



# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 7, 2016

## 2017 Proposed Unified Government Budget

### **STAR Bond Revenues Help Lower Property Taxes and Fund New Services**

The 2017 Unified Government Budget proposed by County Administrator Doug Bach uses new STAR Bond revenues from the Village West tourism and shopping area to reduce property taxes and pay for a number of new programs and services.

The bonds used to finance development and construction of the popular Village West district are paying off five years early. The Unified Government expects to see more than \$12-million in new sales tax revenue annually as the result. Those funds will allow the Unified Government to provide new services and enhance existing programs as identified by citizen engagement efforts such as the Community Survey and the Mayor's Listening Tours. Services which otherwise would not have been possible. The State of Kansas is expected to receive at least \$40-million a year in new sales tax from Village West.

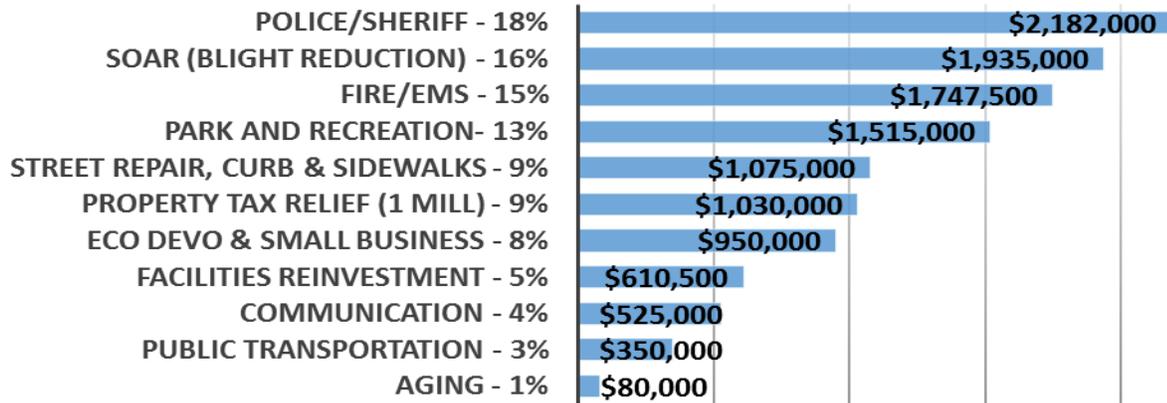
"Wyandotte County is well known in the region for innovative and progressive approaches to growing the community, creating jobs and bolstering the economy through new development. There is no better example than the innovative use of STAR Bonds to create the successful Village West area. With the STAR Bonds paying off much earlier than anticipated, it is time for citizens to reap the reward," said Bach.

The proposed budget now being considered by the Unified Government Commission calls for using the new STAR Bond revenues in a responsible way through a mix of one-time and on-going investments. The sales tax dollars generated by tourists and shoppers in Village West will play an important role in helping the Unified Government continue its goal of bringing structural balance--expenses equal revenues—to future budgets.

The 2017 Proposed Budget uses the STAR Revenues in the following ways:

- ❖ Lowers the Unified Government City property tax rate.
- ❖ Increases investment in streets and neighborhood improvements.
- ❖ Enhances spending on Parks and Recreation.
- ❖ Continues rebuilding fund balances.
- ❖ Allows repayment of money borrowed or deferred in past years from special revenue funds.
- ❖ Provides funding to give all Unified Government employees a two percent pay raise.
- ❖ Increases investment in capital equipment and buildings.
- ❖ Launches new coordinated efforts to with blight.
- ❖ Implements recommendations of the Public Safety studies to improve service and efficiency.
- ❖ Increases social service funding to offset losses caused by the State of Kansas.

**Proposed 2017 Unified Government Budget  
\$12-MILLION in STAR Bond Revenue Initiatives**



The 2017 Proposed Budget reduces the Unified Government property tax rate from 82.6 mills to 81.6. The Unified Government receives 48% of the total property tax bill paid by a resident in KCK. Public schools, the Kansas City Kansas Community College, KCK Public Library and State of Kansas make up the remaining 52%. The current property rate is still much lower than before the Unified Government was created. In 1997 it was 97 mills. Under the proposed 2017 Budget it will be 81.6 mills. That's nearly 16% less than two decades ago.

If STAR Revenues come in as expected, the one mill property tax reduction in 2017 will be followed by an additional property tax reduction in 2018.

The total Unified Government budget is \$345,751,474. The largest share of the General Fund budget is spent on Public Safety— Fire, Police and Sheriff. The second largest category is Public Works--- streets, sewers and infrastructure.

The Proposed 2017 Unified Government Budget takes advantage of the positive growth and progress occurring in Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas. It uses new revenue to invest in the continued success of our community by addressing goals set forth by the Unified Government Commission and residents.

“The Proposed 2017 Budget funds initiatives which will benefit our citizens--- better streets; less blight and trash; improved and more cost effective Public Safety; and robust efforts to bring new development which will create job opportunities for our residents,” Bach concludes in the budget message.

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