KCK Police Addressing Crime with Community

By Pam Waldeck
KCK PD Staff

The Kansas City, Kansas Police Department is targeting crime by implementing data driven crime reduction methods including two ongoing solutions, Project ACT (Addressing Crime Together) and Operation ICON (Impacting Crime in Our Neighborhoods). Project Act is crime prevention within a fixed area, identified through long term data analysis. Implemented in June of 2017, Project ACT has successfully reduced crime inside and outside the zone.

In August of 2019, Project ACT entered into the maintenance phase which will still maintain a high level of law enforcement presence. From June of 2017 to August of 2019, target crime with the Project ACT Zone has dropped 24.3%, Violent Crime has dropped 13.2%, and Property Crime dropped 26.9%. Crime throughout the City also dropped 6.7% since the inception of Project ACT.

Operation ICON is crime deterrence patrol strategy recently implemented by the police department in an effort to reduce violent crime in the city. In order to most effectively address this issue, the department reviews crime data every 30 days to determine the locations in the city where violent crime is most often occurring. Micro hot-spot zones, referred to as ICON zones, are then established based upon the review of the data and officers focus their patrolling efforts in those zones. The patrolling of these zones began in July of this year. One ICON zone is designated for each of the four patrol stations in the city. The ICON zones are typically 5 blocks by 5 blocks in size. The ICON zones are published each month on the Police Department’s Twitter account to inform the community of additional officer presence in their neighborhoods.

As noted below, the data shows a significant decrease in violent crime within the ICON zones. Additionally, even though the initiative has been implemented in order to reduce violent crime in the city, the community is seeing a reduction in property and overall target crimes as well, within the zones. The University of Georgia has partnered with the police department in order to measure the overall effectiveness of the Operation ICON initiative. Operation ICON is funded by a $700,000 federal grant awarded to the department by the U.S. Department of Justice.
Stay Connected with the UG

Website More than 5 million people a year use the Unified Government Website to stay informed and do business with their local government. Check it out at www.wycokck.org

UG ENews Source Every week the Unified Government sends an informative electronic newsletter to your email inbox. Sign-up by going to the UG Website and click on the “I Want To” drop down box.

UGTV UG Commission meetings, Standing Committee meetings and Budget workshops are broadcast on UGTV, along with lots of other information and programs about the community. Tune to Channel 2 on Spectrum cable and Channel 141 on Google TV.

Facebook The Unified Government is officially on Facebook with it’s Kansas City, Kansas Unified Government page. It’s easy to take part. Just go to www.facebook.com/cityokck Click the “Like” icon and you’ll be a member of the Kansas City, Kansas Official FB Page of the Unified Government.

YouTube The Unified Government’s efforts to communicate with citizens and promote the community don’t stop there. The Unified Government Channel on YouTube displays a number of videos about interesting and important issues and events as well. Just go to www.YouTube.com/officialwycokck to see our videos.

Social Media In addition to the UG Website, Facebook, UG ENews, UGTV, YouTube and The Citizen Newsletter, the Unified Government also helps you stay connected through Next Door and Twitter.

The Citizen Newsletter is published by the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, 66101. It is mailed to every residential address in Wyandotte County. Due to postage costs, copies are not mailed outside Wyandotte County. An electronic version is posted on the official Unified Government website at www.wycokck.org. Comments or questions can be sent to Mike Taylor, Public Relations Director at mtaylor@wycokck.org.

In accordance with the Department of Justice regulations, the Unified Government’s Equal Employment Opportunity Plan (EEOP), is available on the Unified Government website at www.wycokck.org.

The 2020 Kansas Legislature convenes in January with a number of issues on the committee and debate calendar. Below are the priority issues adopted by the Unified Government Commission.

Property Appraisal Reform

The Unified Government supports appraisals based on fair market value as historically used in Kansas statute. State law should be changed to clearly indicate fair market value does not include a hypothetical lease fee.

The Unified Government favors procedural changes to the tax appeals process that are balanced and sensible for both the taxpayer and local governments. State law should require the Board of Tax Appeals to adhere to the same rules, guidelines and accepted practices County Appraisers are required to follow. County governments should be allowed to appeal property tax decisions to District Court, the same as the taxpayer is allowed.

