Philosophy and Expectations
We are in the public service business. Delivering great services to our community is our single biggest objective. We must always remember in our daily work and decisions that service to our community’s residents is most important. Great customer service is essential and is expected from each and every person on this team.

Even on our own time, we must be example residents and great representatives of the Unified Government (UG). When we have discussions, including social media, with our customers, our family, our neighbors, or when we are at the convenience store, we must represent the UG with the highest level of professionalism and integrity.

Great services start with making sure we have the right people on the team at all levels. It requires that we come to work each day with a great attitude about our work and our mission. Public service is a noble profession and requires selfless servants to provide truly great services. It is up to each of us to do the things that will make us better and improve our ability to achieve individual and team excellence, each day.

In addition to the right people, we must improve and create systems that help us to be smart and efficient in our work and in our services. It is critical that we do the simple, routine things with excellence. There must be systems for communication in all directions; systems for planning, maintenance of infrastructure and project management. The Public Works Department has a very large annual budget of nearly $100 Million in operations and capital, and the right people and systems are vital to spending these dollars wisely at all levels.

It is important to the welfare of the community that we maximize the life of the assets we build and maintain, and that we create a culture of continuous improvement. Using right applications at right times and being systematic is critical to the wise stewardship of public funds. We must reflect and evaluate often; be outstanding at doing the basics, and pursue excellence in all we do.

This is not just a job- it is a profession, a career with purpose. We are privileged to be employed by the people and it is reasonable to expect us to deliver great services. Each of us must be pursuing our best to achieve those results.

Plan Purpose
To align the large amount of resources within the department in the same direction and with the same attitude; forward and business-like.

Contributors
Many thanks go to the group of staff members, commissioners, and community stakeholders who gave their time to provide constructive input that enabled this to be a well-rounded, thoughtful plan.

Structure
The Public Works Department is made up of approximately 375 teammates that are divided into the following groups: fleet services, buildings and logistics (facilities), street maintenance, wastewater and stormwater maintenance, solid waste, and engineering. The focuses of these groups are the same: deliver these essential and vital services at the highest level possible.

The services are broad and in some cases very different, therefore it is important that all divisions collaborate frequently to discuss and plan the business of Public Works and the Unified Government as a whole.

Influences
The Commission and Leadership team of the Unified Government have an overarching strategy that is influential on this Plan. There are also high priority UG initiatives, various government regulatory requirements, and other plans that were considered when determining priorities, goals and actions for this plan.

**Vision**

*Great Public Servants-Great Team-Great Services*

**Mission**
To provide the safest, most reliable and efficient public works systems and services through a culture of continuous improvement, and by developing and recruiting public servants at all levels with bold ideas and a selfless character

**Values**
Community Oriented
Ethical
Safety
Professionalism
Transparency
Teamwork
Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats (SWOT)

Strengths:
- Support from Leadership
- Emergency Response
- Interdepartmental cooperation
- Institutional knowledge
- Committed and resourceful staff

Weaknesses:
- Organized Training Program
- Written Policies and SOP’s
- Organization/Systems/Processes
- New Employee Orientation
- Public Education/Awareness
- Street, Alleys, Curb & Sidewalk Conditions
- Traffic Management System
- Sanitary and Storm Sewer System Condition and Performance
- Budget Commitment to Facilities
- Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Program (VERP)
- Project Management and Delivery
- Collaboration with BPU & other utilities
- Accountability
- Succession planning
- Utilization of Technology

Opportunities:
- Technology
- Fiber Infrastructure
- Regional Solutions
- Summer interns
- Emulating successful programs

Threats:
- Lack of Internal Customer feedback
- Asset Management
- Construction Inspection
- Personnel Safety
- Weather
- Complacency
- Lack of Continued Commitment to Equipment Replacement
- Staff turnover- Loss of institutional knowledge
- Loss of dedicated sales taxes
- Regulatory changes
- Treatment Plant Biosolids disposal

Goals
Reducing blight and improving the safety and appearance of the community is one of the UG’s highest priorities. The Public Works Department is actively pursuing and working on solutions to meet the Stabilization Occupation And Revitalization (SOAR) Program goals related to the Department.

The goals stated below are, generally speaking, specific to the Department. It is recognized, however, that the Department depends on and works closely with other Departments, and so it is important for Public Works staff to understand that to be successful, there must be thoughtful strategies accounting for the priorities of the other stakeholders.
Goal #1

Develop a culture of excellence

Strategy: Evaluate personnel, systems and resources, and affect change where needed

Action Steps:

- Place right people in the right seats, hire right people, and get the wrong people off the team
- Enhance new employee on-boarding process throughout the department, at all levels, to ensure it is an exciting and successful start
- Organize divisions into highly functional structures that maximize resources and efficiencies
- Review job descriptions to ensure they are accurate and current with the needs of the open position. Make sure to include relevant qualifications and needed experience
- Review all vacancies to determine need. If position is still needed, fill it. If position is no longer needed, evaluate other needs and build business case for re-class or eliminate
- Create a system for recognizing outstanding performance
- Develop an atmosphere where passionate debate without consequences is encouraged in a professional manner, at all levels
- Build trust among team by listening to each other, empowering people, working through differences and supporting each other (e.g. team outings after hours, cross-functional task forces, leadership development at all levels, etc.)

