

THE CITIZEN

ISSUE TWENTY • SUMMER 2018

Your official source of information about the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas



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STATE OF THE GOVERNMENT ADDRESS

Mayor Alvey Calls for New Focus on Neighborhoods

BY MIKE TAYLOR
Unified Government Staff

Mayor David Alvey is calling for a better quality of life for KCK residents and increased economic growth by improving traditional neighborhoods in the city.

Alvey made the remarks during his first State of the Government Address. Alvey became Mayor in January.

“We must attend more closely to our traditional neighborhoods, because our neighbors deserve a better quality of life and because only by improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods will we grow our tax base,” declared Alvey.

The new initiative is called, “From Our Neighborhoods Up.” The basic theory is to use incremental steps to clean-up neighborhoods, build on vacant lots and improve services to keep

established residents and attract new ones. Building new homes on just 10% of the vacant residential lots in older KCK neighborhoods would result in 640 new homes and increase the tax base by an estimated \$96-million. Growing the tax base will allow for individual taxes to be further reduced for all residents.

“We can unlock the potential of neighborhoods. We must build a great community from the neighborhoods up. We need to do what good neighbors have always done: do small things and do them well,” said Alvey.

The Mayor said some things can be as simple as engaging with neighbors, beautifying blocks by picking up trash, clearing overgrown brush and planting flowers. He also wants to improve lighting and make streets more walkable.

Alvey marked downtown KCK and Strawberry Hill as offering unique opportunities for improvement. The area is bordered by Freeman Avenue on the north, Central Avenue on the south, I-70 on the east and 7th Street on the west. Alvey says the area already has many thriving businesses and government offices with room for a lot more development.

The most recent enterprise is the University of Kansas Health System which plans to move hundreds of patients and staff into the long empty EPA building. It will be called the University of Kansas Health System Strawberry Hill Campus.

Watch the State of the Government Address and read more about the “From Our Neighborhoods Up” initiative at www.wycokck.org.

Sales Tax Renewal To Protect and Improve KCK

BY MIKE TAYLOR
Unified Government Staff

The Unified Government Board of Commissioners are asking residents to renew the 10-year Public Safety and Neighborhood Infrastructure Sales Tax when they vote

April 2010 with 70% of the vote. The tax will expire in July 2020 unless voters decide to continue it.

Voting to renew the tax will continue critical funding for public safety and neighborhood projects without requiring a tax increase. The 2018 Community Survey shows citizens place a high priority on public safety and infrastructure improvements.

In 2018, the Public Safety and Neighborhood Infrastructure Sales Tax will generate \$10-million, with 35% spent on the KCK Fire Department, 35% spent on the KCK Police Department and 30% spent on neighborhood improvement projects. Over its 10-year life, the sales tax will have raised \$80-million for critical public safety operations and neighborhood infrastructure projects.

In addition to purchasing new fire trucks, police cars and other

public safety equipment, the sales tax pays for 25 firefighters and 25 police officers. Neighborhood improvement projects include, streets, curbs, sidewalks and parks.

The 3/8-cent sales tax is paid on all retail sales in KCK. A significant portion of those sales are made in the Village West area, which means millions of tourists and shoppers from Johnson County, Lawrence, Topeka, Wichita, Missouri and other states are helping support KCK Police, Fire and Public Works.

While the 3/8-cent tax generates millions of dollars, it adds a few cents to everyday purchases. For example, the tax on a \$15 pizza amounts to 6-cents; it adds 38-cents to a \$100 grocery bill; and 8-cents to the cost of a \$20 shirt.

A YES VOTE MEANS

A yes vote means this critical funding, generating \$10-million a year, will continue to support Public Safety operations and Neighborhood Infrastructure projects without a tax increase.

A NO VOTE MEANS

A no vote means the \$10-million a year raised by the Public Safety and Neighborhood Infrastructure Sales Tax will disappear.

The budgets for Public Safety, Neighborhood improvement projects and other services the Unified Government provides will face drastic cuts

in the August 7 Primary Election.

KCK voters approved the 3/8-cent Public Safety and Neighborhood Infrastructure Sales Tax in

Stay Connected with the UG

Website

More than 2.7-million people a year use the Unified Government Website to stay informed and do business with their local government. Check it out at www.wyocck.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 Time Warner 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/cityofkck. 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/officialwyocck 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.



