers include Kansas-born, Oscar winning actress, Hattie McDaniel honored posthumously as Performing Arts Trailblazer; and Junetta Everett, Delta Dental of Kansas Vice President of Professional Relations, Health/Business Trailblazer. Dr. Sharla Smith, University of Kansas School of Medicine Assistant professor is the 2020 Doris Kerr Larkins Rising Star Award winner.</p> <p>"Trailblazers help tell the story of the significant contributions African Americans make in our community and the world at large," said Denise Sherman, TKAAM Executive Director. "Each inspires others to forge their own paths and to strive for excellence. A Trailblazer is a leader, a pacesetter, a pioneer, and each year TKAAM has honorary categories for individuals who have made a remarkable impact in their respective arena."</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>11/14/2020</p>	<p>178</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Social, Human, Cultural</p>	<p>Motivation</p>

Thank you, Independence Voters, for re-investing in your community by approving the one-cent special use sales tax to take effect in October 2022. The continuation of the sales tax will help us make significant improvements in the community's infrastructure and amenities that contribute to the quality of life we all enjoy in our town. Such a great demonstration of community pride, and your support is much appreciated!	FB, Independence, MG.	11/4/2020	67	1	Postive	Financial , Political	Conscientizatio n
This is the Central Park and North Park Blvd. Sports Complex Master Plan concept that will be presented to the City Commission at their November 19, 2020 City Commission meeting. This is an example of one of the projects that will be partially funded from special use sales tax if the sales tax passes on November 3rd. In addition to upgraded sports facilities, the concept also addresses safety issues and features a walking trail and play area. Special thanks to Doug Pickert with Indigo Design, Independence Recreation Commission, City staff, and the Mayor who collaborated on this concept together. Don't forget to vote on November 3rd! A Penny for Progress! For more information, visit this link: <a href="http://www.independencesks.gov/.../Penny-for-Progress-Handout">http://www.independencesks.gov/.../Penny-for-Progress-Handout</a>	FB, Independence, MG.	11/2/2020	118	1	Postive	Built	Successful Facilitation
March 17, 2020 All City Buildings to Close to Public Due to Coronavirus-19 Effective March 17, 2020 Due to concerns over the spread of Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), the City of Independence will be closing all City buildings to non-City employees until further notice. At this time the open areas of the park and zoo will remain open, and one restroom located on the southwest portion of the playground will remain open and will be cleaned several times throughout the day. We will reopen Memorial Hall for public meetings such as City Commission meetings that are subject to the Kansas Open Meeting Act, but will encourage participation virtually and will practice social distancing as much as possible. During this time, staff will be working and available by phone or email. All events scheduled at City buildings will be canceled through April 17, 2020, which date may be extended if needed. Prepayments and deposits for reservations will be refunded within thirty days. As stated in the March 13, 2020 press release, utility bill payments may be made over the phone at 1-844-215-7377, online at <a href="http://www.IndependenceKs.gov">www.IndependenceKs.gov</a> , or dropped off at our two drop box locations: 811 W Laurel Street, and 120 N. 6th Street. If you need to reach the police department, we request that you call 620-332-1700. If you require face-to-face contact and you are not exhibiting any symptoms of illness, please go to the West door of Temporary City Hall, 811 West Laurel St. and pick up the phone to contact a dispatcher. The police department will not be performing VIN checks until further notice. Any calls that are not in-progress, not violent in nature, or the suspect is not still on-scene IPD encourages citizens to call in and an officer will call them back. As always, if you have an emergency, call 911. If you need to reach other departments, please call 620-332-2500 and follow the prompts. For a complete list of direct department phone numbers or email addresses please visit our website. Our priority is the safety of our employees and citizens. We appreciate your patience and understanding, and we apologize for any inconvenience. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to us.	FB, Independence, MG.	3/17/2020	386	1	Neutral	Human, Political	Information Provision
10/20/2019 UPDATE: The contractor has agreed to delay the start of this project until after Neewollah. Thank you for your patience. The construction of improvements to Peter Pan Road is scheduled to begin the week of October 21st. The roadway will be closed North of the southern entrance to Labette Health. The roadway will be closed for several months to widen the roadway, install stormsewer and replace the surface with concrete pavement. Thank you for your patience during this street improvement project.	FB, Independence, MG.	10/18/2019	86	1	Neutral	Built	Information Provision

