

**PUBLIC WORKS AND SAFETY
STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Monday, November 15, 2021**

The meeting of the Public Works and Safety Standing Committee was held on Monday, November 15, 2021, at 5:00 p.m., via Zoom or on-site. The following members were present: Commissioner Bynum, Chairman; Commissioners Markley, Ramirez, Kane, and Philbrook, and Tom Groneman, BPU Board Member. The following officials were also in attendance: Emerick Cross, Alan Howze, and Melissa Sieben, Assistant County Administrators; Casey Meyer, Susan Alig, and Henry Couchman, Senior Counsel; James Bain, Assistant Counsel; Patrick Waters, Deputy Chief Counsel; Kathleen VonAchen, Chief Financial Officer; Jeff Fisher, Director of Public Works; Angel Obert, Director of Parks and Recreation; Jack Webb, Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation; Stephanie Bell, Parks and Recreation Program Coordinator; Robert Anderson, Public Works Asset Manager; Troy Shaw, County Engineer; Ashley Hand, Director of Strategic Communications; John Kelly, Director of Buildings and Logistics; Joe Barnes, Water Pollution Control Project Manager; Carol Godsil, Deputy UG Clerk; Monica Sparks and Allie Facio, UG Clerk's Office.

Chairman Bynum said before I call the meeting to order, I want to announce that due to COVID, some committee members, staff and public are attending remotely by Zoom, as well as some on site. All participants joining by phone, please mute your phone when not speaking to avoid background noise.

During the meeting, please make sure you announce yourself by name and title every time you speak so that the public that's observing knows who's speaking. This is critical given the number of remote participants and it's also current guidance from our Kansas Attorney General.

The public is allowed to participate by Zoom or submit comments by email prior to the meeting and those will be included in the record of the meeting. The public may also indicate their intent to provide remote public comment by contacting the Clerk's Office by 5 p.m., the Thursday prior to our meetings. The public also will have an opportunity to provide brief comments, either by phone or Zoom or from the lobby of our municipal office building.

Chairman Bynum called the meeting to order.

Roll call was taken and all members were present as shown above.

Chairman Bynum said, we do not have any revisions on tonight's agenda, and our first order of business is minutes from September 27.

Action: **Commissioner Markley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kane, to approve.** Roll call was taken and there were six "Ayes," Groneman, Philbrook, Kane, Ramirez, Markley, Bynum.

Committee Agenda:

Item No. 1 – 211160...RESOLUTION: EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Synopsis: A resolution authorizing the Cooperative Agreement between Bonner Springs, Edwardsville, and Unified Government establishing the Unified Government communications center as the public safety answering point and creating an advisory committee in accordance with the agreement, submitted by Casey Meyer, Senior Counsel.

Casey Meyer, Senior Counsel, said, this is basically just a recitation of what we have already been doing with Bonner Springs and Edwardsville for several years. The Unified Government is the public safety answering point for Wyandotte County, and what that means is we provide the communication and emergency dispatch services to Edwardsville, Bonner Springs, and Kansas City, Kansas. We provide the staffing for that center, which as you probably know, are our Police Department employees and Fire Department employees.

So, all this is doing is putting in writing what we have been doing already and also establishing a 911 advisory committee in which members from both Kansas City, Kansas Fire and Police, as well as Edwardsville Fire and Police, and Bonner Fire and Police, and Administrators from each of those jurisdictions will meet at least twice a year to discuss any improvements that may be able to be made with our communications center. So, that's all it is.

The term is through December of 2030, all parties have the ability to terminate the agreement and as far as fees or payments go, we don't get reimbursed by any of the city in providing these services. There are 911 fees that are collected via state statute, and then those are spent on the

services provided to Bonner Springs and Edwardsville. So, we are just requesting your approval for our ability for Mr. Bach to sign the agreement on behalf of the Unified Government.

Chairman Bynum said, thank you, Casey. You did an excellent job explaining that and it was in our packet. It looks to me like the piece that might be new or additional to what we've been doing is the committee.

Ms. Meyer said, yes, that's true.

Chairman Bynum asked, questions from the committee?

Chairman Bynum asked, were there any comments from the public on the item? **Allie Facio, UG Clerk's Office**, said, no comments were received.

Chairman Bynum asked, do you see any hands up from the public watching for a comment? **Ms. Facio** said, there are no hands raised.

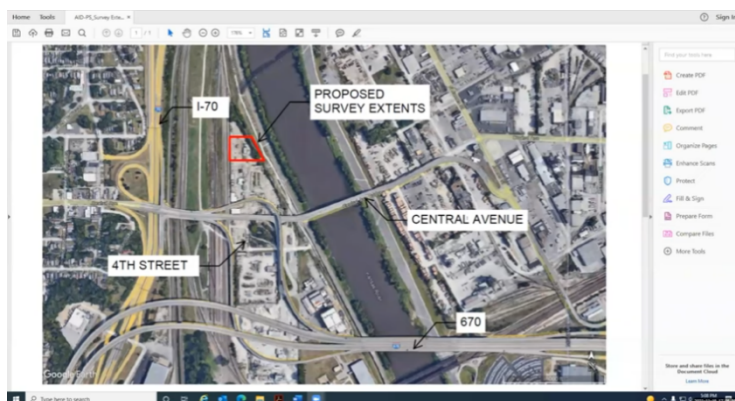
Action: **Commissioner Markley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kane, to approve.** Roll call was taken and there were six "Ayes," Groneman, Philbrook, Kane, Ramirez, Markley, Bynum.

Item No. 2 – 211162...RESOLUTION: ARMOURDALE INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT PUMP STATION

Synopsis: A resolution declaring that the Armourdale Industrial District Pump Station (CMIP 6309) Project is a necessary and valid improvement project and authorizing a survey of land for the project, submitted by James Bain, Assistant Counsel.

James Bain, Assistant Counsel, said, as explained, this resolution is in regard to the rehabilitation of the AID Pump Station. It does two things—declares the project necessary and valid and authorizes the survey of the land to get the legal description for what the Unified Government may take in an eminent domain action that could be filed down the road after an attempt to acquire the

necessary land. Joe Barnes, I believe, is on from Water Pollution Control and I'm going to share the map from my computer and let Joe talk you all through the project.



Joe Barnes, Water Pollution Control Project Manager, said, AID Pump Station is our largest pump station that feeds the Kaw Point Wastewater Treatment Plant. We've had some recent failures in the past 12 months, substantial, \$100,000 worth of damages due to deteriorated pipes at the station. We're currently in design to rehabilitate the station and because of the size of the pump station and the limited land that we have surrounding the pump station, we may need to relocate some electrical equipment outside of the pump station. This is just setting us up so we can survey and see where we can put the structure. With that, I'm open to questions.

Chairman Bynum said, on your map where you have the pump station identified, it sits within a triangle of property, if you will, on the southern end being the Central Avenue Bridge. Is that already—the entire triangle I'm referencing—is that all Unified Government-owned already, or do we contemplate any need for offering a payment for private property on this one?

Mr. Barnes said, I think there's two property owners down there at KC Southern and 402 Central Avenue, LLC, something like that. Where we would be expanding, I guess, our project site would just most likely be to the west to stay within that red box. I don't anticipate any additional land needing to be purchased outside of that red box. When we evaluate the sewers in the area, we may need to do rehabs on the existing collection system, but no further expansion.

Chairman Bynum asked, any other questions, comments from our committee members? Were there comments received from the public? **Allie Facio, UG Clerk's Office**, said, no comments were received.

Chairman Bynum asked, are there any hands raised? **Ms. Facio** said, no hands are raised.

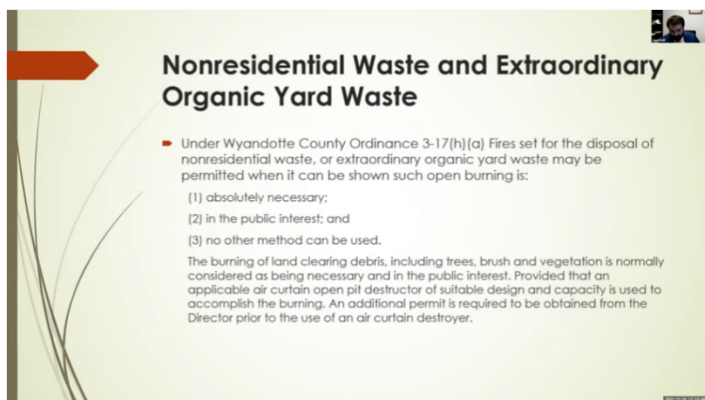
Action: **Commissioner Kane made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Philbrook, to approve.** Roll call was taken and there were six "Ayes," Groneman, Philbrook, Kane, Ramirez, Markley, Bynum.

Item No. 3 – 211065...PRESENTATION: OPEN BURNING

Synopsis: A presentation of potential options to change the Municipal Code to improve clarity to both the public and staff as to what options are available the next time a large storm affects the area, submitted by Jon Khalil, Assistant Counsel. For information only.



Jon Khalil, Assistant Counsel, said, this issue was previously before the committee on July 26th and I'm here today to discuss and solicit some feedback on some proposed changes that came out of the discussion from that meeting.



Nonresidential Waste and Extraordinary Organic Yard Waste

- Under Wyandotte County Ordinance 3-17(h)(a) Fires set for the disposal of nonresidential waste, or extraordinary organic yard waste may be permitted when it can be shown such open burning is:
 - (1) absolutely necessary;
 - (2) in the public interest; and
 - (3) no other method can be used.

The burning of land clearing debris, including trees, brush and vegetation is normally considered as being necessary and in the public interest. Provided that an applicable air curtain open pit destructor of suitable design and capacity is used to accomplish the burning. An additional permit is required to be obtained from the Director prior to the use of an air curtain destroyer.

The ordinance at issue here is Unified Government Code Section 3-17HA, which provides for the open burning of nonresidential waste or extraordinary organic yard waste. This ordinance requires that if you are burning those types of waste, the use of an air curtain open pit destructor.



Nonresidential Waste and Extraordinary Organic Yard Waste



- Under the current code open burning of nonresidential waste and extraordinary organic yard waste is an option of last resort.
- And to mitigate against the environment effects of such, burning an air curtain open pit destructor is required for nonresidential waste and may be required for the burning of extraordinary organic yard waste at the discretion of the health director and chief of the fire prevention division.
- Whether or not an air curtain destructor is required for extraordinary organic yard waste depends on several factors including the amount of material and nature of material to be burned, and the location of the property.