Dial 311 or use the myWyco app to make requests or file reports, pay taxes or register vehicles.

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

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COMMUNITY • PUBLIC SAFETY • MENTAL HEALTH
UNITED FOR GLOBAL WELL-BEING

KCK Police Adopt One Mind Campaign

The KCK Police Department is pledging to improve the response to those suffering from mental illness in the community. The pledge is part of an initiative called the One Mind Campaign, started by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. To join the One Mind Campaign, law enforcement agencies must pledge to implement four promising practices in a 12-36 month period to ensure successful future interactions between police officers and persons with mental illness.

Chief Terry Zeigler made the decision to join the International Association of Chiefs of Police's One Mind Campaign because, "Mental Health education and awareness is an essential part of carrying out our mission as a Police Department."

In completing the One Mind Pledge, the KCK Police Department established a sustainable partnership with a local mental health organization, developed and implemented a model policy to address officers' interactions with those affected by mental illness, and ensured that all officers received some type of mental health awareness training, with at least 80% of the department completing the more intensive Crisis Intervention Training.

The intensive 40-hour curriculum is designed by local agencies to train a team of specialized officers to respond to calls that involve individuals with mental health disorders such as depression or intellectual disability. The curriculum includes education on various de-escalation techniques as well as live role-play scenarios of officers responding to person who need mental health assistance.

Other initiatives that the Department has pursued in response to the needs of the community include the implementation of our CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) program, continued mental health awareness training, the fulfillment of a full time CIT liaison Officer, and the partnership with Wyandot Inc. which aids in providing a mental health co-responder to assist Officers and citizens during crisis situations.

For more information about the One Mind Campaign, please visit the IACP's website: <http://www.theiacp.org/onemindcampaign>

KCK Municipal Court Reduces Fines

The Unified Government has changed the policy on late fees for a failure to appear in Municipal Court. The late is dropping from \$50 to only \$5.

Municipal Court has automated many processes since the original ordinance was enacted to require a \$50.00 late fee for each ticket/citation an individual failed to appear in court on. Prior to automation, a failure to appear for court required many manual and state mandated processes. With the adoption of a new court management platform many of the older, labor consuming methods were streamlined and therefore reduced the expense to the Court.

The ordinance has now been modified to a mandatory fee of \$5.00 assessed on each charge if a warrant must be issued. The \$5.00

fee is more reflective of the actual cost associated with warranting a case(s). The financial savings from increased efficiency are now shared with the citizens.

This change is yet another step in meeting Municipal Court's established outcome of operating with policies and practices that reflect the strengths and needs of the community, not imposing undue or unjust financial burden.

Over the last 3 years, under the direction of Administrative Judge Maurice Ryan and Judge Brandelyn Nicholas-Brajkovic, the Court has changed bond practices to apply forfeited funds directly to owed balances, adjusted warranting to given defendants a grace period



for payment deadlines, reduced the minimum monthly payment on fines, and started formal ability to pay determinations. We look forward to identifying even more areas for improved efficiencies that will better serve the citizen while continuing to enforce compliance with city and state laws.

Why Did My Property Value Increase?

In Kansas, the law states that the Appraiser's Office must determine a 'fair market value' for each property as of January 1st each year. The Appraisers Office analyzes home sale prices and other data to help set the value of all property.

If the houses in your neighborhood or surrounding your property are selling for more than they did last year, then you will likely see an increase in your value as well.

Appraisers do not create value. Appraisers set values that reflect what the market is doing. If people are paying more for homes or commercial property, as they are in many Wyandotte County neighborhoods, then property values will show an increase. An increase in the assessed value means the home or property you own is worth more than it used to be, which means if or when you sell it, you will make more.

The KCK property tax rate has been reduced 8.8% since 2016. If another 2 mill reduction is approved for the 2019 budget, it will make for a total property tax reduction of 13.4% over three budget years, which helps offset increases in property value. Unified Government (city-county) taxes are less than half of the total tax bill. Schools and the State of Kansas make-up more than 50% of the taxes you pay.

