

City of Lyons: a 2017 review

By Ryan Carlson

Although there were a few setbacks, 2017 turned into a successful year for the city of Lyons. Here is a month by month review of all of the changes that took place.

January

January was the time when the city of Lyons finally came to a resolution to the Bolton Building issue. The building developed a hole on the mural located along the north wall in 2016. After sitting for nearly a year the city and building owner Hearts and Hands came to a partnership to demolish the structure. The city worked on a plan to put the structure in a land bank after it's upcoming demolition.

In January part of the preparations for the demolition of the Bolton Building, Dan Hannah began to look for a new home for his statue "Bug on a Stick." The statue was commissioned by Dan Hannah and his later wife as a celebration for their many years of doing business on the Rice County Courthouse Square. Later in the year it finally came to rest at its new home on the east side of the Lyons Library.

Taylor street was partially inaccessible in January due to a collapse caused by a massive water main leak. Approximately 50 feet of street was inaccessible. Rice County EMS wasn't effected much due to a low call volume, but on occasion needed to use an alternate path to Rice County District Hospital until the road was fixed.

In January, City of Lyons received a \$300,000 grant for home rehabilitation in Ward Four. The grant was received from Kansas Department of Commerce and went to fund 14 homes. That included eight homes and seven rentals. Work to properties owned by landlords were funded 75 percent by the grant with the landlord required to put 25 percent of the costs up front. In January the Foundry Road project, adding cement pavement from Highway 56 to the Mahindra tractor facility was nearly complete. The project started earlier in December of 2016. The project finally came to a close in February.

February

In February the City of Lyons conducted a traffic engineering assistance program (TEAP) study on American Road. The study was due to the congestion of traffic to and from Lyons Middle and High School. As reported in the February 7 edition of the Lyons News, Superintendent Bill Day said the gym parking for the middle school only had 37 spots and many were parking on American Road instead of parking in the Lyons High School east parking lot. The study encompassed an area from the school west to Kansas Highway and east to the intersection of Dinsmore and American Road. In the end it was decided to put up no parking signs on that section of road.

A joint project between Quivira Transit and Rice County EMS to build a parking garage was completed in February. The project started in August of 2015, and construction began on Thanksgiving of 2016. Because of the cold, concrete couldn't be poured so the project was on hold. The garage is separated into two distinct sections and it measures 42 feet by 50 feet.

March

It was reported in the March 7 edition of the Lyons News that the Rotary Club of Lyons

donated chairs and tables to the Bar K Bar Arena. The tables and chairs were made from recycled tires and plastic bottles by Champlin Tire Recycling Company in Concordia.

City of Lyons removed traffic lights at the intersection of West Avenue and Main in March, turning it into a two-way stop. The change came after a TEAP study found the intersection did not require traffic lights. Prior to the removal, the streetlights that were present had malfunctioned for the past two years and were left on a blinking setting.

In March the City of Lyons began a project to remove several objects identified by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as obstacles located around the new 4,400 linear foot runway at the Lyons Rice County Municipal Airport. The runway had just been completed in October of 2016, but was shortly shut down due to the discovery of the obstacles. The runway reopened in August of 2017.

April

USD 405 made a determination that the Lyons Middle School building could be demolished after nearly two years of trying to find a new use for it. The demolition had already been planned when the school district passed a bond issue.

Dozens of individuals filled up the KSTW Tractor Facility for a ribbon cutting of Foundry Road. The dedication ceremony had several speakers including then mayor Mike Young and Secretary of Transportation Richard Carlson.

APAC Shears conducted a complete mill and overlay of East Taylor on April 25. The project began with the milling of the street. Later, the company installed a two inch thick layer of new asphalt.

May

Local fire departments displayed their new 15x25 foot American flag during Safety Day on Saturday. The flag's first use was on Memorial Day. It was hoisted on a Lyons Fire Truck at Lyons Municipal Cemetery.

City of Lyons completed a sidewalk project stretching from Wendy's to Shopko on the north side of Highway 56. The project was long requested by Lyons citizens for the safety of pedestrians walking to Shopko and Dollar General.

June

In June the City of Lyons began auctioning off furniture in the old Lyons City Hall building in preparation for its demolition. The auction included several desks as well as 200 original bench seats dating back to 1916. The old seats were installed at a time when the old city hall served as a theater. The auction lasted through July 11.

July

City of Lyons employees repaired a section of highway 56 measuring 19 feet by four feet. It was removed when Sonic repaired a sewer line. The sewer line was needed because of repairs to the restaurant's main.

August

City of Lyons Streets and Flood Control Department workers installed the first of three signs at the intersection of Main and Pioneer in August. The signs are approximately two feet high and wide. The signs display the speed travelers are driving and urge them to slow down if they are speeding.

September

City of Lyons installed temporary grave stones for those who didn't have any. The stones are

included as a budget item and cost around \$500 to \$600 annually. That cost includes the cement, the plates, letters and numbers. They are created in concrete forms held at the cemetery.