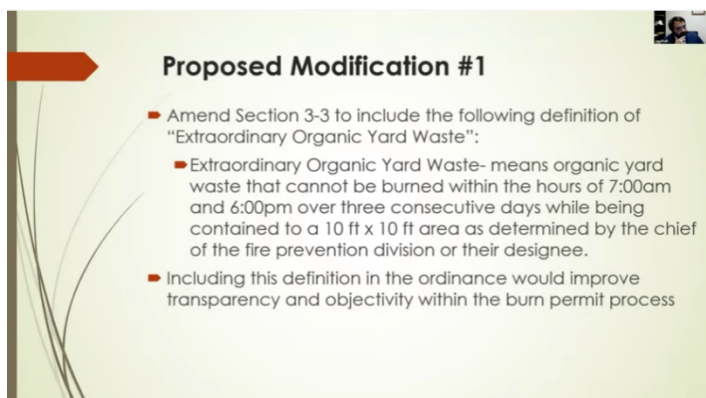
An air curtain destructor is air quality control, air pollutant mitigation device.



Potential Changes to Improve the Ordinance

- Staff is proposing the following changes to provide greater clarity to both the public and our staff as to what options are available the next time we have a large storm that effects the area
- We are here to get feedback from the Commission and make any additional changes that may be requested

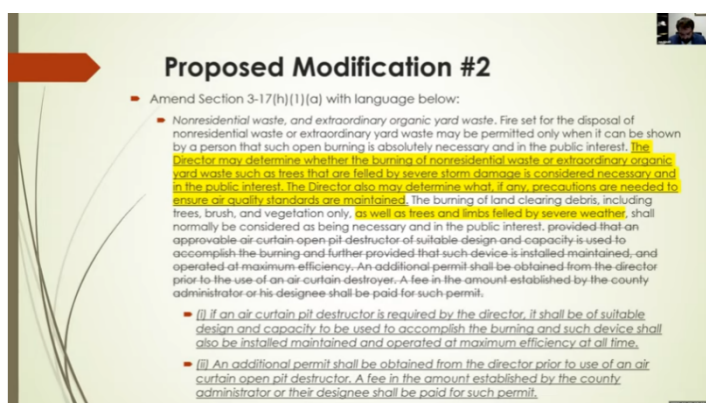
So, the staff is proposing the following changes to provide greater clarity to both the public and our staff as to what options are available the next time we have a large storm in the area that causes an uptick in the amount of organic yard waste that we have to deal with.



Proposed Modification #1

- Amend Section 3-3 to include the following definition of "Extraordinary Organic Yard Waste":
 - Extraordinary Organic Yard Waste- means organic yard waste that cannot be burned within the hours of 7:00am and 6:00pm over three consecutive days while being contained to a 10 ft x 10 ft area as determined by the chief of the fire prevention division or their designee.
- Including this definition in the ordinance would improve transparency and objectivity within the burn permit process

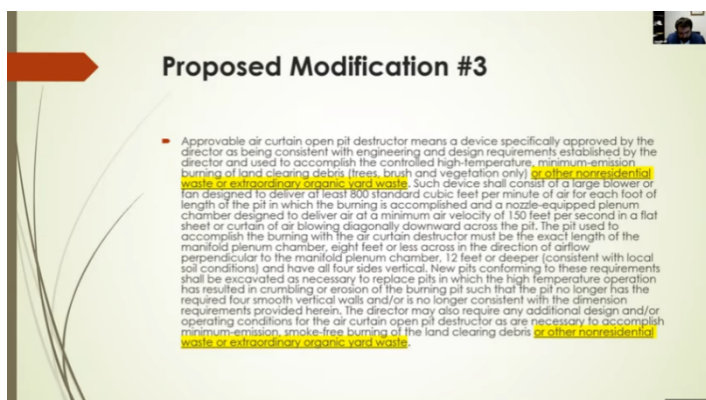
So, our first proposed modification would be to amend Section 3-3 to include a definition of extraordinary yard waste or extraordinary organic yard waste. This definition would be organic yard waste that cannot be burned within the hours of 7 a.m. or 6 p.m. over three consecutive days while being contained to a 10 by 10-foot area, which would be determined by the Chief of the Fire Prevention Division or their designee. This definition is the definition that we are currently using, it's just not anywhere in the code. So, by adding this definition to the code, it would improve transparency and objectivity within the burn permitting process.



Proposed Modification #2

- Amend Section 3-17(h)(1)(a) with language below:
 - Nonresidential waste, and extraordinary organic yard waste. Fire set for the disposal of nonresidential waste or extraordinary yard waste may be permitted only when it can be shown by a person that such open burning is absolutely necessary and in the public interest. **The Director may determine whether the burning of nonresidential waste or extraordinary organic yard waste such as trees that are felled by severe storm damage is considered necessary and in the public interest. The Director also may determine what, if any, precautions are needed to ensure air quality standards are maintained.** The burning of land clearing debris, including trees, brush, and vegetation only, as well as trees and limbs felled by severe weather, shall normally be considered as being necessary and in the public interest, provided that an approvable air curtain open pit destructor of suitable design and capacity is used to accomplish the burning and further provided that such device is installed, maintained, and operated at maximum efficiency. An additional permit shall be obtained from the director prior to the use of an air curtain destroyer. A fee in the amount established by the county administrator or his designee shall be paid for such permit.
 - (i) If an air curtain pit destructor is required by the director, it shall be of suitable design and capacity to be used to accomplish the burning and such device shall also be installed, maintained and operated at maximum efficiency at all time.*
 - (ii) An additional permit shall be obtained from the director prior to use of an air curtain open pit destructor. A fee in the amount established by the county administrator or their designee shall be paid for such permit.*

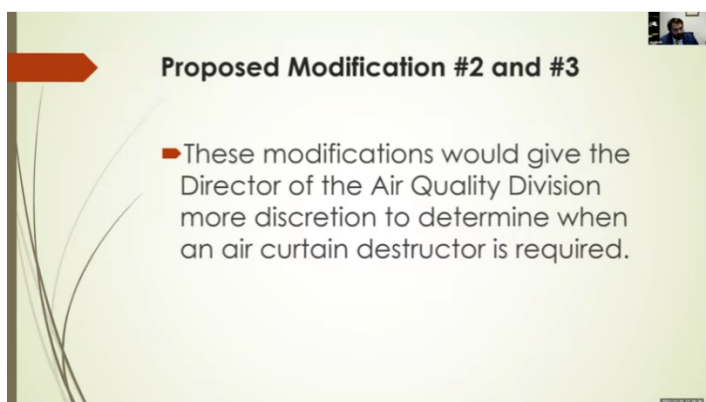
Our second proposed modification would be to increase the discretion of the director. This would give the Director of Air Quality Division the discretion to determine what types of wastes are in the public interest to burn, and if and what air quality precautions are needed when burning.



Proposed Modification #3

- Approvable air curtain open pit destructor means a device specifically approved by the director as being consistent with engineering and design requirements established by the director and used to accomplish the controlled high-temperature, minimum-emission burning of land clearing debris (trees, brush and vegetation only) **or other nonresidential waste or extraordinary organic yard waste**. Such device shall consist of a large blower or fan designed to deliver at least 800 standard cubic feet per minute of air for each foot of length of the pit in which the burning is accomplished and a nozzle-equipped plenum chamber designed to deliver air at a minimum air velocity of 150 feet per second in a flat sheet or curtain of air blowing diagonally downward across the pit. The pit used to accomplish the burning with the air curtain destructor must be the exact length of the manifold plenum chamber, eight feet or less across in the direction of airflow perpendicular to the manifold plenum chamber, 12 feet or deeper (consistent with local soil conditions) and have all four sides vertical. New pits conforming to these requirements shall be excavated as necessary to replace pits in which the high temperature operation has resulted in crumbling or erosion of the burning pit such that the pit no longer has the required four smooth vertical walls and/or is no longer consistent with the dimension requirements provided herein. The director may also require any additional design and/or operating conditions for the air curtain open pit destructor as are necessary to accomplish minimum-emission, smoke-free burning of the land clearing debris **or other nonresidential waste or extraordinary organic yard waste**.

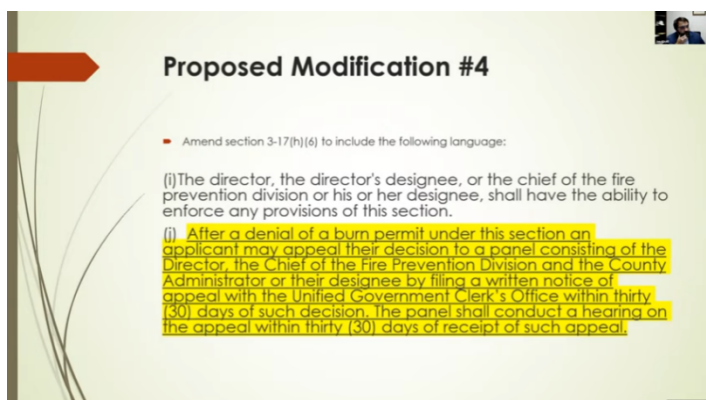
The third modification would update the definition of an air curtain in the code to include emission control on other non-residential waste or extraordinary organic yard waste.



Proposed Modification #2 and #3

- These modifications would give the Director of the Air Quality Division more discretion to determine when an air curtain destructor is required.

These modifications would both give the director of the Air Quality Division more discretion to determine when air curtain destructors are required.

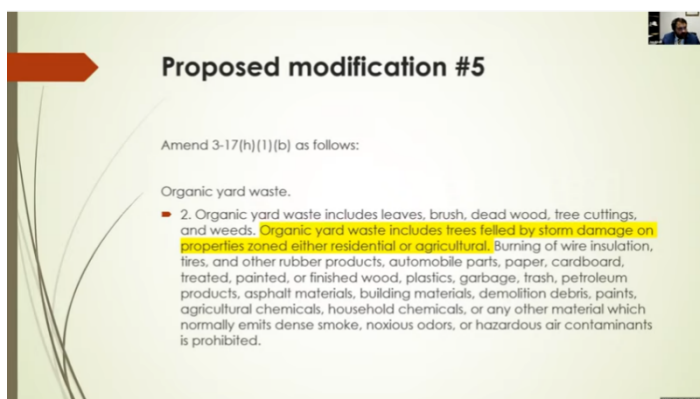


Proposed Modification #4

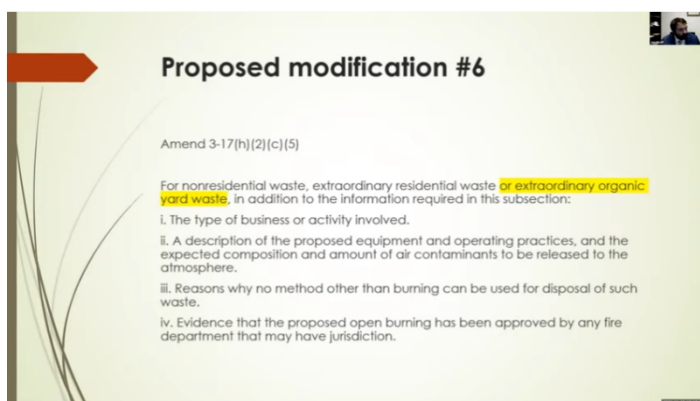
- Amend section 3-17(h)(6) to include the following language:
 - (i) The director, the director's designee, or the chief of the fire prevention division or his or her designee, shall have the ability to enforce any provisions of this section.
 - (j) **After a denial of a burn permit under this section an applicant may appeal their decision to a panel consisting of the Director, the Chief of the Fire Prevention Division and the County Administrator or their designee by filing a written notice of appeal with the Unified Government Clerk's Office within thirty (30) days of such decision. The panel shall conduct a hearing on the appeal within thirty (30) days of receipt of such appeal.**

The fourth proposed modification would create an appeals process for folks who have their burn permit denied. This would be an appeal to the Director of Air Quality, the Chief of the Fire

Prevention Division, and the County Administrator's Office or a panel of the three of them. They would have 30 days to file such an appeal.