In 1997, the owner of a \$100,000 house paid \$1,115 in city/county property tax. 20 years later in 2018, the owner of a \$100,000

house will pay \$905 in Unified Government property tax. That's a reduction of \$210, or 19% less.

The Informal Appeal process in the Appraiser's Office has been completed. A total of 2,330 appeals were filed with 2,214 hearings were held with the difference being 116 no shows/cancellations. The results were 46% of the appeals did receive a change in value. The appeals by category were 69% residential, 17% commercial and the remainder were other categories. These hearings were completed in accordance with the state's timeliness guidelines.

Property values, parcel data & comparable sales report are available on Appraiser's Property Search at: www.wycokck.org/appraiser.



3/8-Cent Sales Tax Ballot Language



Shall the following be adopted?

Shall the City of Kansas City, Kansas, be authorized to impose an additional three eighths of one percent citywide retailers' sales tax the proceeds of which shall be used for the purposes of financing public safety and neighborhood infrastructure, including the construction, repair, and maintenance of roads, curbs, and sidewalks, the collection of such Sales Tax commencing on July 1, 2020, or as soon thereafter as permitted by law, and terminating ten years after its commencement?



Early Voting for August Primary

Primary Election Day is Tuesday, August 7. But if you want to vote before Election Day, there are several options. Early voting in person is open to all registered voters and no application is required.

Election Office: 850 State Avenue, Kansas City, KS 66101:
July 31 through August 3 | 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday, August 4 | 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Monday, August 6 | 8 a.m. - 12 Noon

KCKPD South Patrol: 2100 Metropolitan Ave, Kansas City, KS 66106:
August 1 through August 3 | 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday, August 4 | 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Eisenhower Rec Center: 2901 N 72nd Street, Kansas City, KS 66109:
August 1 through August 3 | 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday, August 4 | 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.



KCK added \$2.1-billion in new residential housing and commercial buildings from 2008-2017.

In 2017, KCK ranked 5th and the top 10 cities in the metro for new homes.

What Does the 3/8-cent Sales Tax Pay For?

Sales tax maintains funding for 50 public safety positions annually

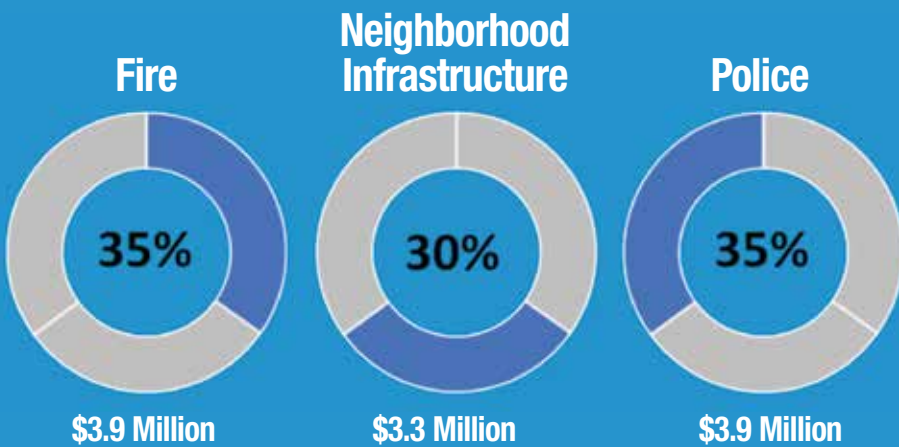


25 Fire Personnel

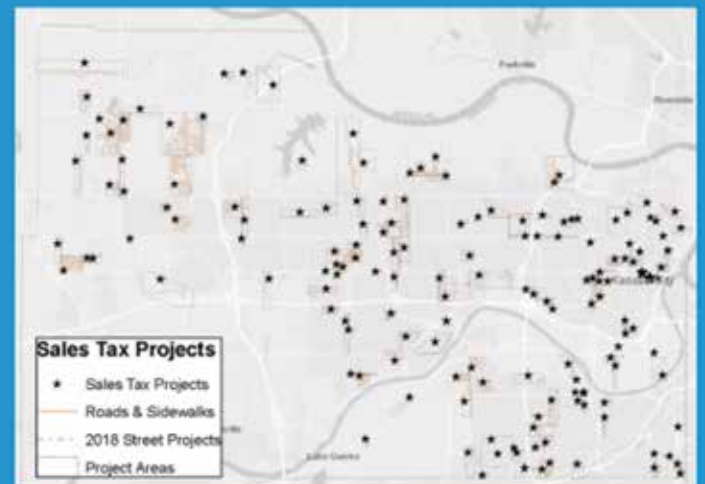


25.25 Police Personnel

2018 Dedicated Sales Tax Allocation



Map of Infrastructure Projects



Investing in Our Future: Public Safety & Neighborhood Infrastructure Dedicated Sales Tax Continuance