October

In October Lyons Fire Department was one of three departments county wide to receive a grant from Jacam. The \$4,000 grant received by Lyons allowed them to purchase a washer extractor to clean their gear after fighting a fire.

November

In November, the Lyons Bell and Star was installed for it's upcoming 2017 holiday season. The installation took place over a two-day period on the week of November 10.

Lyons Police Department received a grant to

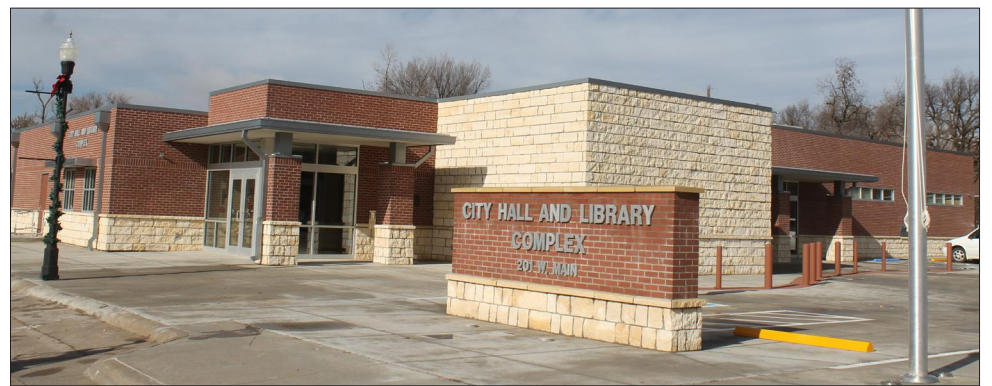
purchase three new bullet proof vests in November. The grant was received from US Department of Justice. Since Chris Detmer became chief of the police department 14 years ago, they have received five such grants.

On November 17, City of Lyons provided Chase

students with job shadowing opportunities. Several department heads met with students individually to talk about their work and City Administrator John Sweet gave a presentation on how to conduct a job interview.

December

December marked the construction of one of the final Quivira Heights Housing Project homes from a 2017 grant. The grant received by the City of Lyons which provided \$50,000 towards the construction of two homes. In all five properties are left for development.



The Lyons City Hall of Library Complex project began in 2010 after the city discussed the need to replace the old building. In 2013, the old SACO building located next to Dairy Queen on West Main Street was chosen as the new location. The construction began in spring of 2014 and completed in December of that year. The new facility has proven to be a great asset to the city since its construction.

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What should you do with your tax refund?

You may not get much of a thrill from filing your taxes, but the process becomes much more enjoyable if you're expecting a refund. So, if one is headed your way, what should you do with the money?

The answer depends somewhat on the size of the refund. For the 2017 tax year, the average refund was about \$2,760 – not a fortune, but big enough to make an impact in your life. Suppose, for example, that you invested this amount in a tax-deferred vehicle, such as a traditional IRA, and then did not add another penny to it for 30 years. At the end of that time, assuming a hypothetical 7 percent annual rate of return, you'd have slightly more than \$21,000 – not enough, by itself, to allow you to move to a Caribbean island, but still a nice addition to your retirement income. (You will need to pay taxes on your

withdrawals eventually, unless the money was invested in a Roth IRA, in which case withdrawals are tax-free, provided you meet certain conditions.)

Of course, you don't have to wait 30 years before you see any benefits from your tax refund. If you did decide to put a \$2,760 tax refund toward your IRA for 2018, you'd already have reached just over half the allowable contribution limit of \$5,500. (If you're 50 or older, the limit is \$6,500.) By getting such a strong head start on funding your IRA for the year, you'll give your money more time to grow. Also, if you're going to "max out" on your IRA, your large initial payment will enable you to put in smaller monthly amounts than you might need to contribute otherwise.

While using your refund to help fund your IRA is a good

move, it's not the only one you can make. Here are a few other possibilities:

- Pay down some debt. At some time or another, most of us probably feel we're carrying too much debt. If you can use your tax refund to help reduce your monthly debt payments, you'll improve your cash flow and possibly have more money available to invest for the future.

- Build an emergency fund. If you needed a new furnace or major car repair, or faced any other large, unexpected expense, how would you pay for it? If you did not have the cash readily available, you might be forced to dip into your long-term investments. To help avoid this problem, you could create an emergency fund containing three to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid,

low-risk account. Your tax refund could help build your emergency fund.

- Look for other investment opportunities. If you have some gaps in your portfolio, or some opportunities to improve your overall diversification, you might want to use your tax refund to add some new investments. The more diversified your portfolio, the stronger your defense against market volatility that might primarily affect one particular asset class. (However, diversification, by itself, can't protect against all losses or guarantee profits.)

Clearly, a tax refund gives you a chance to improve your overall financial picture. So take your time, evaluate your options and use the money wisely.

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