The fifth proposed modification would update the definition of organic yard waste in the code to include trees felled by storm damage on properties zoned either residential or agricultural. I believe at the moment it is just residential properties and it doesn't include trees felled by storm damage.



The sixth proposed modification would be including extraordinary organic yard waste when applying for a permit to burn extraordinary organic yard waste. This additional information would be required to obtain a permit with the Fire Prevention Division. Are there any questions or comments about these provisions or modifications?

Commissioner Kane said, yes. First of all, I appreciate what you guys have done. You've done a lot of work on this. This kind of stemmed from an incident from one of my constituents where the situation may have been mishandled, or was mishandled to be honest about it. No more than

these events happen when we're talking about the curtain and the machine that does that where the curtain destructor is required, they're at a minimum between \$15,000 and \$20,000 to get one of those to rent. No more than these events happen, and it's only happened once in the 16 and a half years that I've been here, so the relativity how often this happens is minimal, and what people don't realize when you lose a downed tree in an agricultural area you don't get any insurance for that. So, you've already lost some trees, you'd be out a multiple amount of monies and an inconvenience and you've got this all over the place. We have a Director of Air Quality, correct?

Mr. Khalil said, yes.

Commissioner Kane said, okay. So, I guess somewhere—I'd like to massage this a little bit to include any agriculture use. The issue, the permit by Health Department and/or Fire Department and now the Director of Air Quality, without the use of a curtain when the application is made as long as the quality conditions are accepted. The reason I say that is I don't know why we went this big. It was a very simple thing that folks are working on and if it meets the air quality, if the Director of Air Quality says it's fine, if the Health Department says it's fine, the Fire Department says it's fine that you keep it in this minimal area, I don't believe that they should be required to have an air curtain.

Like I said, it's only happened once in 16 and a half years, and it was mishandled. I don't want to have this happen again, but if this happened and you had some agriculture around and you did that, as long as they follow the Health Department, the Fire Department, the Director of Air Quality Control, they say you can do it this day or these days, then I don't think the air curtain destructor is required in my mind. If they follow those three recommendations from those three different departments, and it's in that box that you guys keep talking about, I don't think that curtain's necessary.

Nonresidential Waste and Extraordinary Organic Yard Waste



- Under the current code open burning of nonresidential waste and extraordinary organic yard waste is an option of last resort.
- And to mitigate against the environment effects of such, burning an air curtain open pit destructor is required for nonresidential waste and may be required for the burning of extraordinary organic yard waste at the discretion of the health director and chief of the fire prevention division.
- Whether or not an air curtain destructor is required for extraordinary organic yard waste depends on several factors including the amount of material and nature of material to be burned, and the location of the property.

Commissioner Bynum said, if we could step back to that first slide. The one with the photograph, go back to the photograph. Is that the air curtain apparatus? **Mr. Khalil** said, yes, so that's a picture of an air curtain, Commissioner Bynum.

Commissioner Bynum said, so, I'm just trying to track with what Commissioner Kane is saying and not in a position to have ever done this or needed to do this, but it looks to me like there's a hole in the ground, if I'm looking at this properly. What's being burned is in the hole, and the destructor equipment is there for purposes of basically containing and/or putting out that fire because the question that I have is organic material of this magnitude set on fire and allowed to burn between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. is going to have to be put out. Correct? I mean, it's not going to burn itself out.

Mr. Khalil said, there would have to be safety steps taken to ensure the fire was safely extinguished in that time period if there was enough material present to burn for that long. What the air curtain destructor does is it creates an air curtain over the top of that open pit there that keeps all of your potential pollutants from getting out into the wire atmosphere. So, it would keep the smoke and anything else that could potentially be burning inside of that pit from getting out. I mean, the real issue is smoke when you're dealing with organic waste.

What the proposed change here would do, to address Commissioner Kane's point, is currently the ordinance would require an air curtain destructor and this would make that an option for the Health Department when they're making their determination. So, if they feel one is needed, they would still have the option to require someone to use one, but not in every case would one be required.

Commissioner Bynum said, okay. I appreciate that because it sounds like the modifications then are addressing the original concern and the concern that Mr. Kane is sharing today that rather than just requiring it by ordinance, it is allowing for a case-by-case basis, if I'm understanding you.

Mr. Khalil said, yes. So, it would allow for a case-by-case basis for the Air Quality Control and the Fire Department to be able to make a decision on whether an air curtain is needed.

Commissioner Bynum said, excellent. Well, that is good. It sounds like a response to, I think, the concerns that were in front of us over the summer with the issue at hand at that time. What other questions or comments does this committee have? We are soliciting feedback at this time.

Commissioner Bynum said, I do not see any other hands raised on the item. So, if that is the case, if any other staff members have a comment we need to hear, we shall entertain that now. If not, sir, we will thank you for bringing this forward and it is an information only item, so it is not a voting item. We appreciate your time, and as Commissioner Kane said, we do appreciate the work that you all have done to bring these changes forward. So, thank you for that.

Commissioner Markley said, so, I'm just curious. What is the next step for this item? Since it's for information only tonight, taking silence as acquiescence, it sounds like there's support for the language as proposed. Does that mean that it is going to come before us at another standing committee for a vote? I'm just curious what the next step is, since we're not voting on it tonight.

Patrick Waters, Senior Counsel, said, yes, we can take this feedback and we can put this into a final ordinance form, and probably bring it back to you next month.

Commissioner Kane asked, Patrick, can we make sure to highlight to have the option of case-by-case? **Mr. Waters** said, yes, Commissioner.

Commissioner Bynum said, and just for clarification, Patrick. I believe that our December meeting is going to be held very early in the month due to the holidays. If not December, then perhaps January, but nonetheless thank you all very much.

Action: For information only.

Item No. 4 – 211164...PRESENTATION: CMIP PROJECT REPORT

Synopsis: The Public Works team will discuss 2022 CMIP projects & the CMIP criteria weights and data-driven selection process, submitted by Jeff Fisher, Executive Director of Public Works. For information only.

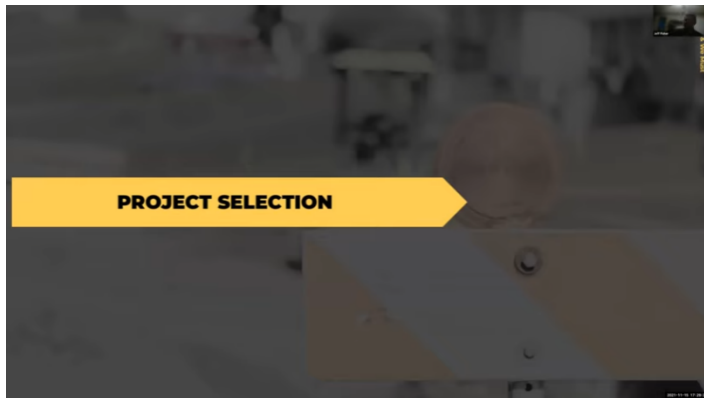
Commissioner Bynum said, Jeff, I'll turn it over to you. I imagine, perhaps, you might have other staff here with you also?



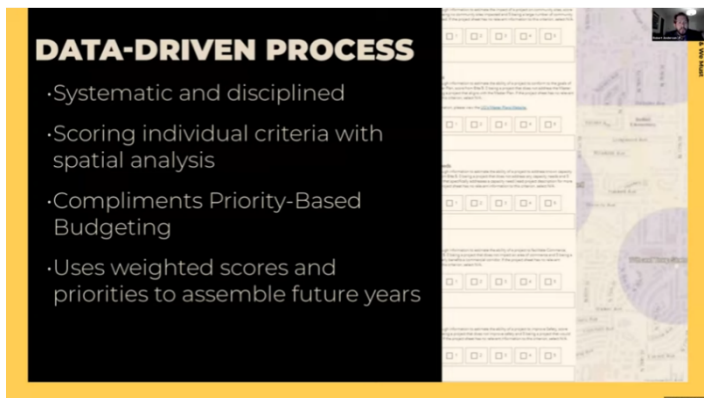
Jeff Fisher, Executive Director of Public Works, said, that's right, Commissioner. We know that this is routine for the UG to make this presentation each fall. Just to highlight the next year's CMIP activities and typical for us to have several participants, like you said, several presenters. We have Robbie Anderson, our Asset Manager, we have Troy Shaw, our County Engineer. We have Joe Barnes, Water Pollution Control, Trenton Foglesong, Water Pollution Control, and John Kelly with Buildings and Logistics.



We've talked about this in the past and in our subcommittees we talked about this as well, I just wanted to make sure we define what CMIP is. It is the Capital Maintenance Improvement Program. Every city has a five-year CMIP or five-year CIP. We just want to point out the difference between capital and maintenance. Capital is usually a one-time project with a defined start and end date with a defined amount of money and a defined scope. Whereas maintenance, that's reoccurring routine work to keep the infrastructure functional and working at its optimum.



Robbie Anderson, Public Works Asset Manager, said, what we ask you to help us with in this process is helping us set weights around how we select projects. We're doing our best to be as data-driven as possible in how we do that, and we've engaged with all of you in that process. It's kind of an exciting time because we just recently wrapped up our presentation on this to the Planning and Zoning Board and will be reengaging you all with that here to evaluate whether or not those weights have been set correctly.



One of the most important parts of what you do is approve the budget that makes improvements to our community. So, the CMIP is a valuable thing and we wanted to be as objective as possible, so we do our best to have a data-driven process that's systematic and disciplined. It's based on this criteria that we've outlined and weighted. It complements the priority-based budgeting process that's trying to find the best programs and best activities that the UG does for the community.