Medicaid Expansion

The Unified Government supports the expansion of Kansas Medicaid program which will improve access to care for those most vulnerable in Wyandotte County. It is estimated that expansion would provide insurance for 10,131 uninsured Wyandotte County residents, bring $67.8-million in new annual healthcare spending to Wyandotte County and create hundreds of new healthcare jobs.

Public Right-of-Way

Cities must maintain their ability to regulate the public right-of-way and recover reasonable compensation for use of the right-of-way. Kansas policy should not be dictated by overreaching federal mandates. The Unified Government opposes efforts to codify in State law Federal directives limiting the power of cities.

STAR Bonds and Economic Development

STAR Bonds have proven to be one of the most effective economic development and job creation tools in the State of Kansas. The Unified Government encourages the Kansas Legislature to continue a workable STAR Bond policy with maximum flexibility and without unnecessary restrictions. The Unified Government encourages the Kansas Legislature to work with local governments in developing innovative economic development tools.

Internet Sales Tax Collections

In order to ensure a fair playing field between Main Street businesses and online businesses, sales tax should be levied on digital goods transactions including print, audio, video, software, games and streaming services that provide those digital goods.

Marijuana Legalization

If the Kansas Legislature chooses to legalize the sale and use of marijuana, local governments must be allowed to collect local sales taxes and levy their own excise fees on those sales. Cities should have the ability to opt-in to allowing dispensaries within their city limits.

Expanded Gaming/Sports Betting

The Unified Government supports the legalization of betting on sporting events. Local governments should receive a share of the revenues generated by expanded gaming.

Mental Health and Jails

The Unified Government supports allocating additional resources for behavioral health programs. Funds should be allocated for community mental health centers and additional bed space for psychiatric patients to reduce the number of people with behavioral or substance abuse issues who are inappropriately incarcerated in county jails.

Comprehensive Transportation Plan

The Unified Government supports implementation and full funding of a new Comprehensive Transportation Program. We also support full funding of the City Connecting Link Improvement Program.

Why the 2020 Census is Important

If 1% of the Kansas population is undercounted in the 2020 Census, the state of Kansas could miss receiving approximately $603,990,400 in federal funding over a 10-year period. It’s also about clout. The Kansas headcount determines how many of the 435 members of the U.S. House (and by extension, the weight Kansas will carry in the president-electing Electoral College).

What’s the Census for? The U.S. Constitution (Article 1, Section 2) mandates a headcount every 10 years, of everyone residing in the United States: in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Island Areas. This includes people of all ages, races, ethnic groups, citizens, and noncitizens. The first census was conducted in 1790 and has been carried out every 10 years since then.

The population totals from the 2020 census will determine the number of seats each state has in the House of Representatives. States also use the totals to redraw their legislative districts. The U.S. Census Bureau must submit state population totals to the President of the United States by December 31, 2020. The totals also affect funding in your community, and data collected in the census help inform decision makers how your community is changing.
When Do I Need a Building Permit?

By Rob Richardson
UG Staff

While some issues such as the ones that go before the Board of Zoning Appeals have more significant consequences, other actions property owners take can result in having to undo and redo work or pay double permit fees. Below is a common list of items we see that can cause residents grief and how to avoid issues with the City. Please call the numbers listed to be sure you don’t need City approval well before you begin. Some of the permit processes are very fast and others can take 60-90 days.

Prevalent improvements initiated by residents that require approval from the Department of Urban Planning and Land Use include:

1. Add gravel where none existed previously or expanding the area of gravel on the property;
2. Add on to an existing structure;
3. Add more than one accessory structure;
4. Start a business in your home especially if non-family members will visit your home;
5. Have livestock on a property of less than five acres;
6. Build a large building, drive and or patio over more than 30 percent of your rear yard;
7. Build a residential fence over 6 feet in height in your rear yard;
8. Build a fence in your front yard;
9. Install a permanent sign;
10. Divide land into more lots or a home into more units;
11. Commercial storage/house equipment (tow trucks, dump trucks and other equipment) on residential property;
12. Offer your home as a short term rental such as Air-BNB; or
13. Dirt fill or removal from property, in excess of 50 cubic yards.

