

## **OPTION 1.**

### **THE WORLD AROUND YOU: HOW TO FIX YOUR CITY**

In Washington, D.C., politicians constantly debate issues like healthcare, defense, and the economy. And while these issues have significant importance, they are not matters that necessarily affect citizens on a daily basis. Every day when people start their morning, the local government affects individual and community behavior. The city sets the taxes on the house or apartment where you live. The city maintains the roads and road signs as you travel from your home. They even hire the police officer that pulls people over when the speedometer creeps over the city-set speed limit.

Cities provide a far-reaching range of services from fire and police protection to parks and swimming pools. Some cities even provide electricity, gas, and cable television. Unlike many of the issues in national politics, individuals can more easily initiate change to improve local government. Consider the community around you and write a \_\_\_\_-word essay on what you would like to change in your community and create a plan to achieve the change.

The League of Kansas Municipalities, which represents the cities in Kansas, is offering six regional awards for this essay contest. A winner from each region (northwest, north-central, northeast, southwest, south-central, and southeast) will receive a \$1,500 savings bond.

## **OPTION 2.**

### **WHEN DISASTER STRIKES: HOW TO FIX YOUR CITY**

When spring arrives in Kansas, the winter winds give way to some of the country's most beautiful weather. Spring also ushers in the start of tornado season. Midwesterners annually face the possibility of devastating storms and tornados, and when the big storms hit, citizens turn first turn to their local government for help. Before the storms, cities literally sound the alarm to warn of the danger. During the storm and after, cities play a central role in providing for its citizens. Write a \_\_\_\_-word essay on what cities can do to prepare and respond to natural disasters.

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## **OPTION 3**

### **DOES YOUR VOTE MATTER?**

Local governments often have the most direct effect on people across the country. Local laws touch most citizens on a daily basis—from speed limits and stoplights to police and fire protection. Despite government’s direct capacity to affect citizen behavior, voter participation in elections has steadily declined, particularly for young voters. In this \_\_\_\_-word essay, describe the reasons you believe that voter participation does or does not make a difference. Complete the essay by suggesting ideas to improve voter participation.

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