FOUNDATIONAL

- Data-driven
- Human-informed
- Helps prioritize projects with multiple benefits in both the short and long terms
- Can be easily updated
- Reliable and explainable

Capital Criteria

Criteria	Weight
Costs: Design, O&M, Full Lifecycle	25%
ROI (Return-on-Investment)	25%
Infrastructure Condition*	15%
Safety*	10%
Capacity Needs*	10%
Population Served*	10%
Coordination: Internal/External Stakeholders	5%
Commerce*	5%
Community Sites*	5%
Master Plans*	5%
Predictable Project Timing and Scope	5%
Total (Must = 100%)	100%

At its heart, it's data-driven, but it's also human-informed. Part of that human-informing is coming from you all, so please keep that on your radar that we'll be reaching out for additional input on this. It's a process that's repeatable and it can easily be updated or modified. That's the whole purpose behind this, to take your input and put it into practice in how we schedule out-year projects. Very important part of our engagement with you. Now, we're going to go on and review the 2022 projects and programs.

2022 PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

BUILDINGS & LOGISTICS 2022 QUICK VIEW

John Kelly, Buildings and Logistics, said, here we have just a couple of pictures for the Buildings and Logistics 2022 quick view to kind of show a couple of the projects we're working on.

November 15, 2021



So, these two particular slides that we have, we talk about the City Hall Stabilization Project, which in 2021 we received \$2.5M and then for 2022, we're receiving another \$2.5M for a total of \$5M total investment. Essentially what this is to do, I think everybody on this call's aware that the City Hall water infiltration has been going on for some time. So, this repair will take the City Hall's diaphragm and allow us to have the reutilization of the ground floor to where maybe we will be able to take people and lease facilities out in other parts of the community and bring them back into space that we have here at City Hall that's underused and will ensure the building to stop having deterioration due to the water infiltration that's been going on for some time.

The other picture below, we have the Pierson Park Fire Station. This particular project is what we're working with the Fire Department currently on with our architect and our CMR to replace two smaller outdated fire stations that are in the Turner area. This will consolidate to one larger fire station that would address immediate needs with room to grow. In 2022, we're receiving another \$2.4M for a total of almost \$9M worth of total investment for this fire station.

We've been having some on-threes with you commissioners explaining kind of where the construction has been looking like since COVID and the supply chain and the cost due to some of these projects being kind of in an idle situation due to the supply chain. So, I just want to make mention that again, we are seeing and hearing a lot of supply chain issues. We just wrapped up a project here behind City Hall at the Health Department and, just for an example, our roofing contractor just literally wrapped up the roofing project to where we were going to start a roofing project across the street at City Hall and we're being told that your basic roofing materials are anywhere between six to eight months lead time.

So, I just want to make sure that the commissioners are aware that as we continue to try to get these projects off the ground and get it moving, the supply chain issue and the cost of some of the—you know, getting our hands on these certain pieces of equipment to get these projects done

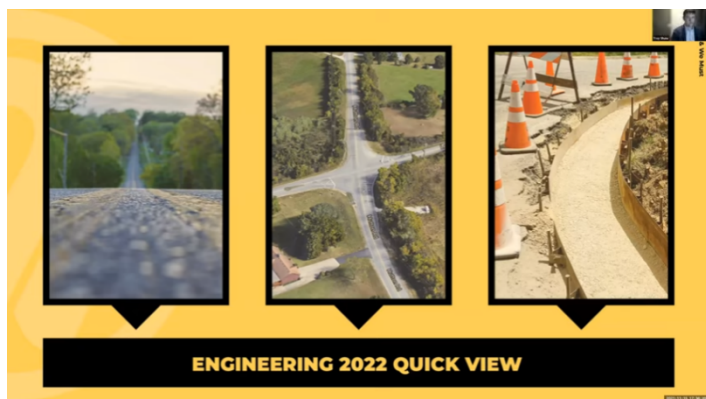
are starting to see a spike. We'll keep you guys informed as these projects are moving if we were to need to come back to get your guys' input, but otherwise, these are just a couple of examples of a couple of projects for 2022 that we're trying to get off the ground and get them going.

Commissioner Kane said, well, I'm not sure what to say here. It took five years to build that fire station out here. I was lied to multiple times, so I hope—and John you did a good job when you picked up the ball on this and I really appreciate it—I hope like hell it doesn't take five years to build another fire station. I know there's supply problems right now, but it didn't take five years, they made sure it took five years and I want to make sure the next one's built in a timely manner.

Mr. Kelly said, I agree, Commissioner, and I think our team that we have formed together that we will ensure that this project moves in the quickest fashion to ensure the durability of the facility and, like I said, if we do run into supply chain issues that would cause the project to be slowed for any reason, we'll make sure you guys are informed of that. You're right, there's several different options that we can look at to keep it going, but at the same time, we want to make sure that we build a fire station for a 50-year type facility. I agree, we don't want to see five years to get this fire station out of the ground.

Commissioner Kane said, and there's still bugs to be worked on in the new one. **Mr. Kelly** said, yes. Any other questions?

Commissioner Bynum said, I don't see any other, if you want to keep moving.

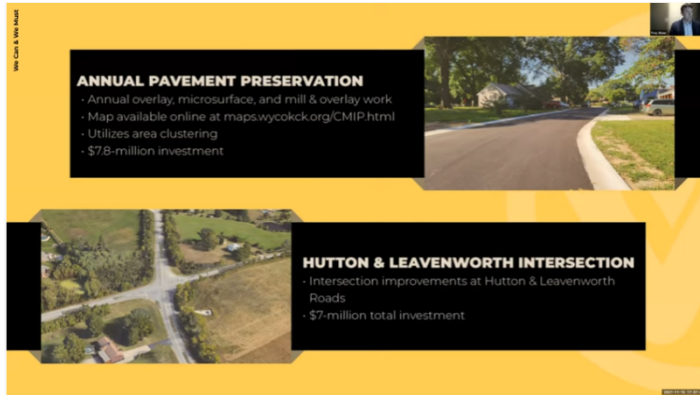


Troy Shaw, County Engineer, said, I'll go over some projects real quick. I think most of us have seen these before, but I want to point out some of these you'll probably start seeing in construction next year.



Start with 7th and Central. That's a project with KDOT as 7th Street's state highway. We're going to do geometric improvements and some access control to improve safety and a functional intersection. Anticipated start of construction is spring of next year. We've actually bid this one early, we had KDOT do a special bid process for us on this one where we were able to order the parts early. So, we've ordered signal equipment, we still haven't got it in yet. We're hoping to get it by spring of next year. To go back to what John was saying, we've done some extra work to get around that, hopefully.

Next one is Hutton and Donahoo intersection. This should be a pretty simple one, it's under design right now. It's another signal project, so plan on bidding that project this winter, getting equipment ordered, and hopefully get that project started. We know there's been backups with the school on Hutton Road, so we've been working with them a little bit, too, to hopefully improve that and I think this project will help with that a little bit.



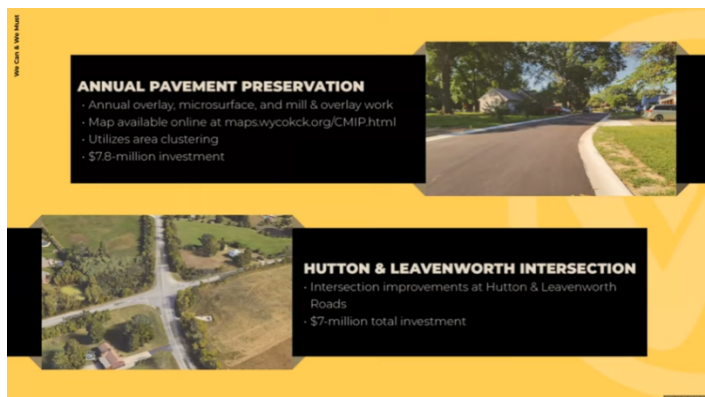
Also, just note like we always do, our annual pavement preservation, a huge focus on that and a priority rating system for that, what we've been working on with the different techniques. Overlay, microsurface, you'll see some of those. UBAs going out for bid this winter and we will be bidding our 2022 mill and overlay this winter, as well, so we'll be ready to get that one started as soon as spring rolls around this year. So, we should be working spring through the summer to get that knocked out.

Then, Hutton and Leavenworth Road intersection. That's a big safety project where we'll be completely rebuilding the intersection of Hutton and Leavenworth, as well as Leavenworth Road from Hutton down to just to the west of 435. There will be quite a bit of work there, you'll probably see utilities start out there. We'll be doing utilities right away in '22, then the UG's portion of construction will start in '23. So, that will be a big one.



The safe routes to school. We're doing a little over two miles of sidewalk in this area, so it's a pretty big project. We bid this one, this is also an assisted KDOT project. We bid this one in the spring of this year, so planning on construction starting right around the end of May after school's

out. Hopefully that works out that way and we're timing it right. So, I think that's all I have, unless you have any questions.



Commissioner Bynum asked, could we go back one slide? Under annual payment preservation, if I'm understanding you, what the Commission has allocated in our budget for the entire pavement preservation budget is \$7.8M. Is that a correct statement?

Mr. Shaw said, yeah, pretty close. I couldn't give you the exact number, it's a combination of a few different pots of money put together, but yes that's pretty close.

Commissioner Bynum said, then, if you compare it to Hutton and Leavenworth Road, which on its own is a \$7M project, the reason I point those two things out is just to highlight the cost, frankly. Infrastructure is expensive.

Mr. Shaw said, sorry to interrupt, but I was going to say that's a very good point. What you guys have done, in which we appreciate, to make it so we can spend more money on preservation is the budget for Hutton and Leavenworth, we spread it out over three different budget years because it's going to be a big project. So, that's really helped us to get a little bit more for pavement preservation each year as well, so we do appreciate that.

Commissioner Bynum said, and then, just a quick question on the Hutton and Leavenworth Road. When you say that we're going to have reconstruction of Leavenworth all the way east to 435, does that include sidewalks in that area?

Mr. Shaw said, I haven't got the design yet, but yes. If we're going to rebuild the road, we will put sidewalks in and I believe—don't hold me to this—I believe this is part of our Trail Master Plan as well. So, one side will probably have a ten-foot trail as well.

Commissioner Bynum said, well, and I don't mean to belabor this, I appreciate the information. I guess one thing I would toss out here for us and the public, frankly, is sometimes it seems like we're building sidewalks to nowhere. But, in fact, the more we can lay down sidewalk while we're improving a road, it's there for the next time we come along that area to match some sidewalk up to it. Would that be a fair statement?