Strategy: Establish a career development program at all levels so the path for those employees that choose to excel and grow is well defined

Action Steps:

- Create a task force to review existing program and discuss objectives for a career development program
- Benchmark other agencies
- Create a program that provides a roadmap for employees to follow that results in individual growth and opportunity, and for succession planning
• Provide guidance for a career path in area of employee’s interest. Have job descriptions accessible to employees so they know what knowledge, skills and qualifications are needed for future positions
• Cross train employees within divisions to achieve a well-trained staff in all aspects of the job
• Utilize internal and external resources for training opportunities, and reward employees that sacrifice their own time to improve
• Utilize Lucity to track employee trainings, certifications, and licenses and their expiration dates

**Strategy:** *Utilize task force groups and cross-functional teams in the department that can identify and recommend solutions and improvements in safety and training*

**Action Steps:**
• Create a safety and emergency management (EM) liaison person that will collaborate with the safety and EM personnel
• Create a department safety and training committee with a charter that can meet quarterly
• Create a team made up of field representatives from each division to discuss shared opportunities and threats to seamless operations
• Benchmark other agencies safety and training programs
• Create a safety manual comprised of safety procedures and protocols to make available to staff, especially new personnel
• Enhance communication with and among employees creating a more conducive environment for reporting safety concerns and suggesting ideas and solutions

**Goal #2**

**Create an asset management and capital improvement program that provides maximum benefit to the community**

**Strategy:** *Create and assemble the Asset Management Division/Team*

**Action steps:**
• Determine expertise and resources needed and create an asset management team in the engineering division
• Prepare an initial and long term scope of work along with an action plan or charter to achieve immediate priorities
• Identify clear goals and objectives for each team member

**Strategy:** Identify needs and systems for the program in order to best serve UG and Community needs

**Action steps:**

• Meet with Public Works staff to identify information gaps, and to determine outcomes and the benefits to each division

• Benchmark other cities with current asset management programs

• Identify stakeholders within the UG that could benefit from the program and develop systems of communication that bridges the gap between the internal groups of Public Works

**Strategy:** Collaborate with other Public Works divisions to analyze what and how data should be collected and assembled

**Action steps:**

• Develop training programs to help staff identify, classify, and make assessments of assets

• Identify what type of assets should be inventoried, tracked and managed

• Identify the right tools needed to assess current and future assets

**Strategy:** Identify the right procedures and resources needed for collecting asset data and delivering services

**Action steps:**

• Implement Lucity in all divisions for tracking and data collection

• Enhance the ability to utilize geo-spatial data as part of the asset management and capital improvements programs

• Identify additional methods of collecting data and whether internal or external resources can be used

• Review, modify, or create new ordinances (if needed) and/or written policies that provides staff with right parameters and direction to result in consistency and best outcomes

**Strategy:** Build strong relationships with Board of Public Utilities and other utilities with assets in the County so the asset database is comprehensive and complete

**Action steps:**
• Establish routine discussions targeted at delivering highest performing projects and services possible

• Share asset information and plans so that there is a strong link in the capital improvement program (CIP) and projects are designed and constructed with great proficiency

• Develop annual work flow processes for the annual CIP development

**Strategy:** *Evaluate and mine asset data to determine appropriate utilization and develop actionable outcomes*

**Action steps:**

• Complete inventory and condition assessment for all public works assets, including geo-coding of assets

• Develop rating system for assets that is utilized to determine appropriate actions

• Benchmark industry standards for asset lifecycles and maintenance timetables

• Create preventative maintenance and major maintenance plans for all assets

• Identify data-sets that can be shared with selected partner organizations or through the UG’s open data portal

**Strategy:** *Develop a smart CIP using a holistic, data driven approach*

**Action steps:**

• Develop systems of communication with stakeholders and private utilities to receive input for future projects scope, schedule and location

• Identify short and long-term solutions for assets that can be valued and prioritized in an objective manner and that results in a highly impactful, cost-effective portfolio of projects

• Define a streamlined, efficient workflow for collaboration and coordination between different UG departments that results in an easy to read, informational and smart financial document

• Recognize fiber as critical basic infrastructure and seek opportunities to stretch scarce resources by making multi-use investments- such as installing fiber conduit as part of road improvements
• Coordinate with other UG departments to support overall UG objectives-for example, working with the Police Department on traffic cameras and the PD’s DDACTS enforcement program
• Complete a Stormwater Master Plan