For assistance or questions regarding one of the potential issues above, please contact the Department of Urban Planning and Land Use at 913-573-5750 and one of the planners will be happy to assist you!

Common actions that probably need a permit from the Public Works Department:

1. Widening your driveway;
2. Installing a new or additional driveway;
3. Fill in or alter a roadside stormwater ditch;
4. Replace the culvert pipe under your driveway;
5. Replace your sidewalk; or

For assistance please contact the right-of-way manager in the Public Works Department he will help get you going! His Number is 913-573-5421.

Frequent building/remodeling activities that likely need a building permit from Building Inspection:

1. Building a detached structure or carport that has an area greater than 120 square feet;
2. Plumbing work beyond replacing fixtures;
3. Replacing a Hot Water Tank;
4. Replacing HVAC Equipment;
5. Work involving gas lines;
6. Electrical work, including new service equipment, beyond replacing fixtures;
7. Replacing your roof if the under deckling will need to be repaired/replaced;
8. Building a retaining wall over 3.5 feet tall;
9. Replacing windows and doors; or
10. Home or room additions.

If you have questions about these home improvements, please call Building Inspections at 913-573-8620 and a member of staff will get you in touch with an inspector or plan reviewer that will quickly answer your questions!

Recurring issues with historic properties that might need approval from the Landmarks Commission are listed below. If you live in a historic district, historic landmark or are within 500 feet of one of these districts please check with staff well before starting your project.

1. Roof replacement;
2. Window replacement;
3. Exterior door replacement; or
4. Any major exterior changes.

For questions about Landmarks and Landmark environments, please contact a planner at 913-573-5750. They are eager to help you! Please also note you can use Dotmaps https://www.wycklock.org/GSSDotMaps.aspx to identify these historic properties. Just agree to the terms, then once the screen refreshes go under “Show Layer List” and check the landmarks box. Then check the four boxes that begin with the word Historic and use the search box to zoom to your address. Remember if you are in a historic district or landmark, you may be eligible for state rehab tax credits.

Yard Waste Center 2019 Thanksgiving & Winter Hours

The Wyandotte County Yard Waste Center is now open for winter hours. From December through March the Center will only be open on Saturday and Sunday each week. Hours of operation will be from 10am to 3pm on Saturday and Sunday during the winter. It is closed on Holidays.

Wyandotte County residents can take grass clippings, garden trimmings, leaves and branches to the Yard Waste & Recycling Drop Off Center. The Center cannot accept stumps and logs larger than 12 inches in diameter or items more than four feet in length. Wyandotte County residents will need to show a proof of residency such as a driver’s license. Commercially generated yard waste material will not be accepted.

Recyclable items accepted include newspapers, magazines, mixed office paper, cardboard, paperboard, food & beverage cans and plastics. Clear, brown, and colored glass are also accepted at the Center. The glass does not have to be separated by color and will be placed in the same container. In addition, other recyclables also do not need to be separated and will be placed in another container.

But there are some plastic items that will not be accepted: No plastic bags. No plastic toys. No motor oil or other auto product container. No herbicide or pesticide containers. No Styrofoam materials such as peanuts, packaging blocks/sheets or cups. No plastic cereal box or cake box liner bags. No plastic 6-pack holders. No plastic pipe, PVC pipe. No plastic building materials or plastic sheet materials.

The Wyandotte County Yard Waste & Recycling Drop Off Center is located at 3241 Park Drive, Kansas City, Kansas.

The Importance of Building Permits

By Jeff Carson
Chairman, Kansas City Kansas Board of Zoning Appeals

As a member and now Chair of the Kansas City Kansas Board of Zoning Appeals (BOZA), the Board sees several cases each year where someone has built something without a building permit.

These cases come to the Board of Zoning Appeals through either code enforcement or neighbor complaints. There are two big problems that happen when construction occurs without a permit.

First, the public safety is compromised because no inspections were performed. Safety inspections are a critical piece of having a great community and they protect those using the building. Typically, that protection is for your own family!

