

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE



PROJECT REPORT

JUNE 2025

1-CENT SALES TAX PROJECT CATEGORIES

Beautification
Community Development
Economic Development
Infrastructure

Crime, Drug, &
Alcohol Prevention
Housing
Project Maintenance

Completed Projects



Liberal Animal Shelter Dog Park

Liberal Animal Shelter's new enclosed outdoor space for shelter dogs is complete. The project was funded in part through the Rotary Foundation with the remaining expenses covered by the crime prevention portion of the 1-cent sales tax. Staff are coordinating with Liberal Rotary Club for a dedication ceremony.

Liberal Municipal Concert Band

Our new concert band performed two shows this summer at Light Park. Approximately 40 local musicians performed a variety of music for park guests. The free shows attracted large audiences and on-site food vendors noted exceptional sales on performance nights.



Community Art Mural

We hosted a community mural dedication event on July 4th to celebrate our new mural at Light Park. The mural is 20 feet long and was painted by local artist, Karem Gallo Flores. This project was funded in part by the Kansas Arts Commission through the National Endowment of the Arts. Matching funds came from the beautification portion of the 1-cent sales tax.

Lobbyist Agreement Renewal

We have signed another one-year service agreement with Watkins Public Strategies, a lobbyist firm located in Kansas which advocates for us at the state and federal levels. Liberal has worked with Watkins since 2023 and we have seen measurable progress in the areas of community development and transportation. They work directly with staff each legislative session to keep leaders updated on bills and decisions affecting our city. Watkins helps prepare testimony for committee hearings, connect us with key state department contacts, and advocate for our needs with legislators. This service agreement is funded by the economic development portion of the 1-cent sales tax.

Current Projects

Launch Liberal 2035 Comprehensive Plan

A public hearing for the *Launch Liberal 2035* comprehensive plan was held at the July 10th Planning & Zoning Committee meeting. Following the hearing the Planning & Zoning Committee voted to approve the draft plan and send it for final approval and adoption by the Liberal City Commission on August 12th. The plan includes information on how the plan was created; a summary of public feedback collected; our core values and goals; and an implementation plan portion which outlines recommended action items to meet Liberal's future development goals.

Rock Island Depot Repair

The city has been awarded \$77k from the Kansas Historical Society's Heritage Trust Fund program to assist with needed repairs to the Rock Island Depot. Bids will be opened soon to start with the building's roof replacement. One-cent sales tax funds will serve as the local match for grant funds. Further repairs to the building's gutter system and foundation will also be required.

Light Park Fitness Court

Our Commission approved a new fitness court project, which will replace a playground area which was removed from Light Park (north of Adventure Bay Water Park). The court will include outdoor workout equipment, turf surfacing, shade, and other amenities. Estimated installation will begin in September once equipment and fixtures arrive.



Leete Park Playground Turf

The location of the playground area at Leete Park experiences flooding and mulch is washed away into the park with every heavy rainfall. This results in a playground that is unusable and requires extensive staff cleanup and replacement mulch to keep the play area in usable condition. The Commission approved new playground turf which will alleviate this problem, improve aesthetics create a more physically accessible playground, and add extra safety protection for falls. The turf carries a 15-year warranty. Installation began today.

McCray Dog Park

Plans continue moving forward to establish a community dog park with a targeted completion date this year. McCray Park near S. Pershing Ave and W. Pine Street has been selected for the site. This project has been frequently requested by our residents.

Park Lighting

The Commission approved the purchase of solar lighting fixtures for McCray Park (replacement), Country Club Park (bollard path lights), Mahuron Park, and Blue Bonnet Park to improve safety and the overall visitor experience. These lights have shipped and are set to arrive in late July for installation through the fall.



Liberal Cemetery Expansion

Staff are working on expansion plans for the Liberal Cemetery. Earles Engineering was recently approved to begin topographic surveys, street design, and gravestone apron design for the expansion. The area is expected to grow to the north and add approximately 50 years of additional space.



Randall Pond

Following a lengthy process of approvals, Randall Pond is being dug for drainage to support land development in Southwest Liberal near U.S. Highway 54. This project is funded by the infrastructure (drainage) portion of the 1-cent sales tax.

Future Projects



Sports Complex Parking

There is an increasing need for vehicle parking near the National Beef Family Sports Complex to accommodate attendees. Staff are evaluating options to expand available parking.

Gun Range Relocation

Relocation of the current gun range has been an ongoing project idea under discussion. City staff have continued to evaluate an appropriate site location for a proposed range to include an area for the public and a separated space for law enforcement training.

Bus Stop Enhancements

Staff are exploring the addition of seating and possible shelters at bus stops in Liberal.

Program Reports

Housing Programs

The following awards were provided for housing programs from January-June 2025:

PROGRAM	# AWARDS YEAR-TO-DATE	\$ AWARDS YEAR-TO-DATE
Paint-the-Town	49	\$24,500
First Time Homebuyer	31	\$93,000
Housing Construction Incentive	9	\$67,500
Emergency Home Repair	51	\$133,980
*NEW: Fence Program	0	\$0

Façade Improvement Program

The following awards were provided for the façade grant program from January-June 2025:

PROGRAM	# AWARDS YEAR-TO-DATE	\$ AWARDS YEAR-TO-DATE
Façade Grant	6	\$52,512

Note: There is sufficient budget authority in this fund to increase to \$100,000 in façade grant funds in 2025, so we will continue accepting new applications.