<p>North Penn Avenue (Highway 75) from Sycamore Street to Pecan Street will be closed early Saturday morning, June 8, 2019 until Wednesday, June 12, 2019. R-Turn will be enhancing the trestle with new paint and signage. Thank you for your patience and we all look forward to enjoying the finished project.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>6/6/2019</p>	<p>53</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>The National Weather Service has issued a Flood Warning for Independence, Kansas. The Verdigris River is predicted to rise to near 43.6 feet by 7 AM Tuesday, May 28. The Verdigris River was at 41.71' at 5 PM today and had risen over 6' since 1 AM this morning.</p> <p>A river height of 43.6' at the Verdigris River Bridge gauge may cause flooding of the following locations in Independence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Park Blvd between Cottonwood and Parkhurst (including the baseball field complex)</li> <li>• South Pennsylvania Ave between Cedar and the South City limits</li> <li>• South 8th, 9th and 10th Street between Birch and the South City Limits</li> <li>• Cement Street between Coffeyville Avenue and the South City Limits</li> <li>• South 1st, 2nd, Park Blvd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th near the South City Limits</li> <li>• North Penn Avenue between Sycamore and Parkhurst</li> <li>• East Sycamore Street between 5th Street and Park Blvd</li> </ul> <p>If actual rainfall amounts are greater or more concentrated than predicted upstream, river levels could rise quickly above the predicted amounts. We continue to encourage residents and business owners to complete preparations to protect their interests in case the river rises above predictions.</p> <p>Memorial Hall will open at 8 PM tonight as a temporary shelter.</p> <p>Citizens should be weather aware and follow warnings from local officials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not drive, swim, walk or play near flood water. Turn around, don't drown. Never drive around barricades. Local responders use them to safely direct traffic out of flooded areas.</li> <li>• If told to evacuate, do so immediately. Gather supplies in case you have to leave immediately or if services are cut off. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Don't forget the needs of pets.</li> <li>• Depending on where you are and the impact and the warning time of flooding, go to the safe location that you have previously identified.</li> </ul> <p>To view the briefing held at 5 PM today visit this link:  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/IndependenceKS/videos/424191628164523/">https://www.facebook.com/IndependenceKS/videos/424191628164523/</a>  For a list of emergency supplies to gather and other information visit this page: <a href="http://www.independeceks.gov/342/Emergency-Management">http://www.independeceks.gov/342/Emergency-Management</a>  To track the river levels forecasted visit this link:  <a href="https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?wfo=ict...">https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?wfo=ict...</a></p> <p>The City of Independence will continue to monitor the situation closely and will update as conditions change. Citizens can monitor the City webpage and Facebook page for updates and in the event flooding occurs the City will use our Civic Ready Alert system.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>5/26/2019</p>	<p>392</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natura</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>City Hall will close at 11:45 AM today (Friday, December 21, 2018) for the City Awards Luncheon and will not reopen until 8 AM on Wednesday, December 26, 2018. There will be sanitation services on Saturday, December 22, 2018, however, there will not be sanitation services on Monday, December 24th or Tuesday, December 25th. Due to the Christmas holiday, weekly recycling has been rescheduled for Wednesday, December 26th from 11 AM to 1 PM at the sanitation yard (21st and Maple). Happy Holidays!</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>12/21/2018</p>	<p>86</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Social, Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>