Mr. Shaw said, yeah, that's 100% correct. It's much cheaper for us to build the sidewalk while we're in there doing the work on the road than it would be to come back later. I know it does, like you said, it looks a little odd when there's just sidewalk going to nowhere, but it is built with the intent to connect to it in the future.

Commissioner Kane said, I hate to ask the question. You guys are still planning on putting a roundabout there, right?

Mr. Shaw said, that is currently the plan. Like I said, it's under design right now and we've started reaching out to the Fire Department to work with them and make sure whatever we do functions for them with the new fire station just to the south there.

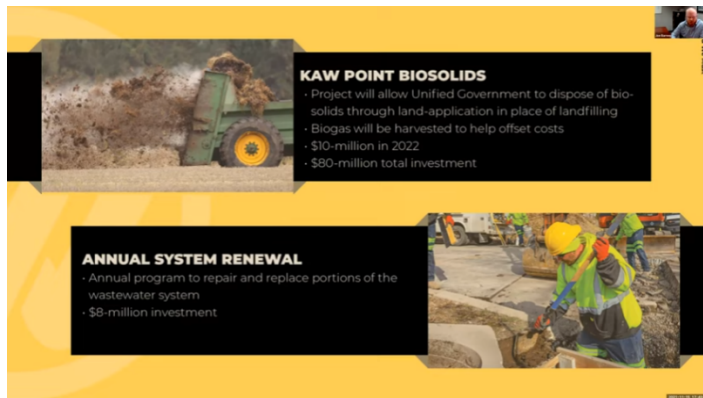
Commissioner Kane said, just so you'll know, I still oppose a roundabout and so does the community.

Mr. Shaw said, I'm aware. I appreciate it and I will be glad to meet with you to discuss. I know we've talked about it before and shared the safety benefits of the roundabout with you, but I know there are those out there that feel completely different. So, I do appreciate that.

Commissioner Kane said, I worked in safety for 21 years. I still disagree with you.

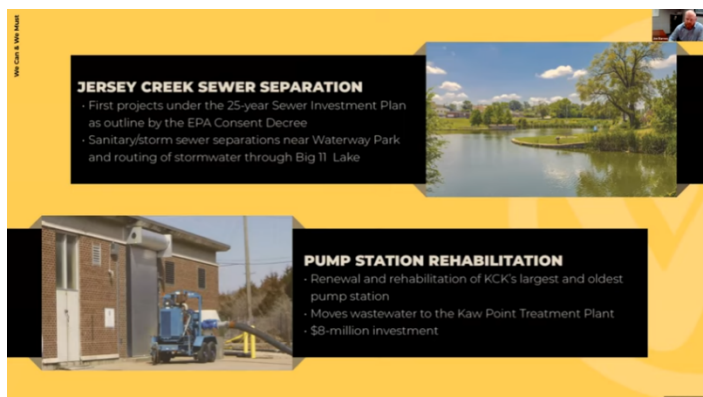


Joe Barnes, Water Pollution Control Project Manager, said, I'm going to go over a few of our projects. This slide is just highlighting some of our field staff and our existing facilities at Kaw Point, at the far right. In the middle is one of our cleaning crews out in the field and then a television crew out doing inspections on our collection system on the right.



A couple of our major project programs. The first one is the Kaw Point Biosolids. It's one of our largest capital projects, it's going to put us in a position to control our own destiny and collaborate with the region on taking in high strength organic waste and FOG (Fats, Oil, and Grease). We won't be reliant on Deffenbaugh or a waste receiving station anymore, we can land apply biosolids. Also, part of that project would be to create biogas and potentially have a revenue stream after the project is completed.

Our next program is our annual system renewal, and this has been supported by our rate studies and included in the five-year CMIP. This renewal program will allow us to prioritize rehab projects at our plants, at our pump station, and then the sanitary sewer collection system based on our asset management program.

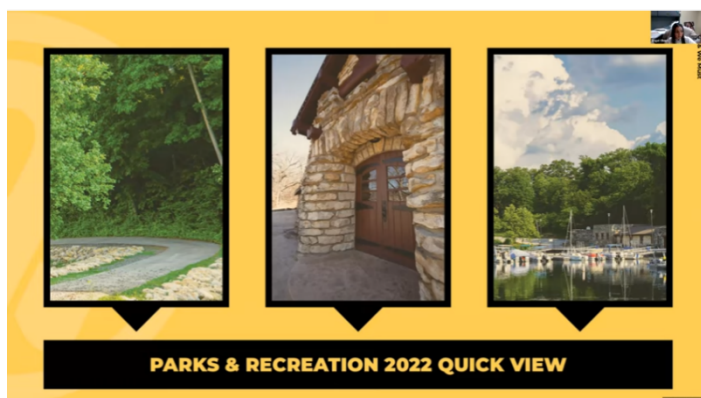


The next project is part of our consent decree. It was the first priority project and it's in the Jersey Creek area. Sewer separations, it will separate the stormwater from the sanitary sewer, it'll reduce volumes of overflows in the system, and it's located right outside of the Big 11 Lake service area.

Our last project that we're going to highlight is our AID pump station. Earlier tonight on this agenda, we got the resolution of survey for that. Again, it's one of our largest pump stations. It had some recent failures, it's a huge capital cost to rehabilitate this sanitary sewer pump station and it sends most of the flow to Kaw Point Wastewater Treatment Plant. With that, I'm open for questions.

Commissioner Bynum asked, are there questions on this one? I know we took action on the Big 11 item last month. I guess there's no other comments or questions for you, sir. Thank you.

Mr. Fisher said, I think I failed to mention that Angel Obert, our Parks and Rec Director, is also here with us tonight.



Angel Obert, Director of Parks & Recreation, said, I'm here to give a brief overview on some of our projects that we're highlighting for 2022, as well.



I want to reiterate a little bit of what Mr. Kelly was saying. We, too, are beginning to experience and anticipate to continue to experience some challenge with production and supply chain issues as we move forward toward these projects for 2022.

The first one we'll highlight is ongoing investment and improvements to Davis Hall. In 2022, we'll be adding a fire suppression system; we want to continue to protect and prevent any damages to this historic hall in our inventory. This year in 2021, we are installing a fire suppression system in the kitchen area, which we are also upgrading to a commercial-grade kitchen. Being able to add a fire suppression in 2022 for the whole building will be a lot better service to the community and also protect it and prevent it from hopefully any issues in the future.

Another ongoing project and investment from CDBG dollars is NRSA improvements that we've had over the past several years to the Clifton and City Park area. In 2022, we will be adding a spray park and playground to the Clifton Park area and also doing some onsite improvements with parking. If any of you are familiar with the spray park and playground combo at Eisenhower, we anticipate this design to be very similar to that concept, which has always been well-liked by the community. As far as the spray park and playground component has always been a nice feature, as well.

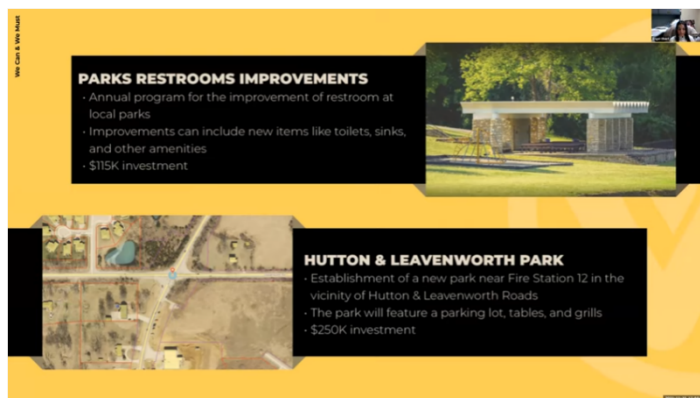
Also with those dollars, doing some improvements to City Park North. Those improvements will include repairing the road and also some parking improvements, as well as updating the shelter and also making improvements to the playground. So, this investment too is \$650,000.

Commissioner Philbrook said, I just wanted to ask you a quick question, Angel. So, the new park, spray park that you're going to put in, it's going to be pretty much as the Eisenhower one is which allows for the nice park benches and table and also the sun shading, as well?

Ms. Obert said, yes. We are looking, as budget allows, to mimic the same design concept, so exactly what you're speaking of, that spray park with the playground that kind of flow into one with the nice seating area in between.

Commissioner Philbrook said, well, I've gotten a lot of positive feedback about that park, of course, but also the fact that sun shading makes a big difference for somebody coming back with their kiddos.

Ms. Obert said, I'll make note of that too, and make sure we can consider that and add it in to the design, as well. The sunshades are extremely popular and they're putting out a lot more grant and also awareness around protection for kids when they're playing in the summer in the heat. So, thank you.



Ms. Obert said, another project we'll highlight is our annual program for the improvement of restrooms. As you guys are aware, in 2018, this program was added into our budget from the 2017 Master Plan findings that identified that park restrooms ranked high on the priority list for the community and also our department. That has been an annual program for us that we've been doing throughout all of our parks.

I do want to note that since 2018, we've actually repaired or touched or replaced 13 restrooms. Eight of those have been made possible through outside funding such as CARES Act. This is a \$115,000 investment that we will continue in 2022 to implement.

Lastly, I want to highlight the establishment of a new park near Fire Station 12. This vicinity is in Hutton Park and Leavenworth Road area. So, in early '22, we anticipate to begin the design phase of this park project. We also anticipate the park will initially feature a parking lot area, along with some tables and grills. This is a \$250,00 investment.

Commissioner Kane said, Angel, do you think you'll have that park done this spring?

Ms. Obert said, I would not say that we'd have it done this spring, as we're going to begin the design phase in early 2022.

Commissioner Philbrook said, quick question. As I know and a lot of other people know, all those lovely new bathrooms, some of them were destroyed. Are we going to be doing anything about cameras or anything like that to try to help prevent our property being destroyed, Angel? Do you know?

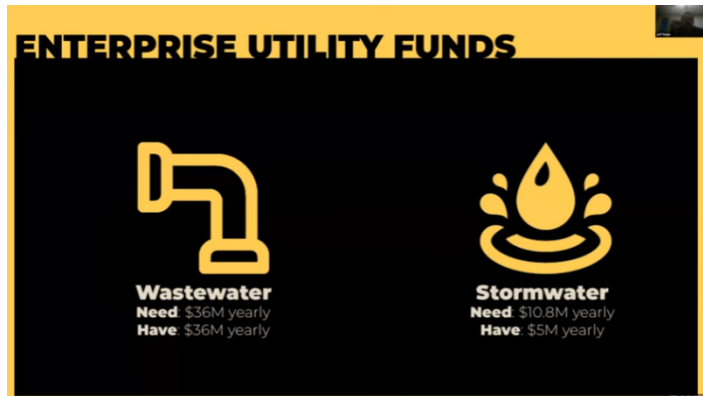
Ms. Obert said, that's a great question. I appreciate all the awareness and support that our commissioners have been helping us do around this issue. It's been very challenging, but we have been exploring some possible new options. It's kind of along the lines of cameras, it's a new product that we're kind of exploring right now but we're also working really closely with the Sheriff's Department to see what we can do to kind of get some more awareness and some more eyes on these high-hit areas and these restrooms that are being hit frequently. That is high on our priority list in exploring some options and some solutions that can help us with that.

