

PUBLIC WORKS

Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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Director's Welcome



One of the more challenging years in my career in three different cities, 2022 was still strong for the Public Works Department. We continue to evolve into a team with a higher level of trust, positive culture, and increasingly data-driven services. However, the infrastructure and facilities owned by the public continue to show serious signs of eminent failure in almost all categories.

As is well known, the UG owns two river crossing bridges that are failed and closed. The Kansas Avenue Bridge is a high priority due to its daily traffic and its strategic importance to freight in the area. The UG is pursuing major federal funding programs to replace it as soon as possible but could not be done before 2025-2026.

In the meantime, repairs will be made in 2023 and scheduled to be open in early 2024. In 2022, the Commission approved the new stormwater rate structure that will be critical to getting the stormwater system on the right track, but even this commitment will take decades to put the UG in an acceptable position.


The great thing is that the Commission also adopted, by resolution, the Outcomes & Strategies Document that is designed to guide the Elected Body and staff to daylight. Still, it will be decades of consistent and increasing commitment before the systems are in an acceptable condition.

It is particularly important to this community's quality of life and economic vitality that the streets and bridges reach the desired outcomes stated in the Document.

As important to the long-term financial position of the UG and community, right-sizing facilities to reduce long-term costs and liabilities. I believe the other philosophy the UG must begin thinking about is how we use facilities and how they are improved and constructed, with the new/future generations in mind and technology. Facilities should be constructed and improved, not based on how we have operated, but based on how our successors will operate.

The Public Works Department will continue to focus on its employees' leadership growth, the culture, and aiding the Elected Body in making the most informed decisions/investments possible. This team is committed to its community's health, safety, and welfare, and we appreciate the privilege of serving Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas.

Sincerely,



Jeff Fisher
Director of Public Works

OUR MISSION

Promote great culture, act boldly, and provide sustainable infrastructure that protects and enhances our community.





OUR VALUES

Positive Culture, Great Service & Smart
Investment.



Strategic Plan

2022-2024 Strategic Plan



Vision

We build leadership at all levels

Motto

We can and we must

Mission

Promote great culture, act boldly, and provide sustainable infrastructure that protects and enhances our community

Values

Positive culture – we do our business of delivering essential and vital services to our community with energy, selflessness, and seamless teamwork.

1. Commit to leadership development at all levels
2. Lead positive change and continually improve
3. Diversity of thought creates better decisions
4. Hire for attitude and train for skills
5. Leave everything better than when we found it

Great customer service – take great care to treat all customers with a high level of professionalism, respect, and empathy, and to be prudent & honest stewards of public funds.

1. Be active listeners
2. Be empathetic
3. See customer requests as opportunities
4. Close the customer service loop
5. Respond to all customers within 24 hours

Smart investment – utilize verified data and information to optimize public and private funds to strategically do the community's work and make objective recommendations to the elected and appointed officials.

1. Invest in team members' growth
2. Be data-driven
3. Prioritize what we can be great at
4. Return on investment drives decisions
5. Seek opportunities to reduce and right-size

2022-2024 Strategic Plan



Outcomes

We measure success with outcomes and the difference we make. Goals, strategies, and outputs must be consistent with our values, and we must create goals that bring us closer to these outcomes:

1. **Trust in Public Works** – Conduct business in a transparent manner, with great foresight & preparation, and provide excellent internal and external customer service, as well as effective public communications to promote public awareness.
2. **Sustainable systems for delivering public services** – Evaluate all business systems, create best practices, document best practices through policies and procedures, reduce bureaucracy and streamline processes to promote economic vitality.
3. **Culture of excellence** – Commit to leadership development at all levels; team members have a selfless, supportive, mission-oriented attitude; highly disciplined thought and action create an environment of accountability, quality work, reliability, achievement, trust, safety, and pride.



Services

Buildings & Logistics



About the Team

The Buildings & Logistics (B&L) team is an integral part of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas, responsible for the management and maintenance of more than 200 facilities across the county.

Their services include overseeing and performing maintenance on all Unified Government-owned and operated facilities, ensuring that they remain accessible and convenient for residents and visitors. Additionally, the team works to provide comfortable, and safe

environments for employees in these facilities. The diverse range of buildings that B&L manages includes police buildings, fire stations, recreation centers, the Wyandotte County Public Health Department, the Criminal Justice Complex, Juvenile Services Center, Court Services, Memorial Hall, and City Hall.