Mowing Grass in the Right of Way

The two most recent citizen surveys showed that overall street maintenance is at the top of the list for most residents in Kansas City, Kansas. Due to these results, the Unified Government Public Works Department has made several operational changes to focus on the major priorities throughout the KCK community, such as curb replacement, making alleys functional again, and an improved pothole patching and street preservation program.

These types of operations require a real commitment and a disciplined approach at all levels and in order for the Engineering and Streets Divisions to right-size resources to tackle these initiatives, activities not within the core responsibilities such as right-of-way (ROW) mowing of private property has been eliminated. Residential homeowners have always been expected to maintain their ROW property so it is not fair to have the same

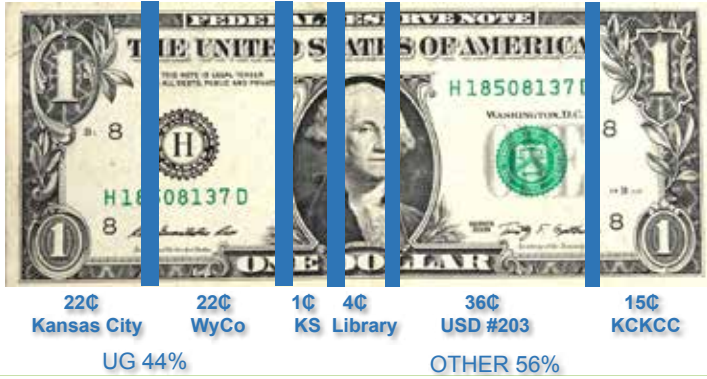
expectation of property owners in other areas throughout the city.

Public Works has begun mapping right of ways for the purposes of identifying the property owners who have responsibility for mowing. Staff will send informative, 5-day notice letters to the owners who are not mowing as the mapping is completed. After 5 days, Code Enforcement will follow up on the addresses where letters were sent and post 14-day abatements to property owners who have not yet mowed. Also, thank you letters will be sent to the property owners who are mowing their right of ways. These efforts are intended as a way to inform and enforce the new right of way mowing policy that was created as part of the SOAR program.

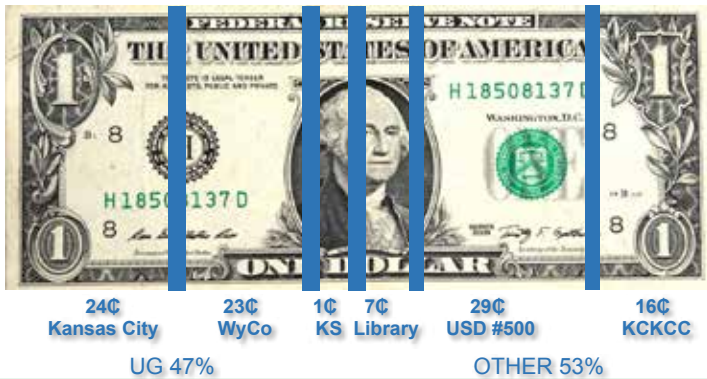
With the support of the Board of Commissioners, the only ROW mowing by the street division that will continue into 2018 and beyond will be along publicly owned properties.