Commissioner Philbrook said, it's so sad that people pay their taxes, and we build stuff for them, and then folks come in and tear things up. That's pretty disgusting.



Mr. Fisher said, thank you for pointing out earlier, Commissioner Bynum, how much infrastructure costs, and it's increasing unfortunately here recently with inflation, like John Kelly was pointing out earlier. I think Joe Barnes might have mentioned it too. Cost of construction is a problem right now, we were taking measures in a number of different ways to minimize that impact, which could mean on some projects being delayed. I'm not speaking to the fire station, I

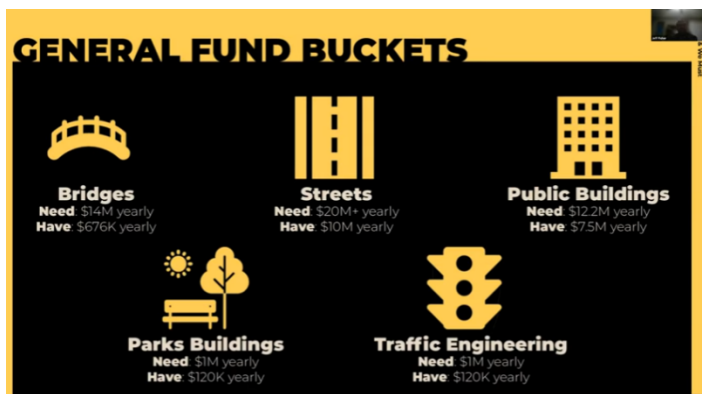
don't believe that's going to be delayed, but we do have other projects where we're timing them the best we can so that we hit the market at the right time.



As we've been working in our subcommittees, which has been a lot of excellent discussion about outcomes and strategies, that we'll be recording on the status of our infrastructure subcommittees this Thursday. There's been a lot of good work, a lot of discussions. We are defining outcomes and strategies to help the organization and the community turn the corner. It's going to take a big commitment, we're going to have to adjust values and that commitment's going to have to hold for 10, 20 years to turn the corner.

Wastewater, the Wastewater Enterprise Fund. It brings in the money it needs to do the work, I guarantee you. Some staff has been saying there needs to be more money, but I think we're managing that very well and we do have things come up like AID and we have to reprioritize, but we're committed to the rate schedule that we've presented in the past and done everything we can to make best use of those dollars.

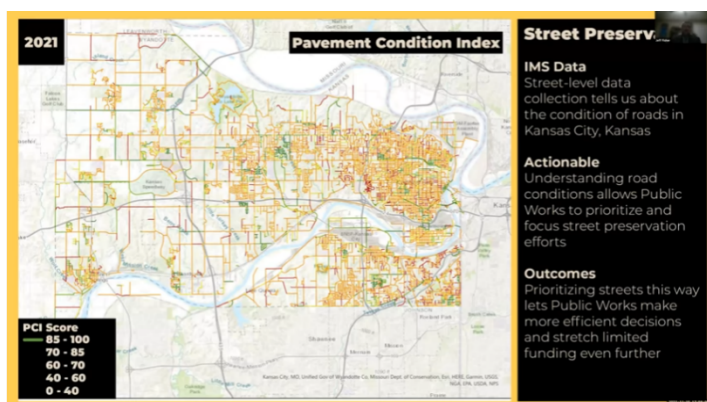
The stormwater fund, as we all know, is a different problem. We have taken a good step in the right direction here recently and we'll be discussing stormwater again this week. We hope that we can take the next step going forward and make that fund bring in enough of the revenues it needs to do the work and the system out there.



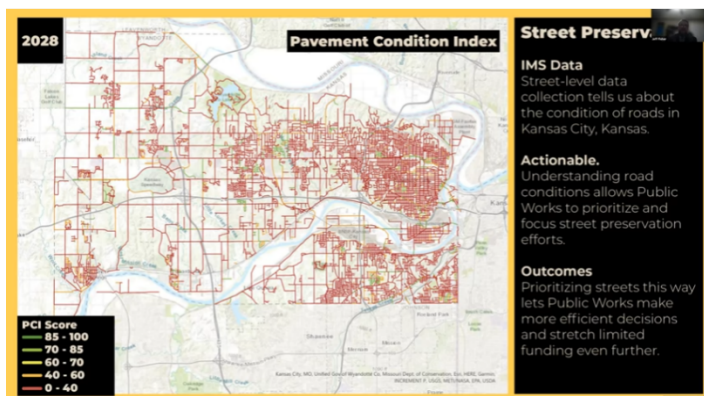
Same for bridges and streets. As I just spoke to for stormwater, there just isn't enough money being spent each year to keep that infrastructure from failing more frequently. \$14M a year for bridges, that's a big challenge and \$20M a year for streets, also a big challenge. As we've discussed several times in the past and in our infrastructure subcommittees, if we don't start ramping that up pretty quickly, we're going to start to see lots of implications from that and the maintenance is just going to get more expensive. So, we either invest it up front, or we spend more maintaining it. Either way, we're going to have to spend a lot of money there. So, resetting values and prioritizing investments is probably where we're going to make that happen.

Public facilities. We've talked about, it's likely we just have too many facilities. We have a lot of parks; we have a lot of rec centers. We just have a lot of those things, and that subcommittee is discussing how we might be able to reduce that obligation over time and be smarter with those facilities and those parks so that we can be great in those areas with less to maintain.

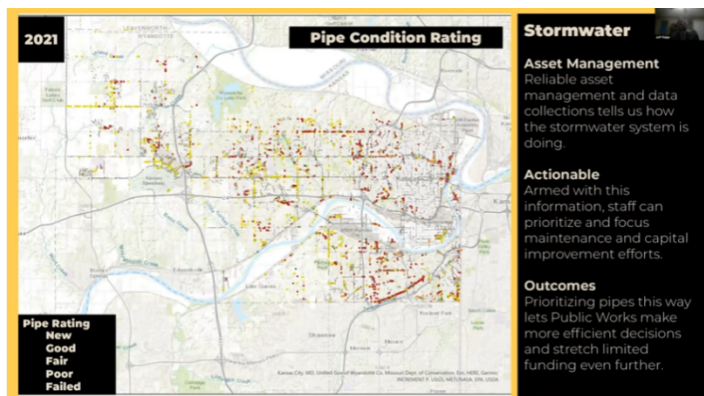
Then, traffic engineering. It's the same story. We're spending \$120,000, we need to spend a little over \$1M a year. I think we spend \$50,000 a year on signs and striping and that just isn't a lot of money. We're not keeping up with expectations there.



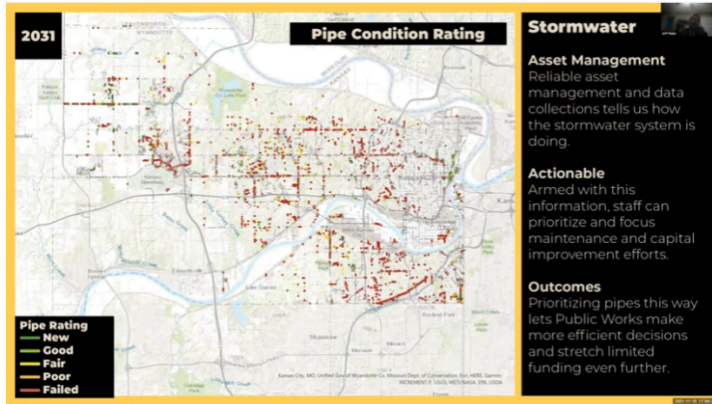
So, we've seen this. We've discussed this several times and it's worth reiterating. Our Pavement Condition Index, our PCI, we're averaging somewhere between 52 and 56. We're getting ready to update the street condition data and at \$7M a year, it's just not keeping up. It's not going to keep up.



If we can't spend 20-plus million a year, in the very near future, we're going to see a lot of red, which this is projecting. None of us want to see streets in that condition, so systemically; there's just going to be more potholes and, like I said earlier, it's going to be more to maintain, and the folks won't be happy.



Stormwater. We know that streets and stormwater are very closely linked and without a good stormwater system, it's impossible to have a good street system in a large portion of our community.



So, same story. If we can't invest more each year with the new rate structure, our system will look like this. It will be predominantly red. It'll be failing more frequently and more frequently, and we will not be able to keep up. I always hate to be the bearer of this kind of news, but I think we're doing an excellent job, more recently, of looking at the brutal facts of the matter and really making some tough decisions. I'm really excited about these subcommittees, and we should have some final reports, I would say, in the first quarter of next year. We'll entertain any questions you have.

Commissioner Bynum said, thank you very much. Thank your staff, too. They've really gone out of their way to make themselves available for these infrastructure subcommittees we've all been working on and there's plenty of work for each of you to do in your daily jobs. So, I think I speak for everybody when we truly mean it when we say thank you for the extra time. I agree with you, Jeff, I think it will pay dividends. Especially as we move forward with decision making. What other comments or questions for our Public Works folks tonight?

Action: For information only.

Item No. 5 – 211165...PRESENTATION: MOWING UPDATE

Synopsis: Presentation on Parks & Recreation end-of-year update on mowing services for county-owned land, submitted by Angel Obert, Director of Parks & Recreation; Jack Webb, Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation; and Stephanie Bell, Program Coordinator for Parks Dept. For information only.

Angel Obert, Director of Parks & Recreation, said, I'm going to go ahead and let Assistant County Administrator Emerick Cross do an introduction of the presentation, and we'll go from there.

Emerick Cross, Assistant County Administrator, said, tonight's presentation is going to be a recap of our 2021 Mowing Season and changes to our mowing program that are being implemented now, and some discussion changes that will be implemented in next year, 2022. I want you to know that Parks and Rec has been working closely with Jeff Fisher and Public Works on these mowing and weeding changes since both departments are currently involved in the mowing process, as well.

With that being said, I would like to introduce Stephanie Bell. She's our new Program Coordinator in Parks and Rec. She's been doing an excellent job for us, and she will be presenting on this mowing topic tonight.



