



2021 Annual Report

PUBLIC WORKS

Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas

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We Can & We Must

OUR MISSION

With the right culture, provide efficient, reliable, and sustainable infrastructure to best serve the community and protect the environment into the future.

OUR VALUES

Positive Culture, Great Service & Smart Investment.



Each year develops its own identity, and 2021 was a year of momentum in Public Works. Work of the previous 4-5 years began to produce fruit in a number of ways. We started to realize that we could be great at what we do for this community. I

know...there is a lot of work to do for sure. But the team must believe in itself before meeting and exceeding your expectations.

We began some really important improvement initiatives like Accreditation, High School recruitment, and Commissioner Infrastructure Sub-Committees. These have the potential to be long-term, game-changing initiatives for the future of Kansas City, Kansas.

Our primary focus is on our culture and developing leaders at levels. We believe by making these the highest priority that we will build a stronger team

that is more durable and sustaining, and that will eventually exceed the Community's expectations. We also believe that the members of the team will live a more fulfilling work and personal life, maybe realizing opportunities that might not be there otherwise.

I hope that the body of work presented in this annual report will provide some idea of the kind of work we do and the kind of people doing that work; that we care about our work. We are public servants and here to make this a great place to live and work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Fisher', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Jeff Fisher
Director of Public Works



"Discipline is the
bridge between
goals and
accomplishments."

-Jim Rohn

Street Maintenance Supervisor Dwayne Smith speaking about leadership at a Public Works Roundtable

PUBLIC WORKS SERVICES

Buildings & Logistics

The Buildings & Logistics (B&L) team oversees, manages, and performs maintenance on all Unified Government-owned and operated facilities to provide accessible and convenient locations for residents and visitors. B&L is also responsible for providing comfortable and safe environments for employees. The 89 facilities they manage include police buildings, fire stations, recreation centers, the Wyandotte County Public Health Department, the Criminal Justice Complex, Juvenile Services Center, Court Services, the Wyandotte County Courthouse, Memorial Hall, and City Hall. Their 2021 operating and maintenance budget was approximately \$12 million.

Engineering

The Engineering team is responsible for the design, construction supervision, and inspection of streets, bridges, traffic signals, storm sewers, and sanitary sewer infrastructure projects in Kansas City, Kansas. If it looks like construction, Public Works' Engineering team is involved. Engineering's 2021 operations and maintenance budget was approximately \$8 million. Their team includes the County Engineer, the City Traffic Engineer, the City Stormwater Engineer, Project Engineers, and Project Managers. They are also responsible for establishing systems for managing complex projects and supporting other Unified Government departments.

Fleet

The Fleet Services team coordinates the maintenance and operation of more than 1,300 cars, trucks, commercial construction equipment, tractors, trailers, and emergency vehicles operated by the Sheriff's Office, Police Department, and staff. More than 30 employees are involved in equipment repairs, engine overhauls, and maintenance like tune-ups, brake jobs, clutch and transmission repair & replacement, electrical system diagnostics, hydraulic system repair, and tire maintenance. Their operations and maintenance budget in 2021 was approximately \$7 million.

PUBLIC WORKS SERVICES

Solid Waste Management

The Solid Waste Management team oversees all solid waste programs, including contracted residential trash and recycling collection, household hazardous waste disposal, recycling & yard waste disposal, e-waste collection, the development of green activities, and clean-ups for events like Earth Day in collaboration with organizations like the Environmental Protection Agency, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and Livable Neighborhoods. The Solid Waste Management division's three team members also assist residents, business, and community organizations with graffiti removal and neighborhood clean-ups. Their 2021 operations and maintenance budget was approximately \$10 million.

Street Maintenance

The Street Maintenance team is responsible for providing Kansas City, Kansas with safe, clean, and visually attractive roads. To achieve this, the Street team provides pavement maintenance, mowing of publicly-owned properties, signage services, snow removal, street sweeping, and right-of-way management for more than 2,400 lane miles of improved roadway and alleys. The division is one of the first responders to emergencies and is the primary resource for everything related to roads. They also provide support for special events such as neighborhood clean-ups, parades, and other community activities. Their 2021 operations and maintenance budget was approximately \$9 million.

Water Pollution Control

The Water Pollution Control team is responsible for providing sewer service, protecting water quality, managing stormwater runoff, and ensuring compliance with Federal regulations regarding water pollution in Kansas City, Kansas. Unlike other departments and divisions, Water Pollution Control receives its funding through two enterprise sources: the Sanitary Sewer user fee and the Stormwater Utility user fee. For more than 100 years, residential customers, businesses, and visitors have benefited from reliable and cost-effective wastewater & stormwater treatment. Their 2021 operations and maintenance budget was approximately \$33 million.

