2004 Amended and 2005 Proposed Annual Operating Budget and 2004-2008 CMIP
# 2005 Proposed Budget: Highlights and Issues

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July 8, 2004

Mayor Marinovich and
Unified Government Commissioners:

It is my privilege to submit to you and the community the 2005 Proposed Unified Government Budget. The 2005 Proposed Budget is more than a fiscal document detailing revenues and expenses. It is a financial blueprint for achieving the Commission’s adopted goals for the community. This proposed budget balances the need to improve and invest in the future of the community, with the crucial goal of making property taxes as low as possible. I believe this budget proposes a prudent and workable plan for accomplishing those goals, while at the same time, giving you as elected leaders, financial options and choices about initiatives and programs.

"Our vision is to grow and nurture an economically
and socially diverse, healthy community that feels good about itself."
Vision Statement
of the Unified Government

This Vision Statement, adopted in June 2004 by the Board of Commissioners, is the guiding principle for the 2005 Proposed Budget. It attempts to accomplish improvements in several strategic goals outlined by the Commission, including quality of life, economic and community development, financial stability, countywide cooperation and high quality government operations.

**Budget Highlights**

- The 2005 Proposed Budget recommends a 4.5% cut in the property tax rate for Kansas City, Kansas residents. This year continues the effort to cut Unified Government property tax rates. In 2004, the total mill levy was reduced 6%. The budget follows the stated principle of steady, consistent and reasonable tax cuts over the next several years.

- The Proposed Budget calls for prudent financial management by keeping fund balance and reserves in the range of 10-15% of total budget.

- General Fund expenditures of $145.9-million are proposed for 2005. That's a 6% increase from the 2004 Revised budget.

- While cutting taxes is a key accomplishment, the 2005 Proposed Budget also targets increased spending on Communitywide Initiatives which address adopted Commission Goals of improving the community and investing in its future success, including:
Implement a Rapid Response Team to more aggressively attack code enforcement problems and clean-ups.

Maintain the commitment to the Neighborhood Revitalization Program with the goal of designating $2.1-million over a five year period.

Enhance Public Safety by adding five additional Patrol Officers in the Police Department.

Shift the E911 operation to a true Countywide operation and streamline management of the Dispatch Center.

Concentrate on recruitment of retail businesses to capture our share of the retail market.

Beef-up the ability of Planning and Engineering to handle the demands of record growth. This initiative also includes $150,000 for communitywide master planning.

Commit $150,000 to a Metro Disparity Study, in partnership with Kansas City, Missouri, to find ways to improve opportunities for minority and women owned enterprises to do business with government.

Reinforce efforts to collect delinquent taxes through additional resources, including one new Sheriff's Deputy specifically assigned to the Tax Collection Unit.

Meet the increased costs of health insurance, retirement contributions and compensation adjustments, while containing all other operating expenses of day-to-day functions at status quo levels.

Continue ongoing efforts to better serve the growing number of Hispanic citizens making their homes in KCK.

Fund the statutorily required public safety duties performed by the Sheriff's Department and approve an initiative sought by the Sheriff to examine privatizing maintenance of the jail.

Community Successes:
Progress, Prosperity and Pride

The 2005 Proposed Budget is built in a time when Wyandotte County is experiencing record growth and phenomenal economic development successes. As a backdrop to the 2005 Proposed Budget, it is important to review some of the significant trends and successes.

The Kansas Speedway and Village West is the most remarkable economic development success story the State of Kansas has ever seen. Ten million people a year are expected to visit Village West and Wyandotte County. Construction of the $246-million Legends Shopping and Entertainment District is ready to begin. All of the shops and restaurants in The Legends will pay full property taxes and are estimated to generate $4.2-million a year in new property tax revenues. The Legends is expected to create 11-hundred construction jobs. And all of this landmark development is happening with no cost to local taxpayers and no financial risk to the taxpayers of Kansas.
Western Wyandotte County is rapidly becoming one of the hottest spots for development in the entire KC metro. In 2003, Kansas City, Kansas tallied its highest single-year total of housing starts in the past 40 years with 433 new single-family housing permits issued. That is a 48-percent increase over 2002 and the largest percentage increase in the entire Kansas City metro. The trend is continuing in 2004 and 2005.

The Homebuilders Association of Greater Kansas City ranks KCK sixth out of 68 metro communities in the number of new housing starts. The average new home built in Wyandotte County last year was valued at more than $120-thousand. The most expensive are valued around $500,000.

The city’s urban core is also experiencing a building increase. Cathedral Pointe and Melrose Gardens are already under construction. Peregrine Falcon, Mission Cliffs and the City Hall Lofts are on the horizon.

Our residents are also safer than ever before. Violent crime in KCK is dropping dramatically. Police Department records show violent crime decreased nearly 50-percent since 1995. 2003 marks the ninth straight year violent crime decreased.