By managing these facilities, B&L plays a vital role in maintaining infrastructure and supporting the community's health, safety, and quality of life.

Public Works Engineering



About the Team

The Engineering team is responsible for the design, construction, inspection, and maintenance of infrastructure in Kansas City, Kansas. This includes roads, bridges, sewer systems, stormwater management systems, and more. The Engineering team also provides technical assistance to other city departments and agencies.

If it looks like construction, Public Works' Engineering team is involved. Their team includes the County Engineer, the City Traffic Engineer, the City

Stormwater Engineer, Project Engineers, and Project Managers. Engineers are responsible for the design and planning of new projects.

They are committed to providing safe, reliable, and efficient infrastructure for residents, businesses, and visitors, and they work hard to ensure that all projects are designed and constructed to meet the highest standards of quality and safety. The division also works to maintain existing structures in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Fleet Services



About the Team

The Fleet Services team plays a critical role in ensuring the efficient operation of over 1,300 cars, trucks, commercial construction equipment, tractors, trailers, and emergency vehicles owned by the Sheriff's Office, Police Department, and other staff members.

Their team comprises more than 30 dedicated employees who are responsible for equipment repairs, engine overhauls, tune-ups, brake jobs, clutch and transmission repair & replacement, electrical system

diagnostics, hydraulic system repair, and tire maintenance. The Fleet Services team is committed to providing reliable and cost-effective maintenance services for the county's vehicles and equipment.

By keeping the fleet running smoothly, the team enables the Sheriff's Office, Police Department, and other staff members to perform their critical functions and provide the community with the services they need.

Geospatial Services



About the Team

The Geospatial Services (GSS) team is an essential component of the Unified Government.

They provide vital mapping products and services to residents and businesses in the county, including maintaining a comprehensive dataset that covers land parcel information, street networks, political boundaries, emergency response facilities, recreational facilities, and other critical data related to Unified Government operations. GSS also offers analytical capabilities that help various

departments tackle complex challenges by visualizing data in ways that enhance decision-making.

By leveraging their expertise in geospatial data analysis, GSS plays a key role in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Unified Government's operations.

Their services enable departments to make informed decisions and better allocate resources to support the needs of the community.

Parking Control



About the Team

Public Works' Parking Control Division is responsible for enforcing city parking ordinances and managing parking facilities for visitors and employees.

They also engage with area businesses and organizations to enhance and improve the downtown parking environment. Parking Control Officers patrol designated areas, including public parking facilities, parking meters, and on-street parking. They also manage the assignment of monthly parking to employees and area businesses

and oversee the school crossing guard program. By enforcing parking regulations, the division promotes traffic flow and enhances the overall quality of life in the community.

The Parking Control Division is dedicated to providing efficient and effective parking services, promoting traffic safety, and enhancing the downtown area for residents, businesses, employees, and visitors.

Solid Waste Management



About the Team

The Solid Waste Management team is responsible for managing many of the solid waste programs in Wyandotte County. Their primary role is to ensure the effective and efficient collection and disposal of residential trash and recycling.

They oversee contracted residential trash and recycling collection services, as well as programs for household hazardous waste disposal, recycling and yard waste disposal, e-waste collection, and the development of green activities.

Additionally, the team collaborates with organizations like the Environmental Protection Agency, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and Livable Neighborhoods to organize clean-ups for events like Earth Day.

The division's three team members also assist residents, businesses, and community organizations with graffiti removal and neighborhood clean-ups. The team works tirelessly to provide a clean and safe environment for the community.

Street Maintenance



About the Team

The Street Maintenance team plays a crucial role in ensuring the safety and cleanliness of roads in Kansas City, Kansas. They are responsible for maintaining more than 2,400 lane miles of improved roadway and alleys, providing essential services such as pavement maintenance, mowing of publicly-owned properties, signage services, snow removal, street sweeping, and right-of-way management.

As one of the first responders to emergencies, the Street team is always

on standby to address any issues related to roads, ensuring that residents and visitors have a safe and efficient means of transportation. They also provide critical support for special events such as neighborhood clean-ups, parades, and other community activities, contributing to the overall beautification of the city.