LEVELS OF SERVICE



283

ADA ramps installed



5,912

Tons of salt used during snowstorms



28,873

Potholes patched

250+ TEAM



1,731

Tons of asphalt used



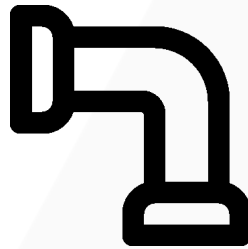
46

Lane miles of street paved

MEMBERS

264

Miles of pipe cleaned



15,975

Vehicles washed



LEVELS OF SERVICES

8,460

Million gallons of
wastewater treated



1,029,307

Gallons of fuel used



3,091

Vehicles repaired



PUBLIC WORKS INFRASTRUCTURE SUB COMMITTEES

Kansas City, Kansas, is at an infrastructure crossroads. Like many cities across the United States, once robust infrastructure systems are reaching the end of their useful life across multiple interdependent asset categories like streets, bridges, facilities, recreation, and stormwater. 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.

The cost of performing this work is as monumental as the challenge itself, but with a disciplined, systematic, and strategic commitment, achieving the outcomes residents, businesses, and visitors desire is possible.

To identify these outcomes and the strategies needed to make them possible, the Unified Government's Governing Body established three infrastructure subcommittees, each chaired and membered by Commissioners: (1) Streets, Bridges & Streetlights, (2) Parks, Recreation & Facilities, and (3) Stormwater & Wastewater. Between June 24, 2021, and April 3, 2022, the subcommittees met 26 times, and members participated in three opportunities for a city-wide infrastructure tour to see and discuss the

challenges Kansas City, Kansas, faces. The culmination of the Commissioners' work is available online at wycokck.org/pw

Nine outcomes were identified, with the top four being:

1. Increase the 2018 average pavement condition index rating of 56 to an average of 65 for the entire road network by 2045.
2. Increase the bridge sufficiency index rating (SI) according to the following by 2040: At least 40% of structures are within the SI range of 75-100 (Good), at least 20% of structures are within the SI range of 50-74 (Fair), less than 20% of structures are within the SI range of 25-49 (Poor), less than 5% of structures are within the SI range of 0-24 (Replace).
3. The UG has developed actionable plans for replacing or retiring major bridges when their sufficiency index rating (SI) reaches 60.
4. The streetlight system will be fully modernized, provide adequate lighting, and include energy reduction/performance controls throughout Kansas City, Kansas, by 2030.



Undercarriage of the Kansas Avenue



the Bridge, which requires replacement



Team members gathered for an introduction to the American Public Works Association Accreditation process



PUBLIC WORKS APWA ROAD TO ACCREDITATION

According to the American Public Works Association (APWA), “the purpose of the accreditation program is to provide a means of formally verifying and recognizing public works agencies for compliance with the recommended practices set forth in the Public Works Management Practices Manual. It is a voluntary, self-motivated approach to objectively evaluate, verify and recognize compliance with the recommended management practices.”

Accreditation doesn’t just increase credibility in the eyes of residents, it is also an excellent opportunity to evaluate processes, implement best practices, and build stronger more cohesive teams.

“Accreditation puts us in the top 1% of all government entities in the nation; it gives us a chance to stand out in our community and it gives our customers a sense of calm knowing that we’re working at our highest level of accomplishment,” said Rane Stone, Fleet Services Senior Technician II.

The Accreditation process takes anywhere between 2 and 3 years for the average organization to complete.

Public Works formed an APWA Accreditation Committee team in late 2021.

In holding with the Department’s commitment to building leadership at all levels, the opportunity to serve in this capacity was opened to all team members, whether veteran or recently hired. Following an interview process, the Selection Committee, comprised of Conrad Vega, Randy Hand, and Dave Reno, believed the chosen team displayed the knowledge, skill, creativity, and ability to build strong relationships critical to leading Public Works into the future.

The following Co-Managers will lead public Works’ APWA Accreditation journey: Joe Barnes, Vinny Billaci, Jonathan Gutierrez, Caleb Lindsay, Samantha Saysoff, Jonathan Wiles, Chad Wiggans, and Jack Xiong.

This team will work closely with members at all levels of Public Works over the next two years to document everything their teams do while collaborating to develop best practices, procedures, policies, and plans that will drive the Department into the future.

PUBLIC WORKS ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

It's one thing to say you take leadership development seriously, and quite another to do something about it.

At its core, leadership development is a long term commitment. You have to wake up every day and work hard to move things forward.

Started in 2020, Public Works Roundtable has been an important part of the department's commitment to developing leaders at all levels.

