

R9 Ranch Project - Cities of Hays & Russell

The R9 Ranch project is of existential importance for the Cities of Hays and Russell. The project will provide a sustainable, reliable supply of water for decades to come. The long regulatory and legal journey is nearing completion. Project design has wrapped up, and easement acquisition is nearing completion.



Hays has begun the process to receive a Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act loan. \$15M in State of Kansas money has been awarded for the project. The support for this project by our Federal Legislative Delegation is greatly appreciated.

Through comprehensive prairie restoration, vital aquifer conservation, expanded public recreation, and a sustainable water supply, this project represents a truly monumental win for our city, state, and entire region.

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*Hays / Ellis County
Delegation Agenda*



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Ellis County Public Safety Radio Project



Ellis County is working to modernize and sustain reliable communications for twelve local and multiple state public safety agencies through replacement of mobile and portable radios and upgrading tower equipment.

- **Replace Aging Equipment** - Upgrade radios and tower equipment approaching end-of-life to prevent failures and to be able to maintain standards as Kansas upgrades their core components while reducing maintenance costs and downtime
- **Maintain Interoperability** - Ensure seamless communication between local agencies and the state radio network and enabling mutual aid coordination during multi-jurisdictional incidents and emergencies.
- **Enhance Responder Safety** - Enable GPS location sharing from radios to the PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point) and improve situational awareness for dispatchers and field responders
- **Reduce Programming Costs** - Minimize travel, on-site labor, and downtime associated with manual programming and streamline updates across multiple devices simultaneously.
- **Estimated Project Scope** - \$7,066,700

Seeking Legislation & Policies Protecting Rural Healthcare



HaysMed is a designated Sole Community emergency care for much of Western Kansas serving rural communities that depend on us as their only accessible source of advanced healthcare. As the region's only tertiary medical center, HaysMed provides 24/7 specialty coverage, including Level III Trauma, cardiology, cardiovascular and thoracic care, orthopedics, oncology, obstetrics, intensive care, and other high-acuity services for an aging population with socioeconomic barriers and no local alternatives.

Despite this critical role, the following current federal policies place HaysMed at risk. The CMS Transforming Episode Accountability Model (TEAMS) disproportionately disadvantages rural hospitals by creating unstable benchmarks and penalties unrelated to quality while limiting care coordination options in regions without robust post-acute infrastructure. Workforce challenges are compounded by federal rules that force Sole Community Hospitals to relinquish SCH status in order to establish residency programs, creating challenges for long-term physician recruitment in rural Kansas. In addition, continued exclusion of rural Sole Community Hospitals from automatic 340B eligibility excludes essential funding that supports uncompensated care and community services. Without legislative and regulatory adjustments reflecting rural realities, policies intended to promote accountability instead accelerate financial strain, workforce shortages, and reduced access to essential services for Western Kansas patients.

Supporting Crisis Infrastructure for Western Kansas



Above: High Plains Mental Health Center Crisis Intervention Center floor plan

Below: Images of patient rooms



Across western Kansas, the need for timely and accessible mental health care continues to grow. Our communities are seeing more individuals in crisis, more families searching for help for loved ones, and more pressure placed on law enforcement, hospitals, and emergency rooms that were never designed to be the front line of behavioral health care. When someone experiences a mental health crisis, the system must be ready with the right level of care at the right time.

At High Plains Mental Health Center, we are working to meet that need, but one of the most significant gaps in our region remains crisis infrastructure. That is why the development of a Crisis Intervention Center (CIC) is such an important priority. The CIC will provide a safe and clinically appropriate place for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis to receive immediate stabilization and care. It will reduce unnecessary hospitalizations, limit the use of jails for individuals in crisis, and strengthen partnerships with local law enforcement and hospitals.

Community Mental Health Centers remain the backbone of behavioral health care across Kansas. The Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic model works because it is built on the CMHC safety net, ensuring services are available in every community. Investments in crisis centers and workforce development directly improve outcomes for the communities served. HPMHC has plans to purchase the Hadley Center facility to create a psychiatric and therapeutic hub to serve the greater western Kansas region. The purchase price is approximately \$5 million, with renovation estimations totaling \$20 - \$25 million.