Secondly, if the work somehow violates the zoning code (it is too close to a property line, too tall or other issues), it comes to the Board of Zoning Appeals for approval. Unfortunately, the State law says that if you create your own hardship by building without a permit we cannot grant a variance to the zoning code.

This results in the person having to tear down what they built. Those of us on the Board of Zoning Appeals and the City staff hate having to tell someone to tear down what they just built but we are forced to do just that. I urge you to save yourself big headaches and get a building permit before you start your project. If you have questions you can contact building Inspections at 913-573-8620 or the Planning Department at 913-573-5750.
Economic development and transportation mobility surrounding the Interstate 70 (I-70) and Turner Diagonal interchange will soon be enhanced as the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas (UG), the Kansas Turnpike Authority (KTA), and Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) have selected Clarkson Construction Company to complete the final design and construction of the interchange.

The Turner Diagonal Project will reduce the existing interchange footprint and create a new diverging diamond interchange (DDI), thus opening up the previously used land from the interchange for development. Improvements to the truck staging area immediately west of 72nd Street as well as a new dedicated pedestrian pathway will also be included in the improvements. The total project cost is $30 million. $13.8 million of the project cost will come from a U.S. DOT BUILD Grant that the UG received in 2018. The remaining costs will be covered by a combination of UG, KDOT, and Northpoint Development funding. Collaboration between all four groups is an efficient and cost-effective approach that will make this project successful and be a model for doing business in the future.

“We anticipate that construction will begin in early 2020,” said Reno. “After the contract phase is completed, the project team will begin final design. We will send out information to the public as soon as design and construction dates become firmer in the weeks to come.”

More information about the project can be found on the project website: TheTurnerDiagonal.com.

ETC Institute is mailing a survey to randomly selected Wyandotte County households. The results of the survey will help the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas plan for the future by understanding perceptions of city and county government services and quality of life. The Citizen Survey will be an important tool for the Unified Government Board of Commissioners who will use the results as input for funding priorities. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. The time respondents invest in completing this survey will influence decisions made about the city’s and county’s future. Individual responses will remain completely confidential. The results are tabulated and viewed only as a whole.
EPA Gives Air Quality Clean Bill of Health

The Environmental Protection Agency has given a clean bill of health to air quality in the Argentine, Armourdale and Turner areas of Kansas City, Kansas.

In fall 2017, a study, the Kansas City Transportation Local-Scale Air Quality Study (KC-TRAQS), was launched to test the air quality in southern Kansas City, Kansas.

“Today we’re going to report to you good news,” said Jim Gulliford, EPA regional administrator, during an announcement on Wednesday morning at the community room at the South Patrol police station near South 21st and Metropolitan Avenue, Kansas City, Kansas. The South Patrol station is built on a remediated Superfund site and is close to railroad yards, highways and industries.

“The EPA’s six monitoring stations reported air quality that was well within EPA’s initial ambient air quality standards,” he said. Both EPA and the community worked together on the project, he added.

“We know that the Greater Kansas City air quality does meet the national EPA air quality standards,” Gulliford said. There are monitors throughout Greater Kansas City.

In this case, EPA was able to come into a local community, do additional testing, and found that the monitors are functioning and the results were accurate, he said.

“We hope this provides you with satisfaction as well,” he said.

The six monitors on the south side also were consistent with a monitoring station on the north side of Kansas City, Kansas, near 10th and Nebraska Avenue, one of the permanent monitoring stations in the area, he said.

He said the EPA teamed up with the community, and did the work they asked, tested the systems of providing additional monitoring data, and are satisfied with the results.

This KC-TRAQS testing project used a “citizen science” approach, with students at area schools participating in the air testing. Students and teachers from Harmon High School, Rosedale Middle School, Turner High School and Wyandotte High School participated in air testing. Portable air monitors were “checked out,” he said, and used to test air quality in various locations.

The KC-TRAQS study tested for fine particle pollution and black carbon.

