



# Derby, Kansas



## 2014 Legislative Agenda

The City of Derby seeks to preserve the values, decision-making processes, and funding essential to our community. This legislative agenda identifies the core principles important to the City of Derby and our residents. These core principles ensure that decisions about services for Derby residents are made openly and transparently and that services remain responsive to local needs.



## Core Principles

### Home Rule

In 1960, the voters of the state of Kansas passed a constitutional amendment granting “Home Rule” authority to cities. Passage of this amendment recognizes that local decisions should be made by locally elected officials.

The Amendment states, in part: “Cities are hereby empowered to determine their local affairs and government including the levying of taxes, excises, fees, charges and other exactions. Powers and authority granted cities...shall be liberally construed for the purpose of giving to cities the largest measure of self-government.” (Kansas Constitution, Article 12, Section 5)

We do not support actions at the state level that erode this constitutional provision for local self-determination. The City of Derby encourages balance between all constitutional requirements.

### Local Elections

Derby supports non-partisan elections which provide the ability for communities to focus on local issues—the issues that matter most to them—without the interference of undue partisanship. Our city charter provides for non-partisan elections, as do those of many cities in Kansas.

The City of Derby opposes changing the timing of local elections away from their current election cycle, which is the first Tuesday in April in odd-numbered years.

City governance is different from state or federal legislative bodies. City councils are responsible for providing direct services to their communities such as the delivery of drinking water, removal and treatment of sewage waste, and maintaining law and order.

To adequately protect citizens from over-reaching governmental authority, state and federal legislative bodies were designed to move slowly through the policy-making and law-making processes. To provide for local health and well-being, municipal governments need to function effectively and focus on reaching agreement to provide direct services. Both kinds of processes serve their purposes—to protect Kansans—and because their bases of authority differ, it is best that local government remains non-partisan.



## Core Principles

### **KPERS**

Maintaining KPERS as a competitive retirement benefit is important to our ability to attract and keep quality employees. Derby and other municipal governments fully fund our participation in KPERS and do not rely on state funding. Derby supports legislative efforts to reduce the unfunded liability of this important retirement system, even though such efforts cost our City budget.

If legislators consider creating a new 401(k)-type system, Derby advocates allowing local governments the ability to choose their level of participation.

### **Local Tax Decisions**

The City of Derby is committed to keeping property and sales tax rates low. Consistent with Home Rule principles, the City opposes statutory limitations on the ability of locally elected officials to make local tax decisions.

### **Unfunded Mandates**

The City of Derby opposes unfunded mandates. If the state government seeks to promote particular policy objectives, an appropriate level of funding should accompany such mandates.

### **Annexation**

The ability of Derby to promote and plan for growth is inherent to the ultimate success of our community. Derby supports the ability of cities to use their annexation authority as currently established in state statute. We oppose any change that limits the authority of cities to grow through annexation.



## Partnerships

Derby participates as a member of the Regional Economic Area Partnership (REAP) to develop and support a regional legislative agenda to inform state legislators about how to support the best economic interests of South Central Kansas.

The interests of the City of Derby and most all cities in the state are also represented by the legislative priorities of the League of Kansas Municipalities, whose mission is to advocate for the interests of Kansas municipalities to advance the quality of life in Kansas. Since more than 82% of Kansans live in cities, the League's priorities are intended to benefit the vast majority of Kansans.

Derby's legislative liaison is Schneider Public Strategies. Scott Schneider can be reached at (316) 303-5379 or [sjschneider@cox.net](mailto:sjschneider@cox.net).

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7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. M-Th  
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