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Hiawatha to Seek KDHE Loan for Water Improvements

(KNZA)--The city of Hiawatha will seek a loan through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to help fund improvements to the city's water supply and distribution system to address the ongoing nitrate problem.

Following a hearing this week drawing no public comment, the City Commission authorized the completion of a loan application for an amount not to exceed \$6.95 million.

Rita Clary with the Kansas Rural Water Association, which is assisting the city with the loan application, said there may be an opportunity for Hiawatha to receive a KDHE loan with a 30 percent principal forgiveness. She said the remainder could then be paid off with bonds. Clary said there's also a possibility Hiawatha would qualify for a grant that would cover up to 75 percent of the remainder of the loan.

An engineering firm has recommended the construction of a new ion exchange water treatment plant to address the nitrate problem.

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