Stephanie Bell, Parks & Recreation Program Coordinator, said, like Assistant County Administrator Cross mentioned, there's a team of us here this evening. Myself, Jack Webb, our Deputy Director of Parks, and Angel, our Director of Parks will be assisting me as well.

I'd like to start before the presentation by taking this opportunity to thank the Commission for your time this evening and simply just wanted to reiterate tonight emphatically that we know how important the overall look and feel of the county is to our neighbors and the elected body. We understand that mowing specifically is a big topic of conversation and particularly important to folks who live next to city and county-owned land.



Our Why

- Reduce blight
- Be a good neighbor
- Make our community beautiful
- Improve sense of care and safety

What do we want our community to look like?

Mowing Update 2021 - Parks

With that said, we want to start this evening by reiterating the why behind the work that we do and start by saying that we share the Commission's goals when it comes to beautification of our city and county. The way we see mowing operations on our team is that we are here to reduce blight, be a good neighbor, make our communities more beautiful, and also improve the sense of care and safety felt by our fellow residents.

As you hear our update this evening, we want you to know that the driving question behind our work is what do we want our community to look like? These conversations inform the way that we're trying to innovate and serve the public. Let's get started.

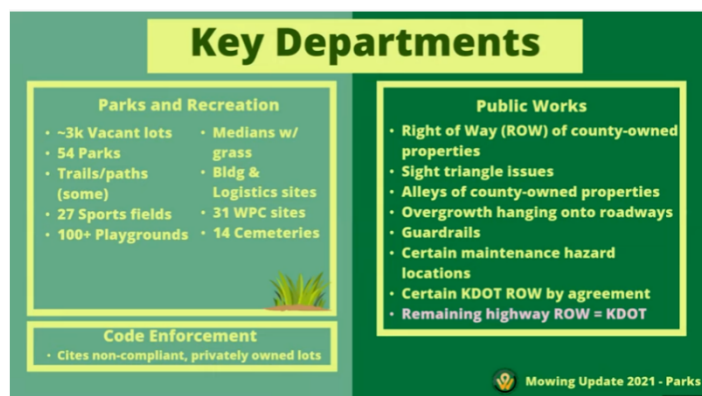


Tonight we'll cover:

- Key mowing teams
- Customer service process
- 2021 vacant lot mowing stats
- 2021 service challenges
- Future plans

Mowing Update 2021 - Parks

This evening, we're going to give you a mowing-at-a-glance presentation, sort of a snapshot of where we're at right now today as a service. We'll be providing a refresher on what departments mow what areas, how we are handling calls for service, the end-of-season mowing stats for vacant lots. We're going to describe a few challenges that we've faced as a department this season and let you in on what we're working on for the future. Like we said previously, we understand that this program is important to many residents and the elected body, so we appreciate this opportunity to update you on our efforts.



First, we'd like to start by essentially restating who mows what. We provide this information because we want to make sure that questions are directed to the department who can provide the best information, specifically about things like status updates, timelines, etcetera.

So, here you'll see that the primary mowing teams are the Parks and Rec Department, Public Works, and also the Kansas Department of Transportation, or KDOT. We've included the Code Enforcement team on this slide because as you know, they're tasked with citing private properties who are not mowing or taking care of their land.

Starting on the left-hand side, we've got our Parks and Rec Department, and we handle the mowing and care of approximately 3,000 vacant lots. I also wanted to quickly note that we use the term Land Bank lot and vacant lot somewhat interchangeably, so know that we're referring to those properties owned by the Land Bank. We also take care of 54 parks, some of the trails and paths within our counties, 27 sports fields, over 100 playgrounds. We have medians with grass, Building and Logistics sites, 31 Water Pollution Control sites or WPCs, and 14 cemeteries as well.

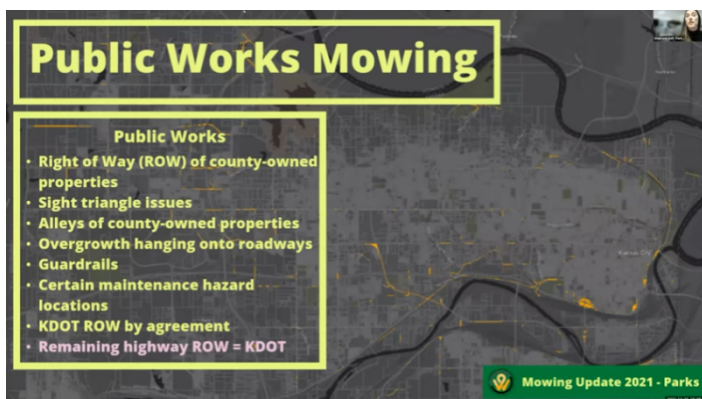
Our teammate, Public Works, they take care of the right-of-way of county-owned properties, site triangle issue areas, alleys of these county-owned properties, overgrowth hanging onto the roadways, guardrail areas, and certain maintenance hazard locations. They also care for certain right-of-way areas in agreement with KDOT, and the remainder of the highway right-of-way areas are mowed by KDOT themselves. We understand that residents have had a lot of feedback regarding the highway mowing this year, so we'll be providing KDOT's public information line at the end of the presentation. I'll just pause for a second in case there's any questions about who mows what.



Here's some additional photos for the Commission, clarifying our areas. On the left, you'll see a common Land Bank lot that's mowed by the Parks Department and on the right, we have Public Works taking care of a right-of-way area.



This is an additional map outlining the Public Works areas, specifically the right-of-way.

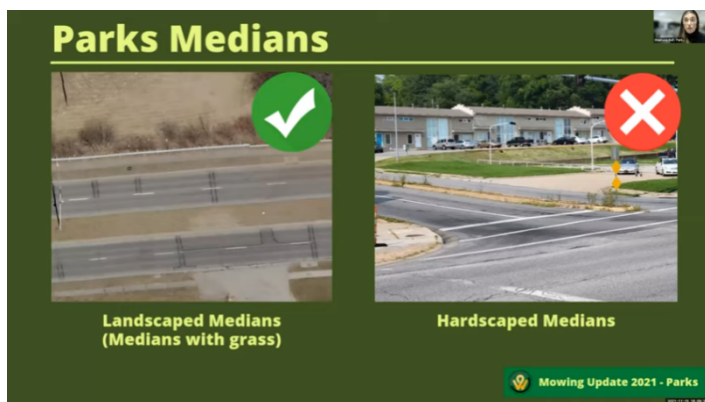


Here's a second glance at that list of areas. We're showing you this slide just to simply demonstrate the variety of land mowed in our county and also the massive scope. These right-of-

ways span from the east of our county all the way to the west. Simply, we wish to point out that this is a big job.

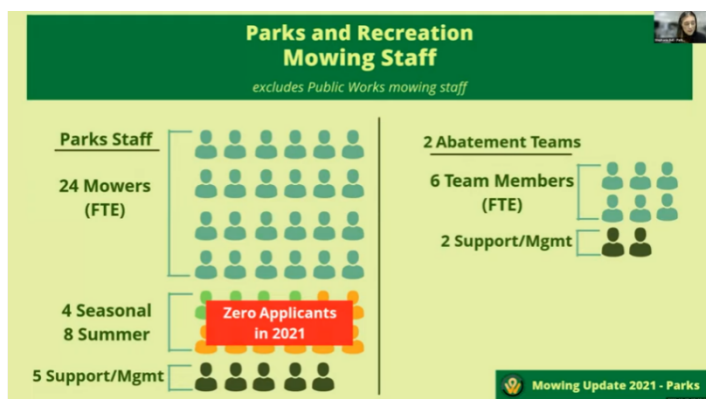


So, on this next slide here, we wanted to provide you with a sample map for the Land Bank lot mowing that we would give to one of our contractors or our in-house crew working for the UG. This is an example of the Jersey Creek Park area, and these yellow parcel squares that you see on the map, these are vacant lots that we mow. Our teams rotate about 55 of these maps. Some of the maps are going to have 20 yellow parcels on them, and some of the maps are going to have as many as 300 yellow parcels on them. This is in addition to our duties related to parks, trails, and fields, what have you. Again, our message here is just to say that this mowing service is big and that we cover a lot of ground, no pun intended.



A quick note about medians. We wanted to clarify which medians are cared for by the Parks Department. On the left, you're going to see a landscaped median, or we might refer to them as medians with grass. These are ones within our purview currently.

On the right-hand side is a hardscaped median, and these are not currently under our purview, but we are in talks about what it would take to absorb this responsibility and to our program and incorporate it into our routine weed spraying that we do. So, this would mean that we would hit these medians with weed killer several times throughout a season to prevent weeds growing through the cracks.



Here we'd like to give our elected body a sense of what our staffing looks like to support our mowing efforts, and I'll pause here just to give you a moment to look at this.

Currently as it stands, we have two separate mowing tracks. On the left you'll see the Parks staff, and these are the individuals who care for parks, fields, about a third of our vacant lots, trails, etcetera. On the right, we have our two abatement teams, and these are the staff responsible for stepping in once Codes has completed the citation process for privately-owned properties. They mow, they address trash, and other blight.

We also just wanted to quickly thank you for your help in expanding this team, which has allowed us to take care of more calls and provide faster service.



Next, we'd like to provide insight into how mowing questions or complaints are handled once they're received by the Parks Department. So, when we receive a complaint about a tall lot, the very first thing is we verify who owns it. So, if it's us, if it's the UG, we'll send a supervisor out to verify its condition and make sure that we have a plan to resolve the issue. We know that the Commission receives a lot of calls about mowing, you know, residents see something that's not being cared for, they're fired up, and for our staff it's really important that we start by confirming that it's actually our land to care for.

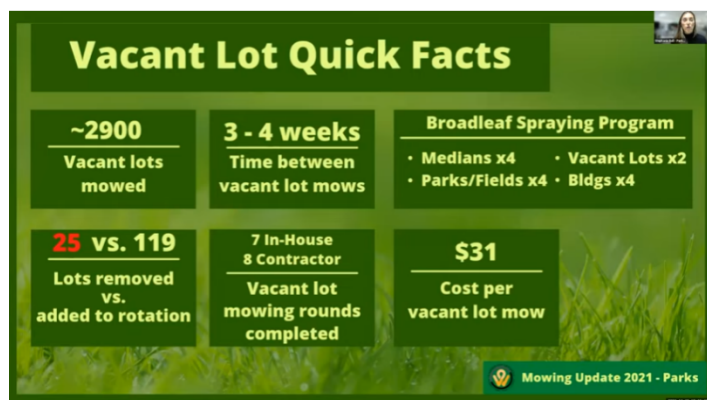
If we discover that the lot is privately owned, we're going to refer it to Codes and allow them the opportunity to go through the citation process. If the owner for some reason is unresponsive, it will ultimately come back to us, and we will send out the abatement team to fix the issue and then the property owner receives a bill for our time. We just want to note here that sometimes you might hear from a constituent that there's been no progress on a given area that they've complained about, when in reality it's possible that we're just allowing Codes the opportunity to go through their process before we can deploy our teams.