How one of your 2018 Tax Dollars is Spent for Household in USD #203 (Piper School District)



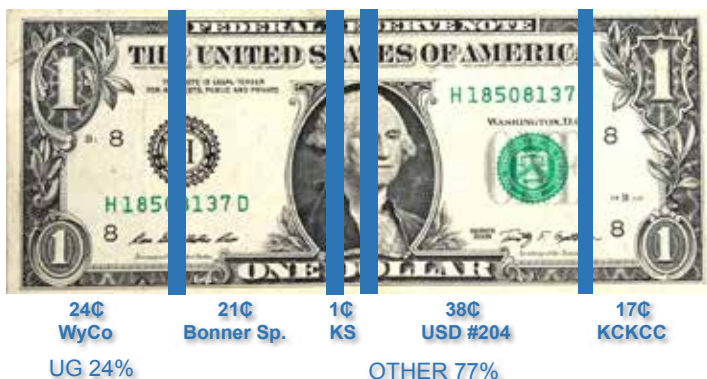
How one of your 2018 Tax Dollars is Spent for Household in USD #500 (Kansas City, KS School District)



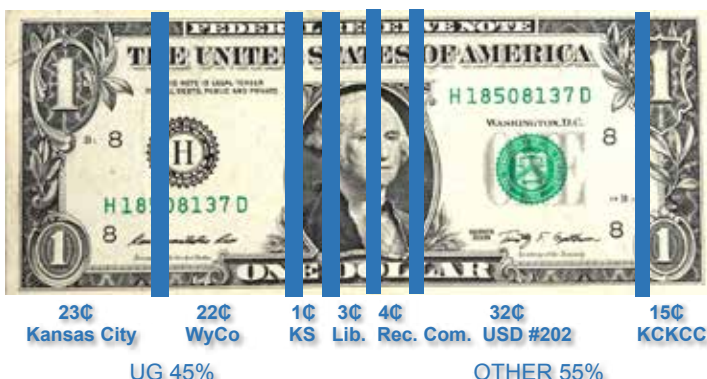
How one of your 2018 Tax Dollars is Spent for Household in USD #204 (Edwardsville Resident in Bonner Springs School District)



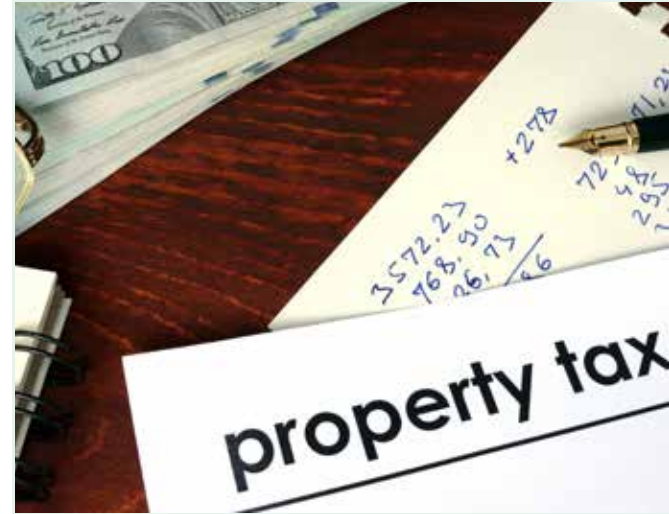
How one of your 2018 Tax Dollars is Spent for Household in USD #204 (Bonner Springs Resident in Bonner Springs School District)




How one of your 2018 Tax Dollars is Spent for Household in USD #202 (Turner School District)



Unified Government Property Tax Lowered



The KCK property tax rate has been reduced 8.8% since 2016. If another 2 mill reduction is approved for the 2019 budget, it will make for a total property tax reduction of 13.4% over three budget years. 

TAX RENEWAL

cont. from page 1

The Unified Government Commission reviews and votes on how the money will be spent as part of the annual budget process. However, all of the sales tax revenue must be spent on public safety and neighborhood improvement projects.

A yes vote means this critical funding, generating \$10-million a year, will continue to support Public Safety operations and Neighborhood Infrastructure projects without a tax increase.

A no vote means the \$10-million a year will disappear and budgets for Public Safety, Neighborhood improvement projects and other services the Unified Government provides will face drastic cuts. A property tax increase would be the only way to make-up the loss of the sales tax revenue.

For more information about the KCK Public Safety and Neighborhood Infrastructure Sales Tax go to the Unified Government website at www.wycokck.org.

The Unified Government proudly announces the **U.G. kNOw LEAD KCK Program in Partnership with Community Development and the Wyandotte County Health Department**

Lead-based paint is especially hazardous when chips, flakes or dust from scraping or sanding are released into the air. Everyday activities that cause friction on surfaces, such as opening windows or doors, may also release lead dust.