"Developing ourselves is something we value because we know that great people provide great services," said Diana Jimenez, Office Manager. "Public Works' Roundtable program is entering its third year, and while completely voluntary, we've had more than 80% of our team participate."

The Roundtable occurs twice per year, usually in the early spring and late fall. The event is open to all team members, from veteran's with 30 years experience to new hires in their first week on the job.

Each event is slightly different and organized by a committee of Public Works team members from different divisions and levels of the department.


Team members are not allowed to sit with their friends or close co-workers while attending. Instead, individuals are encouraged to meet new people and get outside their area of expertise by partnering up with people they might never have worked with or even seen before.

Not only does this approach help break down silos, it helps create cross functional teams by introducing people to new concepts, thoughts, ideas, and service types.

Topics vary from Roundtable to Roundtable, but they are always rooted in developing the leaders around you, increasing team cohesion, and learning more about how to be truly great public servants.



Public Works team members participating in a roundtable discussion.

A photograph of a man with a shaved head and a beard, seen from behind, wearing a blue t-shirt. He is seated at a long table in a brightly lit room. On the table in front of him are several yellow sticky notes, a pair of glasses, and some papers. In the background, other people are seated at similar tables, some looking towards the camera and others looking away. The overall atmosphere is one of a collaborative meeting or discussion.

***We Build Leadership
At All Levels***

icipating in a roundtable discussion



Combination sewer maintenance vehicles parked in a garage before crews get to work



PUBLIC WORKS CLEAN WATER CHAMPIONS

Developing the leaders around you is an important part of improving organizational culture, but so is thanking folks when they go above and beyond in the line of duty.

Public Works' Water Pollution Control team doesn't just build or repair sewer pipes or treat sewage at local plants. The Water Pollution Control team is charged with prioritizing and protecting public health and the environment.

The work this team does matters - they clean our dirty water, and they make sure waste is carried safely away from homes and business 24/7.

Wastewater treatment is often a thankless job by virtue of the fact that when it works, most people forget the underground pipes, pump stations, and treatment facilities even exist.

In late 2021, the Water Pollution Control team developed an employee recognition program that aims to show appreciation for all that Water Pollution Control professionals do to make sure sinks drain, toilets flush, and backups are prevented.

And so Public Works' Clean Water Champion Award was born. Team members nominate others when they see them going above and beyond, and then at the end of each month, a new Clean Water Champion is selected.

The first Clean Water Champion identified was Ian Hayes, Sewer Maintenance Worker I. His nomination form reads:

"Ian teaches proper techniques and work ethic to new employees. He's a good role model for others. He leads by example with hard work, quality work and he works independently. Ian has been a quality employee from day one."

Recognizing team members like Ian isn't just a great way to improve culture, it's a great way to let folks know they're appreciated!

For deeds that don't necessarily rise to the level of Clean Water Champion, but still matter, a kudos system was also developed. Whether it's having a positive attitude, showing selfless character, or proposing a bold new idea, all those moments of going the extra mile deserve a pat on the back!

PUBLIC WORKS RECRUITMENT AND OUTREACH

It's no secret that 2021 was a difficult year for hiring across multiple sectors. This is especially true for local government. Public Works teams need all the support they can get in order to deliver the vital and critical services residents rely on.

Instead of relying on traditional job postings, a team of Public Works members took a proactive approach to recruitment by deploying the department's first-ever internally-managed recruitment program.

In previous years, Public Works divisions, like Street Maintenance had to rely on traditional job postings. While this approach works slowly, it misses a much broader pool of candidates who may never be directly exposed to a career in public service.

Kicked-off in the Fall of 2021, the Public Works recruitment program is lead by Diana Jimenez, Office Manager and supported by a committee of team members: Dewayne Smith, Street Maintenance Supervisor; Conrad Vega Fleet Services Parts Specialist; Brandon Wayne, Street Maintenance Operator III; and Brad Philis, Water Pollution Control Operations General Superintendent.

The Committee reached out to local school counselors about creating a program that would expose students to both skilled trade and professional career paths available to them in a Public Works environment.

Since then, the team has attended 7 local recruitment events at the high school and college levels, and participated in hands-on education events with elementary school students that feature exposure to machinery like dump trucks, backhoes, and combination sewer cleaning vehicles.

The program is showing signs of success on the hiring front, but there is still a lot of work for the team to do.

"The recruitment portion is great, but the opportunity to engage local students, see them get excited about public service, and help them explore a wide range of rewarding career opportunities is the most rewarding part," said Diana Jimenez.

The team looks forward to continuing and expanding this important outreach moving into 2022 and 2023.



Public Works' recruitment team de



monstrating equipment at a local school

We Can & We Must