The Street Maintenance team is an integral part of the Kansas City community, providing necessary services to ensure that the roads are safe, clean, and visually appealing.

Water Pollution Control



About the Team

The Water Pollution Control (WPC) team is an essential component of Kansas City's success, providing sewer services, managing stormwater runoff, and protecting water quality. Their work is critical to safeguarding local streams, rivers, and lakes, ensuring they remain clean and safe for both people and wildlife.

WPC operates and maintains an extensive network of treatment plants, sewer pipes, pump stations, and water quality monitoring facilities throughout

the city. By collecting data on water quality, the WPC can assess the overall health of the waterways and identify areas where improvements are needed.

Their work has been instrumental in providing reliable and cost-effective wastewater and stormwater treatment for over a century.

Residential customers, businesses, and visitors have all benefited from their efforts, enjoying safe water treatment and a healthier environment.



Levels of Service

By the Numbers



855,994

Gallons of fuel used



58,437

Million tons of trash



13,751

Vehicles washed



7,559

Million gallons cleaned



5,230

Equipment repairs



264

Miles of pipe cleaned

By the Numbers



278

ADA ramps installed



55,033

Feet of curb replaced



10,877

Tons of salt used



1,661

Tons of asphalt used



28,208

Potholes patched



43

Lane miles paved



Major Moments

Major Moments

Outcomes & Strategies Document

Physical infrastructure is the foundation of modern life, and now that this infrastructure has served generations over the past 50 to 100 years, it must be rebuilt or replaced. For more than a year, Public Works engaged the governing body through several infrastructure sub committees tasked with creating a plan for overcoming the community's infrastructure challenges. The resulting document, which was adopted by resolution in 2022, outlines nine desired outcomes and the strategies needed to obtain them. View it online at wycokck.org/pw



Stormwater Rate Transition

Following more than four years of engagement, rate modeling, and gathering community input, the governing body approved a rate transition for the Stormwater Enterprise Fund. Beginning January 1, 2024, ratepayers will be charged only for the stormwater they contribute to the stormwater system. The transition is based on impervious, or hard, surface amounts on an individual property. The transition is an important first step to successfully managing the community's stormwater infrastructure challenges.



Public Works Roundtable

Leadership matters and Public Works believe developing leaders at all levels of the organization is an essential part of creating a strong culture based on trust, teamwork, goodwill, hard work, and empathy. The Public Works Roundtable is a twice-yearly event where team members gather to discuss leadership development, culture development, continuous improvement, best practices, and relationship building. Roundtable event dates, locations, and topics are developed by a revolving team of Public Works employees from multiple levels within the department.



Major Moments

KC Levees Raise

In partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, ground broke on a \$529-million levee raise investment that began in 2019. The finished mega-project will improve 17 miles of levees along the Kansas and Missouri Rivers and protect 32 square miles of residential, industrial, and commercial areas containing 100,000 jobs, 7,000 structures, and \$25 billion in investments. The project is on schedule to be completed in 2026, after which it will protect more than 27,000 residents and 2,700 businesses by reducing flood risk.



Wolcott Wastewater Treatment Plant

Opened in 2021, the Wolcott Wastewater Treatment Plant expands system capacity to meet residents' current and future needs in western Kansas City, Kansas. The fifth of its kind in the nation, the plant utilizes new technology, aerobic granular sludge, which eliminates many traditional wastewater treatment steps, reduces operational complexity, and decreases maintenance needs while keeping the community and the environment safe from harmful toxins. The new plant was delivered ahead of schedule and under budget in 2022.



Fleet Internal Services Fund

Implementing the Internal Services Fund has allowed our Fleet team to think more as a business. Capitalizing on opportunities that leverage our municipal buying power and professional partners has created a self-funded pathway to revenue. The outcome is creating a sustainable fleet management program that keeps maintenance costs low and vehicles looking and working great. 2022 Was the program's first full year, with eight departments participating with 259 vehicles in service or on order by the year's end.



Major Moments

Patchy the Pothole Sprayer Deployed

Teams patched more than 28,000 potholes in 2022. To help keep the city's streets as smooth as possible, Public Works added a new tool to their belts: a spray pothole patcher. Unlike Public Works' Hot Patchers, a single crew member can operate the Spray Patcher using a "Patch-on-the-Go" spray injection system. In some cases, the new vehicle can be used to patch potholes in as little as two minutes. To help welcome the new addition, Public Works invited the community to vote on their favorite name, and they ultimately chose "Patchy."