<p>City Manager Craig Whitehead has provided a weekly Administrative Report to the City Commission and staff since his tenure began in June of 2017. He would now like to start sharing this document with the public to provide more transparency regarding the operation of your local government. For the most recent copy of the Administrative Report visit this link:  <a href="http://www.independenceks.gov/.../City-Administrative...">http://www.independenceks.gov/.../City-Administrative...</a>  To be notified immediately when these reports or other news items are posted, you can visit the City's website at <a href="http://www.IndependenceKs.gov">www.IndependenceKs.gov</a> and sign up for updates using the "Notify Me" link under the main website banner and subscribing to "News Flash" notifications via text and/or email. The Administrative Reports will be archived on the City website with a link on the Administration/City Manager page, which is listed under Departments if you place your cursor on the "Government" tab at the top of the homepage.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>11/21/2018</p>	<p>148</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Political</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>The City of Independence, Kansas, is accepting bids to resurface six (6) concrete tennis courts at Riverside Park in Independence, Kansas. Bids will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 811 W. Laurel Street, Independence, Kansas, 67301 until 2:00 p.m., Thursday, May 10, 2018. At that time the bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>4/19/2018</p>	<p>59</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Built</p>	<p>Successful Facilitation</p>
<p>As one more effort to keep community residents informed on municipal government activity, the City of Independence has posted its 2017 3rd Quarter Operating Report on its website at <a href="http://www.independenceks.gov">www.independenceks.gov</a>. The detailed, 33-page report covers the quarter ending September 30, 2017, and includes financial performance data for each city budget category; executive summary narratives; and the city's 2017-2018 Strategic Goals work plan with timelines and outcomes to date.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>1/15/2018</p>	<p>68</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Financial , Political</p>	<p>Successful Facilitation</p>
<p>Animal Control Officer (ACO) Charlie Benedict was honored at the 1/8/2018 City Commission meeting for his performance in the line of duty. Officers were dispatched to 13th and Poplar in Independence Kansas on Thursday, September 7, 2017 at 8:23 a.m. for a report of an armed suicidal man. The man was armed with a shotgun. Officer Benedict arrived with another officer and observed the armed man walking down the street. Benedict crept up behind him and ripped the shotgun from him. The shotgun was loaded. The man was taken into protective custody without incident. The man informed officers his intent was to force police to kill him. Benedict could have taken a tactical approach and used cover to confront the man. Based on the man's statements, that could have ended with a deadly force confrontation jeopardizing both the armed man and police officers. Knowing the man's condition and history, Officer Benedict, at risk to his own safety, approached close enough to take the shotgun from the man knowing that it was the most likely way to avoid a deadly force confrontation. Officer Benedict's action saved the life of the man, prevented a deadly force scenario, and protected fellow officers from the possibility of being exposed to gunfire.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>1/10/2018</p>	<p>211</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Social, Human</p>	<p>Motivation</p>
<p>Jim Duke is retiring from his Zoo Keeper position effective November 1st, 2017. He was hired in February, 2000. He has spent the last 17 years caring for all the zoo animals and they will definitely miss seeing Jim. He was given a photo book of all the zoo animals from his co-workers at his retirement party. We know how much he loves them and will miss interacting with them daily. He is a very dependable employee and zoo staff will miss him. We wish Jim a Happy Retirement.</p>	<p>FB, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>10/31/2017</p>	<p>95</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Postive</p>	<p>Social, Human</p>	<p>Motivation</p>

Peter Pan Road will be closed to all traffic beginning September 5, 2017 and will remain closed until the end of December from US 75/US160 (West Main) to the City Limits North. This closure is to allow the reconstruction of Peter Pan Road from US 75/ US 160 (West Main) which will include installation of new storm sewer, curb and gutter and three (3) lanes of concrete pavement. Limited access will be available from Oak south to the New Labette County Medical Center and Classic Clippers. Emergency access to the New Labette County Medical Center, and limited access to the Agriculture Conservation Offices will be available through the Hugo's parking lot. During this time period, US 75/ US 160 (West Main) will experience periodic outside (west bound) lane closures for the installation of the new traffic signals.	FB, Independence, MG.	8/30/2017	141	1	Neutral	Built	Information Provision
The governing body of the City of Independence, Kansas will meet on August 14, 2017 at 5:30 PM in the Veterans Room of Memorial Hall for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of 2017 ad valorem tax.	FB, Independence, MG.	7/28/2017	53	1	Neutral	Financial , Political	Idea Sharing