Financial Landscape:
**Budgeting Assumptions and Revenue Realities**

The financial philosophy of steady, consistent property tax decreases over the next several years is a goal adopted by the Board of Commissioners and embraced by the administrative staff. The mill levy for city and county property taxes decreased 6-percent in 2004 and the 2005 Proposed Budget continues the trend of lowering property taxes.

Wyandotte County has one of the lowest property tax mill levies in the State of Kansas, ranked 95th lowest out of 105 counties. Meanwhile, Kansas City, Kansas has one of the highest property tax mill levies in the state, ranking 7th highest out of 26 first class cities.

Lowering property taxes is a critical step to make our community more competitive with other Kansas cities and more affordable for our citizens. But lowering taxes at a time when the need for community improvements and expanded services to meet unprecedented growth is greater than ever, offers significant challenges.

The Unified Government continues to lose about $4.3-million a year because of cuts in State Revenue Sharing Programs. The Kansas Legislature is not likely to restore the longstanding partnership with local governments, so the Unified Government’s budget must absorb those cuts permanently and we must find ways to replace that revenue.

Delinquent taxes are a significant drain on expected revenues. Despite significant successes in collecting unpaid taxes, more than $58-million in delinquent real estate taxes and $6-million in unpaid personal property taxes remain. This creates an unfair and inequitable situation for home and business owners who do meet their tax obligations. An organized, aggressive effort to collect unpaid taxes continues and steps are proposed to make the collection efforts even more successful.
Increases in assessed values are much lower than in the past three years. Assessed values increased 4.6% in 2004, as opposed to double digit increases in 2001, 2002 and 2003. Now that State mandated adjustments in property values are completed, increases on existing homes and businesses will be much smaller in future years. The smaller increases in appraised values and lower tax rates are positive economic factors for citizens, but mean less revenue available to pay for needed and wanted services.

In addition to the modest increase in assessed valuation, forecasts call for 2% growth in sales tax revenues and a 1.6% increase in revenues from franchise taxes. Revenues from motor vehicle tax are predicted to drop slightly. Revenues from the recently approved EMS Sales Tax are also included in the 2005 Budget.

But those small increases in revenue are more than offset by escalating expenses in health insurance premiums, retirement plan contributions and compensation adjustments. Operating expenses, the cost of running day-to-day functions minus personnel costs, of the Unified Government remain at status quo levels in the 2005 Proposed Budget.

The financial forecasts and revenue realities clearly show the need for the Unified Government to diversify its revenue sources and increase cash flow through economic expansion, new development and the collection of delinquent taxes. Recruiting retail businesses to Wyandotte County is a crucial link in the plan to grow the economy and generate new revenues.

**Budget Forecasting:**

*The Art of Balancing Revenues and Expenditures*

The 2005 Proposed Budget sets appropriation and expenditure levels for operation of the Unified Government. Diligence and prudent management practices ensure actual expenditures are less than budgeted expenditures at yearend. It is accepted practice for organizations to anticipate such expenditure savings during development of the budget.

In past years, budgets were built with the assumption that every dollar budgeted would be spent. At the end of the year, the Unified Government’s annual financial report would then display the variance between what was budgeted and what was actually spent.

The 2005 Proposed Budget recognizes the expected difference between appropriations and actual expenditures. This budget calculates the difference between expenditures that could occur and those that historically do occur, with the overall budget reduced accordingly. Historically the amount of budget unspent at the end of the year ranges from 3% to 7%. This budget anticipates approximately 4% of budget unspent at the end of 2004 and 2005.

**Countywide Cooperation:**

*Combining Our Strength to Benefit Everyone*

A major strategic component in the 2005 Proposed Budget involves a shift in funding for the E911 Dispatch Center. The proposed change is possible through a partnership with Bonner Springs and Edwardsville. This cooperative countywide initiative offers significant financial flexibility to all three Wyandotte County cities.
Currently, the full cost of the Countywide E911 Dispatch Center is included in the KCK City budget. Bonner Springs and Edwardsville are billed on a per capita basis to cover their use of the center. That costs Bonner Springs about $148,000 a year and Edwardsville about $98,000 a year. The cost shows up in the KCK budget at $3.7-million a year. It is expense which must be budgeted and taxed for in each city's individual budget.

By 2006, the Justice Complex general obligation debt will be paid-off. By leaving the county tax levy constant, the E911 Dispatch Center can be shifted to a Countywide function, freeing up revenue in each city budget.

Elected leaders of each community are able to decide how this new financial freedom can best benefit their community. In KCK, that money is proposed to be used for important initiatives which improve and invest in the future of the community, from code enforcement to public safety and needed construction projects.

