

House Committee on Taxation
Hearing on House Bill 2136
Thursday, February 14, 2013 at 3:30 p.m. – Room 582-N
Written Testimony of Loren J. Pepperd
Mayor, City of Manhattan, Kansas

Good afternoon Chair Carlson, Vice Chair Schwab and honorable members of the House Taxation Committee. My name is Loren Pepperd, and I have the honor of serving as Mayor for the City of Manhattan. I want to thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony to the Committee.

The City of Manhattan opposes HB 2136 that would redirect to the State General Fund revenues from the the four-tenths of a cent sales tax that are committed to the State Highway Fund to support the T-WORKS program. Preservation of T-WORKS is a top legislative priority for the City of Manhattan. Like many municipalities, Manhattan was a strong advocate of a new 10-year transportation program to ensure funding for highway preservation, expansion projects, and modernization improvements to promote safety and economic development. T-WORKS is projected to create 175,000 jobs over 10 years and must be preserved in order to sustain the state's economic recovery.

T-WORKS made possible the upgrade of K-18, the primary traffic artery between Manhattan and Fort Riley, which was previously identified as the top transportation priority for the region. In cooperation with Riley County and the City of Ogden, Manhattan is nearing completion of a planning study that will designate significant land along this corridor for future commercial and industrial development.

Several other projects in Manhattan are scheduled for T-WORKS funding in 2013 and beyond, such as replacement of the bridges on K-18 over Wildcat Creek, improvements to the intersection of US-24 and Leavenworth St., and advances to the city's Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) that will improve traffic flows along K-113 and Anderson Avenue. These and other projects targeted for joint local and state funding are essential to supporting growth in Manhattan and the entire State of Kansas, especially by promoting ongoing economic development related to Fort Riley, Manhattan Regional Airport, Kansas State University, and the National Bio and Agro Defense Facility (NBAF).

Please oppose HB2136 and keep the promise to avoid redirecting designated transportation funding for other state priorities.

Thank you for your consideration, and I would be happy to answer any questions. I may be reached by mail at City Hall, City of Manhattan, 1101 Poyntz Avenue, Manhattan, KS 66502, by phone at (785) 587-2404, or by email at pepperd@cityofmhk.com.