Commissioner Philbrook said, I really love this layout of what you've done. It really does help, even us commissioners, to get a more succinct picture of what's going on. So, for example, there was an issue on Parallel and this particular property—you really couldn't see the property because it's all wooded and all this kind of stuff. Next to it is a sidewalk which is then grown over by grass, so people can't walk the sidewalk. So, we did end up going ahead—we meaning the UG—ended up going ahead and mowing along that right of way for that sidewalk. But does that mean then that what happens is we code the people that own it, and then they don't respond—so in this case—are we at the point now where we slap a bill on those people who are not responding for taking care of the front property or the sidewalk property?

Ms. Bell said, so, to answer your question, if we verify that an area is a privately-owned piece of land—piece of land, home, what have you, it's owned by an individual, they're responsible for caring for their right of way. So if Codes has deemed that they are unresponsive, they receive notice in the mail, or however Codes has deemed notice should be filed, once their timeline is up, they will tag us in and say we've done all we can, they've not been compliant. Please send out your team. So, we do bill for our time in that instance, and it's mailed to the property owner.

Commissioner Philbrook said, so, sometime when you come back to the Commission, can you give them an idea of what that timeline really looks like in reality from beginning to end? In other words, somebody calls in and complains, you find out it belongs to somebody else. How long, you know, before actually Codes could get back to you, so you can take action? Because by then, you have people trying to walk their dogs or themselves through the grass hanging over and people are not happy about that. So, that's one of the major complaints we've had since we changed how we were handling our right-of-ways a few years back. I will admit that I was part of that mistake, but hey, I just want us not to forget. I want us to remember that we can appeal—consider dealing with that in a timely manner.

Ms. Bell said, absolutely. I'll make note of that comment and provide you with some clearer timelines during our next visit.



Ms. Bell said, next we'd like to kind of give you our mowing-at-a-glance stats for 2021 and I'm starting in the top left-hand corner, here. As it stands, our team is caring for approximately 2,900 vacant Land Bank lots, which is up slightly from 2020. We're up by about 100. Our average turnaround time between mowing rotations, specifically for the vacant lots, was between three and four weeks and sometimes longer due to rain. I do want to just take a moment to note that some of these other parts of town—parks, City Hall—we want to note that these areas have a faster turnaround time in terms of mowing. So, this is just the average for vacant lots.

It costs us approximately \$31 per mowing per lot to perform mowing for the vacant lots, and we have two teams that do this. We have an in-house crew that's employed by the UG and our contractors who handle about two thirds of the vacant lots. They completed seven, and actually, I'm sorry. The contractor line should say nine, nine rounds respectively. We are performing more

mowing rotations than we did last year, which is great news. Our contractor is more experienced in their sophomore year.

Our in-house crew is a three-member team who oftentimes had to be rerouted this year to assist with other parks duties, mowing, caring of our fields, and whatnot; so, they were behind just slightly. We also want to note that our crew can sometimes get pulled off to support the staff when folks are sick, maybe they're out on leave, on vacation, and what have you. So, that will explain the discrepancy there.

Our Land Bank lot list is growing. So, in 2021, 25 properties were removed from our care list thanks to Land Bank development, but roughly 120 were added because of the tax sale. So, we're just wanting to note here that adds are outpacing the deletes when it comes to these Land Bank lots.

Lastly, our Broadleaf Spraying Program was executed this year with high visibility locations receiving four chemical sprays, and vacant lots receiving two sprays. With the spraying program, we achieved what it was we set out to do, but we understand that there's room to grow this program. In 2022, we are looking to add those hardscaped medians, hitting those hopefully six times annually. We're also looking to include preemergent in our upcoming bid so that weed preventative is mixed in with that first round of spraying.



Moving on to challenges. This year there were a few of them, namely trash, staffing issues, weather delays, and frankly, the sheer volume of lots in our care. We'll start with trash, so trash is a big concern for our residents, and we know it's a big concern for the Commission. Speaking candidly with you, it's been really bad this year. We see it, you see it. It's definitely been an issue for our teams because it slows them down.

We actually held a contractor feedback meeting recently just to sort of touch base and see how things went for them this year, and trash was discussed at length, to be honest. One of our future discussion points is going to be something like how do we structure our budget and our contract to get the extra manpower needed to stay on top of this additional trash that we are experiencing in the community? We currently have trash pickup in our contract, it's included, but the feedback we're getting from our teams is that we need more money and more manpower to encounter and handle the prolific trash that they're seeing out in the field.

So, ultimately, we want to make sure that we're hearing our vendors and being good partners to them, so we are exploring a variety of avenues to fix this problem and help remove any barriers to them getting their job done well. So, just know that we are hearing the message about trash loud and clear and actively working on solutions for that problem.

In terms of staffing, like we mentioned before, we had zero applications for our summer and seasonal mowing positions. We know it's not hard for you to imagine, because you're hearing about the same hiring issues in other departments and frankly, these are similar problems that we're seeing throughout our country. These open positions are the same people who are providing that critical support role, things like weed whacking and picking up trash, and not having these filled has likely impacted our community's perception of the service. So, we really want to get these positions filled for 2022 as much as the residents do.

Weather delays were also an issue at certain times in the season. You'll recall that in the month of May, we had 11 days of rain. So, first, this is a safety concern before anything else for our staff and safety is our number one priority when deciding how to execute these mowing rounds. Wet ground can make it more dangerous to operate our equipment, and especially on that hillside mowing.

Secondly, rain not only delays the mowing of flat areas, but you can imagine that it takes us longer to get to those hilly areas as well because of safety, and also just issues operating the equipment. Parkwood Park, for example, it has that very large slope and if we were to try and mow that when it's really wet, we could cause ruts in the ground and ultimately create new issues for our staff. So, sometimes we might have to split up a mowing job. We might do the flat part on one day, and then we can return at a later date for the hillside areas. Our goal at the end of the day is to get this job done as quickly as possible without compromising safety or the integrity of our grounds.

Lastly, we want to forecast an increase in the volume of vacant lots coming into our care and the funding required to care for them. Just the 120 new lots from 2021 are going to have a budget impact of approximately \$29,000 and before the commission's October tax sale meeting, we were anticipating three more sales just before the 2022 mowing season. So, that would've created a significant increase in work just before April and we understand that these sales are postponed. We just want to speak candidly about the possibility of having a sizable amount of lots added as the tax sales continue on in the future.



Lastly, we want to just hint at some future plans and considerations for the service, and we want to reiterate that this question that's driving our efforts is what do we want our community to look like? Some of the other questions we're also asking ourselves are how do we increase efficiency within our department? How do we improve the quality of the mowing services? Most importantly, how do we show the public that we care about their neighborhoods through these efforts? These are the questions that help drive our planning for the following year.

A few items that we're working on. First, we mentioned staffing issues. We are trying to address these vacancies by raising wages for summer and seasonal employees. We're hoping that a two dollar an hour increase will make us more competitive than we've been as an employer in the past.

The second is we're changing the way we are negotiating with our vendors and we're utilizing an RFP process instead of a traditional bid system. We think that this is going to allow us to improve our terms of our contract and our negotiations, and we are working closely with procurement on this process. Additionally, we are looking at unbundling some of our current contracts and making the scope of work more manageable. We're also hoping that that is going

to open us up to a larger pool of mowing vendors, and like I said, make the work a bit more manageable.

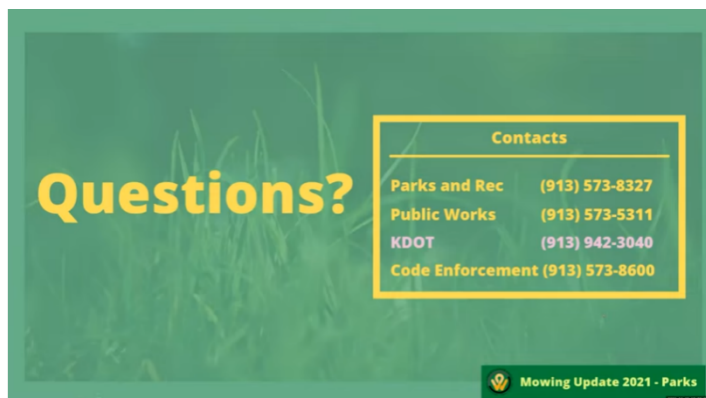
Third, we are working on a new digital tool that will enable us to better assign, track, and report on mowing activities both to the public and the Commission. This is a solution that uses technology that we're already paying for, so that's really promising. We're also looking at some basic, but effective accountability tools. Something as simple as before and after photo requirements for our contractors. We're hoping that that's going to free up our supervisors a little bit and also help us flesh out complaints if we are to receive them.

Lastly, our team is going to be beefing up communication efforts to better inform the public about the areas that we're caring for. This includes things like some strategically timed social media content, website updates, and in short, we just really want to be better communicators and make ourselves more accessible to residents who need to reach out.

The very last thing I'm going to mention, and I'll be passing the baton over to Mr. Cross here, is we are in the beginning stages of exploring what it might look like to put together a mowing division. I'll hand the baton to you, Mr. Cross, and you can provide more insight into that.

Mr. Cross said, commissioners, we are looking at making this whole mowing and weed eating process and the spraying program, we're looking to make it a lot easier for our citizens, so if they have a call in, we're looking at a dedicated one-line call-in number. We can't do that for KDOT, but we can be able to provide them the information and the contact number they get if they have questions or issues with KDOT's responsibilities.

We're also looking at joining employees and possibly creating this mowing division. That's going to be a lot of work and it's going to be a little ways down the road, but it's something we're looking at for just efficiency and convenience. It's like Stephanie said early in the presentation, what do we want our community to look like? And I think we're all on the same page of that and now we have a plan to try to get there.



With that, we will take any questions you may have.

Commissioner Bynum said, excellent presentation. Most appreciated and extremely well done. Are there comments or questions from our committee members for this team? I'm not seeing any hands raised. Did we receive any comments from the public on the item, Madam Clerk? **Allie Facio, UG Clerk's Office**, said, no comments were received.

Commissioner Bynum said, I don't see any attendees raising their hand, either. If that is the case, it was an information only item. It was very much appreciated. It's the last item on our Public Works & Safety agenda, so we will be completed with this meeting. I thank you, Mr. Tom Groneman, as always, for being here with us.

Action: For information only.

Adjourn:

Chairman Bynum adjourned the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

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