Construction will begin on the street repair of Pennsylvania Avenue and Laurel Street on Monday April 3, 2017. Construction will include the full depth removal of the Pennsylvania Ave. from Laurel Street to a point 100' south, and will include full width from Curb to Curb. Also to be included will be the reconstruction of both the SE corner and SW corner of side walk and brick inlay. This work is expected to take up to 45 days to complete. Estimated construction completion date will be May 17, 2017. During this time the street will be blocked off from Mid-Block between Laurel and Myrtle with all parking stalls at the north end of the block being closed to traffic, but the parking stalls at the south half of the block will be left open for the general public. We are sorry for the inconvenience but we do appreciate your patience during this construction project.	FB, Independence, MG.	4/1/2017	158	1	Neutral	Built	Information Provision
The City of Coffeyville is a participant in the opioid litigation settlement through the Kansas Attorney General's office which is a result of ongoing efforts to combat the opioid epidemic. These funds are to be utilized by entities to support treatment of Opioid Use Disorder and any co-occurring conditions through programs and strategies outlined in Exhibit E (link below). The City of Coffeyville is taking applications until Monday, September 9th from local organizations that can utilize these funds. The maximum amount awarded will be \$10,000 per entity. Completed applications can be brought to the City Clerk's office at 102 W. 7th or e-mailed to mcarter@coffeyville.com. Please call the City Clerk's office at 620-252-6108 with any questions.	Web, Coffeyville, MG	8/5/2024	117	1	Neutral	Human, Political	Information Provision
Our facilities pages have been upgraded to a new look, and new features have been added such as enhanced search capabilities, an interactive map, and the ability to view facility availability and sign up for updates. Please come check it out!	Web, Coffeyville, MG	6/19/2023	41	1	Postive	Built	Information Provision
In conjunction with Coffeyville's Reawakening, a downtown revitalization community survey is underway and available for the public. The survey is geared toward learning what the top economic development priority for downtown is as well as priorities for capital improvement projects. The 7-question survey also asks about innovative ideas for a successful downtown and activities and events of interest.  A copy of the survey can be downloaded here and copies are available at the Coffeyville's Reawakening headquarters at 115 W. 9th; Chamber of Commerce, 807 Walnut; and in the City Clerk's office at City Hall, 102 W. 7th. A link to the online version is available below.  The deadline to submit surveys is May 15.	Web, Coffeyville, MG	4/24/2019	117	1	Neutral	Social, Political	Idea Sharing

<p>Neighborhood Exterior Grant Program: A Resounding Success Sparks New Opportunities in 2024!</p> <p>In a thrilling celebration of community-driven success, the City of Independence proudly announces the triumph of the Neighborhood Exterior Grant Program. With over \$175,000 in funds awarded since 2021, this transformative initiative has propelled nearly 50 projects, infusing over \$400,000 in improvements into our neighborhoods.</p> <p>Unlocking New Possibilities: Applications Open March 15, 2024!</p> <p>Building on this success, the City is excited to declare that applications for the 2024 period of the Neighborhood Exterior Grant Program will be accepted starting March 15, 2024. This eagerly anticipated opportunity empowers homeowners to reinvest in their properties and continue the positive momentum that has revitalized our housing stock.</p> <p>Act Fast - Limited Funding Available!</p> <p>The City encourages all eligible homeowners to seize this chance for positive change. Applications will be accepted until program funding for the year is exhausted. With the past success of the program, the City anticipates a high level of interest, so act swiftly to secure your spot in this community-enhancing initiative.</p> <p>"Independence has witnessed remarkable transformations through the Neighborhood Exterior Grant Program. Success stories are not just about numbers; they're about the revitalization of our neighborhoods and the sense of pride that comes with it," said Dean Hayse, Commissioner for the City of Independence.</p> <p>Join the Movement – How to Apply:</p> <p>Begin preparing your co-application with a partnering neighbor within line of sight.</p> <p>Ensure your property meets eligibility criteria, such as being located in a Neighborhood Revitalization district or being valued at under \$100,000 or rated as an Average Minus or below by Montgomery County records; Additional requirements such as not being in a floodplain and having all your city utility bills and taxes up to date must also be met.</p> <p>Review the list of eligible improvements, from façade restoration to roof repair.</p>	<p>Web, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>5/3/2024</p>	<p>295</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Financial , Political</p>	<p>Successful Facilitation</p>