Children under the age of six are most at risk for lead poisoning.

Contamination most commonly occurs from eating or inhaling lead dust that gets on their hands and clothes.

Kansas City, Kan. The Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, KS is excited to announce that the Lead Hazard Control grant, originally awarded in late summer of 2017, is now ready to assist KCK families! This three-year program is a valuable resource to fill the void and address lead poisoning in our community which is vital for the well-being of our families.

Qualifications include:

- Homeowner of a single-family house in Kansas City, KS
- Home built prior to 1978
- Kids under 6 that reside or spend six hours or more a week in the home
- Pregnant
- Property taxes are current or on a payment plan
- Income eligible:

Family Size	Annual Household Income Limit
1	\$41,900
2	\$47,900
3	\$53,900
4	\$59,850
5	\$64,650
6	\$69,450

Applications for assistance are available at the Community Development Office, 701 N. 7th Street room 823 or the Wyandotte County Health Department 619 Ann Ave.

For more information please call Community Development at 913-573-5100.

kNOw LEAD Courtesy of the New Jersey Department of Health



Free stop-smoking medications for Wyandotte residents

Wyandotte County smokers can get free stop-smoking medication, including gum, patches and lozenges, through the Kansas Tobacco Quitline by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669).

Although this offer is part of a nationwide campaign, the efforts to help people quit are particularly important for Wyandotte County, where 24.1% of adults smoke – one of the highest smoking rates in Kansas.

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the community, and quitting benefits health and quality of life both in the short term and the long term. When a person quits, in a matter of minutes their heart rate and blood pressure drop; within three months their lung function improves; and in five years their risk of stroke can be the same as a non-smoker. Quitting is also good for their wallet - the average Kansas smoker would save \$1,500 each year if they quit.

The fight to quit smoking, however, is not an easy one. Most smokers want to quit—around 62% of Wyandotte County smokers try to quit each year, but it is difficult without help. Medications like nicotine gum, patches and lozenges double a person's chance of staying quit long term.



Here's how smokers and other tobacco users can receive free medications to help them quit:

- Call the Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW) and enroll in the Quitline program
- Answer a few questions to make sure they are medically eligible to receive NRT
- Callers will have a choice of 2-week starter kits of nicotine lozenges, gum, or patches, which

will be mailed directly to their home.

- This free offer began on June 4 and will be available while supplies last

For more information on free NRT, visit hcwyco.org/freenrt. To learn more about local efforts to help Wyandotte County residents quit smoking and help youth from becoming addicted, check out hcwyco.org/tfw.



The average weekly wage in Wyandotte County is \$953. It's \$1,008 in Johnson County and \$1,019 in Jackson County, Missouri.

KCK has grown by 7,152 new residents since 2010. That's a 4.9% increase in population. Overland Park grew by 10%, while Topeka lost almost 900 residents.

Warm Weather Showers Bring High Hazards

Spring and Summer bring many things to love in Kansas City; green areas come back to life, weather warms up, and Royals baseball takes center stage. Among all these highlights however, can be a more hazardous side of warmer months- increased rain showers.

For some businesses and homeowners an increase in precipitation also means an increased risk of flooding. According to www.usclimatedata.com, rainfall in Kansas City typically peaks in the months of April, May and June. When heavy rains strike in urbanized areas of the city there is not always adequate time for the ground to absorb and the drainage system to convey the sudden flow of water. In these situations, commonly referred to as “flash flooding” properties and streets can be inundated with water in minutes. Maintaining adequate open space and ensuring ditches and channels on your property are free from debris can help alleviate water pooling.

As the name implies, “flash flooding” happens quickly and may not always come with warning. There is typically little time to react, however there are some things you can do to protect yourself and your property.

In the event of a flash flood you can protect your property by moving furniture, rugs, electronics and important documents to higher floors, or if there are no higher floors, elevate using concrete blocks. Shut electricity off at the breaker panel. Sandbags can be used to block water from entering in low-lying doors and openings, such as garage doors or walk-out basements.