Sidewalk Cost Sharing Program

Maintaining concrete sidewalks doesn’t just improve the appearance of neighborhoods, it also helps keep our families, friends, neighbors, visitors, and pedestrians safe. Like many municipalities around the United States, Kansas City, Kansas does not provide sidewalk maintenance, repair, or replacement services. However, the city does understand that investing in our infrastructure is an important part of improving health, wellness, and community pride. To help residents and neighborhoods replace damaged or aging sidewalks, the Unified Government’s Public Works Department has established a cost-sharing program.

“When sidewalks deteriorate, they create hazards for pedestrians, limit the ability of individuals with physical challenges to reach their destinations, and reduce community pride. The goal of the Sidewalk Replacement Program is to incentivize making our city’s sidewalks safe and accessible for everyone by reducing the cost residents would normally have to pay on their own,” says Dave Reno, Public Works’ Community Engagement Officer.

Residents interested in replacing existing sidewalk may hire an independent contractor or utilize a Public Works contractor. Reimbursement rates are designed to cover approximately 50% of the average cost for sidewalk removal and replacement for one house. Reimbursement funds are limited to the extent of the annual budget and offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Learn more about the Sidewalk Replacement Program and how to get started online at www.wycokck.org/PW/Programs.

Stormwater Fee Changes Planned

The Unified Government is considering a change to the current stormwater fee. The most recent proposal includes feedback from businesses and homeowners. Community feedback was clear – KCK needs a stormwater rate structure that is fair for all users, reduces frequent flooding risks, and adequately funds the maintenance & enhancement of stormwater infrastructure like inlets, culverts, underground pipes, and roadside ditches.

Many community members were surprised to learn that under the current structure, small properties and large properties pay the same $4.50 monthly user fee regardless of their total contribution to stormwater runoff. The current fee structure is not just unfair for many homeowners and small businesses; it also fails to generate the funding needed to mitigate flooding risks, repairing failing stormwater infrastructure, and perform routine maintenance.

To address this disparity and the need for additional funds to repair and enhance stormwater management, the Unified Government is looking to implement a fee based on the amount of hard surface, such as parking lots, which create more rain runoff. The new fee, as proposed, does not change the fee of $4.50 for the majority of residential property owners in KCK, in the first year.

As the Unified Government Commission continues to study the change to the stormwater fee to better align with the rain runoff properties are creating, they would like more residents’ input on the proposed fee change. Learn more about the proposed change and provide feedback online at www.wycokck.org/Stormwater/Rate.

Rental Licensing Department Protects Tenants

The Rental Licensing and Inspection division would like to ensure that you are aware of our function and the resources available to you. All residential rental property in Kansas City, Kansas is supposed to be licensed with us. We also perform inspections to make sure that the property you are living in is safe and maintained to the standards set forth by city codes.

Below is a list of common things to look for:

• Smoke detectors are required in each bedroom plus each level of the unit/house
• GFCI outlets are required in bathrooms
• Double keyed locks are not allowed
• Copper cannot be used for gas supply lines
• Windows must be operable, not blocked or boarded
• Handrails are required at sets of 4 or more stairs/risers
• Hot water tank and furnace must be vented properly and operational
• Electrical panel and circuits must be safe
• Exterior areas are free from weeds and plant overgrowth in excess of 8 inches, also free of junk and trash
• Address numbers are a minimum 4 inches in height, contrast with their background and are visible from the street

If you would like the Rental Licensing/Inspection division to do an interior inspection of the rental property you are leasing, please call our office at (913)573-8649 or email us at rentallicensing@wycokck.org to schedule an inspection.

Average weekly wages in Wyandotte County total $1,042. That compares to $1,001 in Wichita and $910 in Shawnee. Johnson County weekly wages average $1,168.
Welcome to myWyco
A New Way to Pay Municipal Court Tickets

Login
Residents can create an account or transact as a guest. Accounts can be created using an email address, Facebook, or Google to log in.

Search
Residents can find their citation by entering their name and date of birth, license plate number, or case/ticket number. Note: Parking tickets aren’t searchable with name and DOB.

Dashboard
Residents have access to all myWyco services on the dashboard. To access the Courts Services, select the Municipal Court Tickets button that’s highlighted in red.

