

Subject: Evaluation of Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer's Tenure as City Manager

Dear Members of the Shawnee City Council,

I write to formally present a detailed analysis of City Manager Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer's tenure, which began in October 2021, and how her leadership has impacted the citizens of Shawnee, Oklahoma. This holistic evaluation focuses on crime rates, public safety, economic governance, and transparency, all of which have seen shifts during her term.

### Overview of Crime Trends Under Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer's Leadership

As City Manager, Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer assumed office during a time when Shawnee's crime rates were notably higher than the national average. Based on the 2022 crime data—the most recent full-year data available—there has been a modest reduction in crime, but key areas of concern remain:

#### 1. Violent Crime:

- The violent crime rate in Shawnee remains 54% higher than the national average. Crimes such as assault, robbery, and aggravated assault have contributed to Shawnee being ranked among the least safe cities of its size ([NeighborhoodScout](#))([CrimeGrade.org](#)).
- In 2022, Shawnee's violent crime rate stood at 5.74 per 1,000 residents, with limited reductions from previous years ([NeighborhoodScout](#))([AreaVibes](#)).

#### 2. Property Crime:

- Property crime continues to be a significant issue in Shawnee, with 35.12 property crimes per 1,000 residents in 2022. This includes theft, vehicle theft, and burglary, which remain persistent threats to the community ([AreaVibes](#))([CrimeGrade.org](#)).
- Despite a slight 3% reduction in overall crime during 2022, this change has done little to alter the city's broader reputation for high crime, and the community still faces elevated risks compared to other U.S. cities ([AreaVibes](#))([CrimeGrade.org](#)).

## Public Safety and Governance Under Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer

### 1. Inconsistent Public Safety Investments:

Under Weckmueller-Behringer's leadership, there have been delays in addressing critical public safety concerns, most notably at Lions Club Field and other community areas. Despite community calls for improvements, responses have been slow, putting Shawnee residents at risk. This reflects poorly on the City Manager's prioritization of public safety ([AreaVibes](#))([CrimeGrade.org](#)).

### 2. Handling of MMJ Regulation:

Shawnee has imposed strict regulations and high compliance fees on small MMJ businesses during Weckmueller-Behringer's tenure, creating a challenging environment for these enterprises. While her office has justified these measures under the guise of public safety, the financial burden on small businesses raises questions about her economic governance and whether her approach has been overly punitive to specific sectors ([NeighborhoodScout](#)).

## Lack of Transparency and Accountability

Public trust in the City Manager's office has eroded due to the perceived lack of transparency in handling public funds and property transfers. Decisions that significantly affect Shawnee's citizens, such as the use of opioid abatement funds and other resource allocations, have not been accompanied by sufficient public consultation or reporting ([NeighborhoodScout](#))([AreaVibes](#)). This lack of clarity raises concerns about how effectively the City Manager's office is serving its citizens.

## Challenges in Economic Growth and Resource Allocation

Shawnee's reliance on sales tax revenue has placed additional pressure on city governance to balance economic growth with effective resource management. However, public safety issues, such as unaddressed field maintenance, continue to take a backseat in the city's financial priorities. The allocation of opioid abatement funds, for example, has been criticized for being underutilized in addressing pressing health concerns ([AreaVibes](#)).

## Recommendations and Conclusion

Given these findings, it is my recommendation that the Shawnee City Council consider the following steps as part of a broader review of Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer's performance as City Manager:

1. Prioritize Transparency:

Weckmueller-Behringer's office should be required to release more regular and transparent reports on crime rates, public safety spending, and resource allocation. This would help restore public trust and ensure that key decisions are being made with adequate community involvement.

2. Reevaluate MMJ Fee Structures:

A thorough review of the current MMJ regulatory framework and fee structures is needed. The current system may be discouraging economic growth, particularly for small businesses that are essential to Shawnee's local economy.

3. Immediate Focus on Public Safety:

The City Manager must prioritize delayed safety improvements, particularly at key public spaces like Lions Club Field, to demonstrate her administration's commitment to community well-being. Allocating more resources to address ongoing crime and public safety concerns is critical.

In conclusion, while there have been minor improvements in Shawnee's crime rates, the overall impact of Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer's tenure remains mixed. The modest reductions in crime have not significantly improved Shawnee's standing, and concerns regarding transparency, economic governance, and public safety persist. As her contract is up for renewal, these issues warrant close consideration by the Shawnee City Council to ensure the city is being effectively managed.

Sincerely,

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Shawnee Resident/Stakeholder