Prepare your family by having a family emergency plan. Plan alternative ways to exit your home if needed. If you are out traveling, keep in mind that even inches of fast-moving water can carry away a vehicle or person. If you see a flooded street remember this phrase: turn around, don't drown.

Flooding is most common in designated floodplains; however, it can happen anywhere. The local floodplain administrator can help you determine if you are located within a floodplain or high-hazard area. All new construction in the floodplain is required to have a floodplain permit and meet designated standards. Unfortunately, there are many properties in Kansas City, Kansas that were constructed in floodplains prior to the known hazards and required safety measures. On a bright note, all residents of KCK are eligible to obtain flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program. Flood insurance can save your family from financial tragedy.

Contact the local floodplain administrator at 913 573-8664 for more information on flood hazards, floodplain boundaries and flood insurance.



Renew Your Vehicle Registration on the myWyco App

Continuing to push forward in offering convenient digital services to residents, Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas residents can now renew their State of Kansas vehicle registration from the convenience of their smartphones with an enhancement launched to the myWyco application.

The Unified Government is among the first in the nation to combine state and local services into one convenient, intuitive experience. The platform is a product of a partnership between the Unified Government and PayIt, a Kansas City based technology firm. Since launching in the fall of 2017, myWyco has driven online payment transactions increase of 35% and online tax collection increase of over 80%.

The Unified Government plans to add a service for users to pay court and citation fees through myWyco in the next several months. The State of Kansas plans to add additional services soon, including Driver's License Renewals and Vital Records. myWyco is available on the Apple App Store, Google Play Store on online at <https://mywyco.wycokck.org/>

KCK PetHELP Program

Coalition For Animal Services, Assistance & Education

THIS VOUCHER IS VALID FOR NO CHARGE

SPAY/NEUTER FVRCP DA2PP RABIES MICROCHIP

NAME: _____ PET NAME: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

ADDRESS: _____

DOG CAT

MALE FEMALE

CALL (913) 229-6121 or KCKpethelp@gmail.com TO SCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT

POSSIBLE APPOINTMENT LOCATIONS INCLUDE:



The Humane Society of Greater Kansas City
5445 Parallel Pkwy, Kansas City, KS 66104



Great Plains SPCA
5428 Antioch Dr., Merriam, KS 66202



Spay and Neuter Kansas City
3722 State Ave., Kansas City, KS 66102

APPOINTMENT DATE: _____ TIME: _____

OUTREACH TEAM MEMBER: _____ DATE ISSUED: _____

For information and assistance please contact kckpethelp@gmail.com or visit us at www.kckpethelp.org.

If your pet has a medical condition, the veterinarian may examine your pet and determine that your pet should not be spayed or neutered. Redemption of this voucher for a free spay or neuter is subject to the availability of funds. It is possible your pet could be placed on a waiting list until funding is available.

KCK Pet Help program funding is exclusively available for residents of Kansas City, Kansas only. When you access vet services funded by our program, you will be asked to provide proof of residency in KCK. Proof of residency could include either a driver's license or utility bill with your address.



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 Wyandotte County • Kansas City, Kansas
 701 North 7th Street
 Kansas City, KS 66101

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 Standard
 U.S. Postage
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Construction is underway on a \$30-million luxury apartment complex and expansion of the Legends parking garage near Parallel Parkway and the entrance to Village West. The apartment will be built above the expansion of the parking garage.

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.

2018 Unified Government Commission



DAVID ALVEY
 Mayor/CEO
mayoralvey@wycokck.org



MELISSA BYNUM
 District 1 At-Large
mbynum@wycokck.org



TOM BURROUGHS
 District 2 At-Large
tburroughs@wycokck.org



GAYLE E. TOWNSEND
 District 1
gtownsend@wycokck.org



BRIAN MCKIERNAN
 District 2
bmckiernan@wycokck.org



ANN BRANDAU-MURGUIA
 District 3
amurguia@wycokck.org



HAROLD L. JOHNSON
 District 4
hjohnson@wycokck.org



MIKE KANE
 District 5
mkane@wycokck.org



ANGELA MARKLEY
 District 6
amarkley@wycokck.org



JAMES F. WALTERS
 District 7
jwalters@wycokck.org



**DR. JANE WINKLER
 PHILBROOK**
 District 8
jphilbrook@wycokck.org