Early Learning Driver Training (ELDT) Program

A DOT rule change in 2022 for CDL training raised costs. To cut unbudgeted expenses, Transit, Parks & Rec, and Public Works formed a committee for in-house training. External training costs \$5.8K per person and involves a 30-45 day absence. The ELDT program team introduced online training and an in-field course at 4th & Minnesota. In-house training saved \$20.4K, allows team members to train with the vehicles they operate and keeps them in the field from day one. Bonner Springs and Edwardsville team members were also invited to participate.



Data-Driven CMIP Process Nationally Recognized

In late 2022, Public Works' Asset Manager, Robbie Anderson, was invited to speak at the American Public Works Association's national convention. Mr. Anderson highlighted the Unified Government's data-driven, human-informed approach to project prioritization. Since then, municipalities from Illinois to Oregon, New York, and Louisiana have reached out to him to discuss the system he developed in greater detail – and his work "Capital Criteria-Block by Block" has been nationally recognized in Volume 36 of the Esri Map Book.



Major Moments

Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School is a popular community program and partnership between the Unified Government and the Kansas Department of Transportation to provide infrastructure funding for projects and educational activities which enable children to walk or bicycle to school more safely. In 2022, nearly two miles of sidewalk were added around Northwest and Bertram Caruthers Elementary Schools in Kansas City, Kansas. New sidewalks also provide pedestrian access between the two schools, nearby transit routes, the Jersey Creek Trail, and other activity centers.



Online Permitting System Deployed

Permits are necessary for various reasons, especially for work in the right of way, such as a driveway or culvert replacement, water line repair, and internet installation. Public Works collaborates with residents, businesses, and contractors to ensure the permitting process is efficient. In 2022, the Asset Management and Right-of-Way teams replaced the paper-based system with a digital hub, allowing easy online applications for common permits. Residents can also view a live map of permitted work occurring in Kansas City, Kansas, to stay informed.



RegenX Sweeper Hits the Road

Public Works welcomed a new KC Monarchs-themed street sweeper in 2022 with a unique feature. The new sweeper will be used with crack sealing and pothole patching operations. It has a notable optical enhancement that detects and sprays for weeds that cause damage to curbs. The more efficient vacuum and the vehicle's ability to dispose of debris in a roll-off dumpster mean it can clear cracks and potholes quickly and before patching and sealing activities. Vacuuming excess debris in cracks and potholes means repairs can last much longer.





Challenges

Challenges

Pavement Condition Index Declining

Public Works began tracking Kansas City, Kansas' Pavement Condition Index (PCI) in 2018. At that time, the city's average PCI was 56 and anticipated to fall without significantly increased funding. When streets reach a score of 40 or below, they are considered poor or failed. In 2022, data was again gathered, and the average PCI fell to 51. At this rate and without increased funding, a majority of streets in Kansas City, Kansas, will be in a poor or failed state in 10 to 15 years.



Bridges Reaching Critical Point

Kansas City, Kansas, has more than 270 bridges, including 5 major river crossings. Bridges are an important part of streets, and their failure negatively impacts the city. One major bridge, the Kansas Avenue bridge, is already closed, and its replacement cost is estimated at more than \$120 million. Right now, bridge maintenance is funded at \$476 thousand annually. Bridge maintenance funding needs are more than \$14 million annually. Without change, closures will further strain an already aged and deteriorating transportation system.



Facility Maintenance Nearing Tipping Point

The Unified Government is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of more than 200 publicly owned buildings. A review of 87 structures established a Facilities Condition Index (FCI) of 19 and declining. Like PCI, the FCI is a general report about the health of structures. Without a change to current practice, buildings in the study will decline to an FCI of 33 by 2031. The known backlog of deferred maintenance requires more than \$90 million (2018) total. A full-scale buildings review is needed, and the Unified Government will need to be creative in managing this liability.



WE CAN & WE MUST



We Build Leadership
At All Levels

ADOPT-A-SPOT
WYCO
In Recognition of Tim Saint

UNIFIED GOVERNMENT
WYANDOTTE COUNTY