View/Details
Residents can view the following about their ticket: if the ticket is payable online, if the ticket is suspending their license, to whom the ticket was issued, the court charge description, court date/time/room, and the status of the ticket.

Partial Pay
Residents may make partial payments on eligible tickets that are a minimum of $50.

Payments
Residents may pay with credit or debit cards. ACH is not allowed for Municipal Court tickets.

Partial Pay Address
If a citizen partially pays a ticket, it is vital that they then provide a mailing address, to which the Municipal Court will send the updated court date and time.

Fees
The following fees apply to an online ticket payment: 2.5% processing fee, $2.00 convenience fee.

PayIt Support
Contact PayIt Support directly with issues or questions about the myWyco app.
816-343-8095 or support@payitgov.com

myWyco is the official web and mobile application for the Unified Government, myWyco allows residents to easily transact with their City, County, and State government. myWyco’s conversational user interface allows residents to quickly step through processes to complete transactions with ease.

PayIt is a registered trademark of PayIt, Inc. myWyco, PayIt, the PayIt logo, and any related marks are trademarks of PayIt, Inc. Logo used under license.
Ways to Be a Good Neighbor in Your Neighborhood

SOAR (Stabilization, Occupation, and Revitalization) Work Completed:

- Completed 4,589 individual property improvements out of the 5-year goal of 10,000.
- Established the Land Bank Rehab Program to rehabilitate and occupy previously vacant and blighted homes.
- Improved boarding processes to better secure vacant homes and keep neighbors safe.
- Increased mowing frequency of parks and UG-owned property.
- Launched an open data portal at yourdata.wycokck.org.

Help us improve the safety and appearance of Kansas City, Kansas. The Unified Government has already accomplished some of its SOAR goals and plans to do much more over the next 5 years, but we need your help! If everyone can be a good neighbor, we will improve the quality of life in Kansas City, Kansas.

Engage with your community by participating in your neighborhood group! Find out which neighborhood area you live in by contacting Livable Neighborhoods at 913-573-8737.

Pay your property taxes. You can do so quickly on the myWyco mobile app! Taxes are the only way the UG can provide necessary services and improvements to residents.

myWyco Mobile App
Report vacant property, especially if it is not properly boarded and secure, to the myWyco mobile app. Just search “myWyco” on any App store to download. You can also call 311 (913-573-5311) or visit 311.wycokck.org.

Find tenant information at wycokck.org/Rental Licensing if you’re renting.

Did you know?
The Unified Government is working to improve Kansas City, Kansas through appearance, safety, and communication. Find out more at wycokck.org/ SOAR

See how you can help by looking over this diagram!

Take care of your pets! Make sure your pets are spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and licensed with the city. Keep your pets fenced, leashed, or in your home at all times. (Animal Services – kckpd.org/animal-services.html)

Protect your home from expensive repairs to water and sewer lines. Check for coverage with your insurance agent or see: homeserveusa.com/may/ wyandotte

Maintain your yard (free of weeds, trash, indoor furniture, and overgrown grass).

Find which day to put out your trash and recycling and more information at wycokck.org/waste.

Maintain your home (including paint, roof, siding, and gutters).

Find suspicious activity to 911.

Report vacant property, especially if it is not properly boarded and secure, to the myWyco mobile app. Just search “myWyco” on any App store to download. You can also call 311 (913-573-5311) or visit 311.wycokck.org.

Pay your property taxes. You can do so quickly on the myWyco mobile app! Taxes are the only way the UG can provide necessary services and improvements to residents.
An estimated 11,000 people attended the annual Dia De Los Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebration on Central Avenue. Day of the Dead is a two day holiday that reunites the living and dead. Families create offerings to honor their departed family members that have passed. These altars are decorated with bright yellow marigold flowers, photos of the departed, and the favorite foods and drinks of the one being honored. The KCK celebration also includes a parade down Central Avenue.

Website: www.wycokck.org

3-1-1.
One easy number to contact the Unified Government with questions, concerns, complaints, comments or to pay taxes. Just call, go online or use the mobile app.
Dial (913) 573-5311 if required.