Goal #3

Improve community confidence in Public Works

Strategy: *Improve public understanding of services, values and responsibilities*

Action Steps:

• Update the PW webpage with re-designed content for each division
• Create a page to include mapping of both current and future PW projects
• Provide educational information on services such as snow removal, street repairs, project status
• Provide educational presentations to various stakeholder groups
• Utilize social media to message informational items on a regular basis
• Update the Public Works FAQ brochure
• Develop a customer feedback system
• Implement a colored logo system for PW vehicles for improved identification

Strategy: *Improve overall customer service*

Action Steps:

• Develop a Customer Service Policy to define employee expectations and give employees guidance on all forms of customer interaction
• Develop a system to address after-hour/weekend complaints and requests
• Improve ability to reference or direct public inquiries to appropriate staff or department
• Enhance the relationship with 311 to improve response on citizen complaints and requests
• Integrate Lucity system with 311 CRM System to automate work order requests and provide residents and businesses with information once requests are completed
• Utilize 311 as the primary point of contact for most resident requests, including in information and promotional materials
• Identify data sets that can be made publicly available in order to increase transparency
• Complete wastewater rate study to determine most equitable rate structure that generates sufficient funds to meet needs
• Evaluate the current stormwater utility revenue structure to determine most equitable fee structure
• Utilize technology to improve workflow for staff and development community in the planning/engineering process

**Strategy:** *Improve overall appearance, functionality and safety of public assets*

**Action Steps:**

- Develop policies and procedures for the daily maintenance of vehicles and equipment
- Create a dress code policy
- Make needed improvements to the wash bay
- “Practice what we preach” - follow same processes as is expected of the public; maintain assets according to standards and code
- Develop a plan for improvements to the efficiency of the traffic management system - update speed limits, assess traffic signals and intersections, and update signage
- Update ROW Management procedures and policies to improve and accelerate restoration activities once work is completed - includes UG work and that of others

**Strategy:** *Improve operational performance and customer satisfaction*

**Action Steps:**

- Develop SOPs that ensure the efficiency and quality of projects, inspections, and response to customers
- Update engineering standards and details to be consistent with APWA and other key standards, and to be consistent with the region - include new details for fiber, street lighting and guard rail
- Develop functional classifications for roadways throughout the county
• Build a database with Lucity over time and utilize the data and information to make adjustments in operations that will increase efficiency, improve safety and make good decisions (i.e. street preservation, buildings, traffic management system, etc.)

• Research, develop and implement a Project Management Software package that will be utilized to aid staff in the delivery of high performing projects

• Create systems for communicating to the public project information, status of work and upcoming activities

• Utilize GPS Technology and geospatial analysis in work planning and response to emergent issues such as storm response

• Install and utilize GPS units in field vehicles (e.g. snow plows, street sweepers, sewer maintenance) to improve operational efficiency, customer service and accountability

• Develop a system for alley maintenance to improve operational efficiencies in street sweeping, snow plowing, and trash pickup

• Develop a pavement maintenance system and purchase pot-hole patchers in order to, provide more effective repairs, extend the life of the road and minimize risk to the public

• Improve ROW Ordinance to increase expectations in restoration activities

• Develop curb and sidewalk restoration and maintenance program

• Eliminate ROW mowing on private property and repurpose staff to curb and sidewalk restoration

• Identify solutions to ongoing solid waste pick-up issues and improve community recycling

Goal #4

Promote and practice Environmental stewardship

Strategy: Continue to reduce environmental impacts

Action Steps:

• Utilize latest technology and best practices to improve efficiencies and/or effectiveness

• Work with other partners/agencies to develop/promote programs to protect the ecosystem
- Pursue opportunities or enhance programs to conserve natural resources and minimize negative impacts to the environment
- Achieve all Consent Decrees milestones in the smartest, most cost efficient manner possible
- Utilize a triple bottom line when making a choice or selection- social, economic and environment impacts
- Provide education to contractors, developers and industries on environmental friendly practices
- Review, modify and enforce UG ordinances that protect the environment

**Strategy:** Improve and develop programs & practices that will ensure environmental compliance

**Action Steps:**
- Identify an Environmental Compliance manager to oversee existing programs to protect the interest of both the public and Unified Government
- Update standard practices and procedures to maximize compliance and review on a pre-determined schedule
- Develop & implement staff education on regulations in achieving regulatory compliance, protecting the environment & public health
- Update post-construction best management practices (BMP) program.
- Utilize most up to date industry standards for BMPs
- Continue to enforce UG’s erosion control program
- Comply with regulations set forth by EPA & KDHE on all public works projects

**Strategy:** Educate staff and community on ways to protect the environment

**Action Steps:**
- Provide education to UG staff on how to protect the environment at work
- Participate in community festivals, events, and education programs that promote environmental stewardship
- Dedicate one staff person per UG department to be “environment champion”
- Enforce ordinances that are directly related to the environment