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<p>The results of the Independence resident satisfaction survey conducted earlier this spring are now available on the City's website. The survey report summarizes feedback from the 791 survey respondents.</p> <p>Survey results may be viewed using this link:  <a href="https://www.independencex.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2316/Community-Survey-Presentation-05272021">https://www.independencex.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2316/Community-Survey-Presentation-05272021</a></p> <p>A video presentation of the results also is available on the City's YouTube channel: <a href="https://youtu.be/HEnaiB3zSf4?t=527">https://youtu.be/HEnaiB3zSf4?t=527</a></p> <p>"We are very appreciative of the effort our residents made to complete this survey," said Independence City Manager Kelly Passauer. "This was an important initiative to collect meaningful feedback that will help us improve current and future services."</p> <p>According to the survey report, the areas of highest satisfaction among residents completing the survey included the maintenance of Riverside Park &amp; Ralph Mitchell Zoo and quality and responsiveness of Fire and EMS services. Key areas noted in need of improvement were city street conditions and enforcement of standards related to maintenance and upkeep of residential homes.</p> <p>The survey process and report were facilitated by the Tanner Accountants &amp; Advisors consulting company and were presented to the Independence City Commission at its May 27 meeting. Passauer said the City will consider feedback from the survey as it develops plans for future programs and services.</p>	<p>Web, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>6/2/2021</p>	<p>194</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Social, Political, Cultural</p>	<p>Successful Facilitation</p>
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<p>In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City's Economic Development Advisory Board recommends funding an Emergency Grant Program which would provide a \$5,000 grant to certain hospitality and retail businesses that have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Eligible Businesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitality Industry (excluding hotel/motel) - Defined as restaurant and retail (businesses that sell goods)</li> <li>- Located within the City limits with a permanent address (brick and mortar business location excluding home businesses)</li> <li>- Owner/Franchisee must live within Montgomery County</li> <li>- Must hold a current City business license</li> <li>- Must have been open and operating at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> <li>- Must reopen within 60 days after the Governor rescinds the Executive Order(s) restricting residents and businesses due to the COVID-19 pandemic</li> <li>- Must have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic</li> </ul> <p>Applications should be submitted to <a href="mailto:lacey1@independences.gov">lacey1@independences.gov</a> by 5 pm on Monday, April 6th for review or submit this application online by the due date. Applications will be numbered as received and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis for those that meet all eligibility criteria.</p>	<p>Web, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>4/2/2020</p>	<p>171</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Financial, Political</p>	<p>Successful Facilitation</p>
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<p>The Independence City Commission will meet at 2 PM, today (Saturday) at Temporary City Hall (811 W Laurel) to make a disaster declaration due to the flooding situation. The disaster declaration will allow for various resources from the State of Kansas to be made available to Independence. The meeting will be held in the Leadership Conference Room (former MRI area). Enter on the east side of the building, on the south end (double doors).</p> <p>The declaration will be made after city and county officials were alerted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about the release of water from area lakes that feed into the Verdigris River.</p> <p>The previous projection today estimated the river to rise to 44.2' at the USGS Verdigris River Gage, however, this has been updated to rise to 47' by Monday based on current conditions and information. A level of 49' at the USGS Verdigris River Gage will affect the water treatment plant. Currently, the water treatment plant is fully operational.