Countywide funding of the E911 dispatch center is part one of our proposed county wide plan. The second part will begin in 2006, when the remainder of the $5-million a year Justice Complex debt is paid off. That money would be shifted from the County Bond and Interest Fund to a Countywide Infrastructure Support Fund. Bonner Springs, Edwardsville and KCK would each receive an amount of money from Wyandotte County every year to spend on infrastructure needs in their individual communities. The exact dollar amount would be based on an agreed upon formula.

The foundation for the countywide E911 plan and the Infrastructure program is based on the idea of cooperation to benefit all of our citizens. By teaming up to share the costs of countywide public safety dispatch and infrastructure needs, elected officials can reduce costs for each of their cities, while keeping Wyandotte County property tax rates low and competitive.

**Conclusion:**

**Improving the Community and Investing in its Success**

For the first time in decades, Wyandotte County communities are robust and growing. That growth is positive, but it also presents financial challenges. The 2005 Proposed Budget for the Unified Government sustains and supports the services our current citizens and existing businesses depend on, but also initiates measures to promote and support the economic development growth we are experiencing.

The 2005 Proposed Budget furthers the goal of making tax rates competitive and as low as possible, while still providing quality services and programs which improve the community and invest in its future success.

Sincerely,

![Signature]

Dennis M Hays
County Administrator
Vision Statement Adopted 6/17/04

Our vision is to grow and nurture an economically and socially diverse, healthy community that feels good about itself.
Strategic Goals

- Enhance Quality of Life
- Promote Economic & Community Development
- Maintain Financial Stability
- Foster Countywide Cooperation
- Deliver High Quality Government
2005 Budget Highlights

• 4.5% cut in the property tax rate for Kansas City, Kansas residents
• Maintain fund balance and reserves at 10% of expenses
• Implement a Rapid Response Team to more aggressively attack code enforcement and clean-up problems
• Maintain commitment to Neighborhoods through continued funding of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program
Budget Highlights, cont.

- Enhance Public Safety by adding five additional Patrol Officers in the Police Department
- Shift the E911 operation to a true Countywide operation and streamline management of the Dispatch Center
- Concentrate on recruitment of retail businesses to capture our share of the retail market
- Beef up Planning and Engineering to handle the demands of record growth
Budget Highlights, cont.

- Reinforce efforts to collect delinquent taxes
- Commit $150,000 to Metro Disparity Study
- Contain operating expenses
- Meet increased costs of health insurance, retirement contributions and compensation adjustments
- Fund the statutorily required duties of the Sheriff’s Department and support several proposed initiatives
2005 Budget Highlights
Countywide Cooperation

- Justice Complex bonds retired
- New partnership with Bonner Springs and Edwardsville
- Shifts E911 funding from cities to county
- 2006 County funded infrastructure program
- Financial flexibility for all cities
- Keeps County tax rate competitive
Value of New Single-Family Permits
Kansas City, Kansas 1994-2004

Thousands

Value ($)

10,000 20,000 30,000 40,000 50,000


Year

2004 Projection
Tax Policy and Budget Goals

- Reduce property tax rate
- Ensure acceptable fund balance and reserves
- Maintain lean and efficient organization
- Grow the community and UG revenues
- Implement initiatives based on Commission goals and community need
2005 Budget: Sources of Revenue
All Funds

- Grants & Other Federal or State Transfers: 17%
- Other Revenue: 8%
- Charges for Service: 14%
- Other Tax Revenue: 9%
- Franchise Tax: 8%
- Sales Tax: 14%
- Property Tax: 30%
2005 Proposed Budget

$258,540,186

All Funds
The Cost of the Unified Government:
How your tax dollars will be spend in 2005

- Community Services, $0.08
- Debt Service 13%
- Judicial 5%
- Administration 12%
- Public Works 12%
- Public Safety 50%
Balancing Revenues & Expenditures

- 2005 Proposed Budget is based on a historical 4% savings rate
- Expected savings captured up front and placed in reserves rather than at end of year
**KCK Residents**

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<th>Rate</th>
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<td>2002</td>
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<td>2003</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>$682.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>$665.35</td>
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*$75,000 Home*

Kansas City, Kansas Rate $383.37  
Wyandotte County Rate $281.98

**TOTAL** $665.35
Who Would Have Thought?

- Town houses being built on Strawberry Hill
- Strong demand for new housing at Cathedral Pointe
- Subdivisions planned for 18th & Getty, 7th & Quindaro and 18th & Mission Cliffs
- Lofts at Old City Hall
- Lowe’s at Mid town
- Reality of Village West – Vacationing in “The Dotte”
Who Would Have Thought?

- Dramatic and sustained increase in property values
- Delinquent property redemptions tripled
- Wyandotte County successes are the envy across the state
Who Would Have Thought?

- The Mayor and Commissioners did!
- The staff, our employees and organized labor have made this happen

    The vision is becoming reality

    We are turning our community around!
# Budget Calendar

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<td>Proposed Budget to BOC</td>
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<td>July 12</td>
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<td>Budget Work Session</td>
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