</p> <p>A river height of 47' Verdigris River Bridge gauge will cause flooding of the following locations in Independence:</p> <p>North Park Blvd between Cottonwood and Parkhurst (including the baseball field complex)  South Pennsylvania Ave between Cedar and the South City limits  South 8th, 9th and 10th Street between Poplar and the South City Limits  Cement Street between Coffeyville Avenue and the South City Limits  South 1st, 2nd, Park Blvd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th between Poplar and the South City Limits  North Penn Avenue between Sycamore and Parkhurst  East Sycamore Street between 5th Street and Park Blvd  Cottonwood between 5th and Park Blvd</p> <p>For a list of emergency supplies to gather and other information visit this page: <a href="http://www.independenccks.gov/342/Emergency-Management">http://www.independenccks.gov/342/Emergency-Management</a></p> <p>The City of Independence will continue to monitor the situation closely and will update as conditions change. Citizens can monitor the City webpage and Facebook page for updates and in the event flooding occurs the City will use our Civic Ready Alert system. You can sign up for Civic Ready Alerts at this link: <a href="https://independence-ks-area.reggroup.com/signup">https://independence-ks-area.reggroup.com/signup</a></p>	<p>Web, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>5/26/2019</p>	<p>335</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natural</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>
<p>If you are in the floodplain and have flood damage in addition to the permit process mentioned in the previous press release, please make contact with your insurance company, obtain estimates and verify that contractors have City licenses before signing a contract or authorizing them to perform work. City employees are currently surveying the storm damage and will be attempting to contact property owners to assist them with the flood permit process as required by FEMA. Call City Hall at 620-332-2500, Option 1 to verify whether a contractor has a valid City license.</p>	<p>Web, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>8/17/2018</p>	<p>94</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Natural</p>	<p>Information Provision</p>

<p>The City of Independence and Cohen-Esrey Development Group, LLC have announced the long-anticipated senior housing development at the former Washington School site is moving forward, thanks to the recent award of federal tax credits.</p> <p>After unsuccessful attempts to secure tax credits in 2015 and 2016, Tim Quigley, Cohen-Esrey development director, said his company received notification last week from the Kansas Housing Resources Commission (KHRC) that its 2017 application for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) had been approved. Quigley explained each state receives an annual allocation of federal housing tax credits, formally known as Section 42 Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). KHRC administers the program for the State of Kansas. The credits were the final stimulus needed to green-light the project, Quigley said.</p> <p>“The third time (application) was the charm, apparently, and we are very excited to get this development off the ground and breathe new life into the sentimental school building,” Quigley said.</p> <p>Quigley anticipates architectural renderings and final financing arrangements should be completed in four to five months, with construction beginning in September or October.</p> <p>Named “Washington Historic Residences,” the complex will offer 26 units, a combination of both one- and two-bedroom apartments, Quigley said. The apartments will be outfitted with washers and dryers, and the building will offer secured access, an elevator, weather safe room, a community space, green space and off-street parking. The facility will be designed specifically for senior residents whose incomes are no more than 60 percent of the area median income.</p> <p>“The Washington School development is a win for both progress and historic preservation in our city,” said Independence Mayor Fred Meier. “It will be great to see the historic 1939 building repurposed in such a useful way and once again contributing to our quality of life in Independence.</p> <p>“Also, Cohen-Esrey has been a great partner with the city, with a track record of producing quality, affordable housing for our residents.”</p> <p>Washington Historic Residences will be the third housing development in Independence completed by Cohen-Esrey, who also developed Pheasant Point Apartments on the city’s north side and the 8th &amp; Main Historic Residences in the former Union Implement building.</p>	<p>Web, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>5/22/2017</p>	<p>371</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Postive</p>	<p>Built</p>	<p>Successful Facilitation</p>
<p>The City of Independence wishes to thank those of you who volunteered your assistance during the recent flood disaster. We wish to take a moment to express our appreciation for your generosity and compassion by saying thank you.</p>	<p>X, Independence, MG.</p>	<p>5/30/2019</p>	<p>38</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Postive</p>	<p>Social</p>	<p>Motivation</p>