

**ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Monday, January 29, 2018**

The meeting of the Administration and Human Services Standing Committee was held on Monday, January 29, 2018, at 5:45 p.m., in the 5th Floor Conference Room of the Municipal Office Building. The following members were present: Commissioner Markley, Chairman; Commissioners Philbrook, Johnson, McKiernan subbing for Kane, and Bynum. Commissioner Kane was absent. The following officials were also in attendance: Gordon Criswell and Melissa Sieben, Assistant County Administrators; Henry Couchman, Senior Attorney; Alan Howze, Chief Knowledge Officer; Chris Cooley, GIS Specialist; Jud Knapp, Analyst; and Doug Bailey, Sergeant-at-Arms.

Chairman Markley called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken and all members were present as shown above.

Chairman Markley said we have one revision to tonight's agenda. A blue sheet was distributed last Thursday adding a new item under the Committee Agenda. Item No. 4 is a presentation on the continued paratransit ridership demands.

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Approval of standing committee minutes for November 13, 2017. **On motion of Commissioner McKiernan, seconded by Commissioner Bynum, the minutes were approved.** Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Agenda:

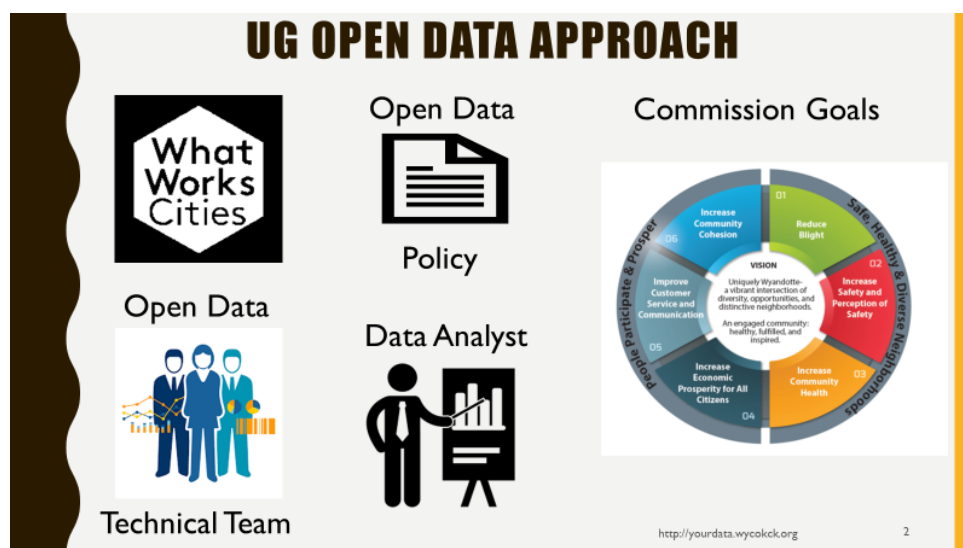
Item No. 1 – 171446... UPDATE: UNIFIED GOVERNMENT'S OPEN DATA REPORTS

Synopsis: Recap of progress on open data initiative 2017 and goals for 2018, submitted by Alan Howze, Chief Knowledge Officer.



Alan Howze, Chief Knowledge Officer, said, Commissioners, we are back here this evening to give you an annual update on the Unified Government's open data initiative. These are—give you a broad update about how the Unified Government is utilizing data as well as the open data portal which is at the bottom of the screen for yourdata.wycokck.org that residents can go to and find out all kinds of data that are publicly available. It's consistent with the UG's push towards transparency as well as towards our operational excellence. You'll see as we go through this, the data is really underpinning a lot of our efforts to improve customer service as well as operations.

Joined with me here is Jud Knapp, our UG Data Analyst, and Chris Cooley, who is the manager of our GeoSpatial Services Team. The two will be giving the presentation with me here tonight.



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We'll start off here with our UG data approach. There is a history here and it builds on the efforts that were early days of SOAR led by Ms. Sieben and others in the Unified Government engaged with What Works Cities on an engagement with the Bloomberg Foundation to help us set up an open data strategy. Out of that, there was a significant amount of work that happened in 2016 and 2017; stood up an open data portal. There is a technical team that meets on a weekly basis to continue to advance on how we put data up and make it available to the public and utilize it for internal operations. You saw some of that at the SOAR presentation last week.

There was an Open Data Policy that was signed into effect in late 2016. Part of that policy also included an annual update to the Commission, part of the reason we're here before you. Then last year, mid-year, we added Jud as a full-time data analyst. First time the Unified Government has had a full-time data analyst role. We're utilizing existing staff, but in a different way to really accelerate our efforts.

We really see the data as foundational and supportive of all of the Commission goals. Again, as we go through here, there's data that underlies our efforts in all of these Commission goal areas.

This has really been a collaborative and cross-departmental effort. We got folks from a lot of different areas that are working on data from our technical team and other parts of the data effort, and really just want to emphasize and appreciate and recognize those folks who are coming together and really helping us move forward on data.

WHAT ARE WE DOING WITH OPEN DATA?

- Make data **available** to everyone
- Use data as **enterprise-wide** resource
- Support the **SOAR** initiative
- Drive **data-driven** decisions
- Give **residents** neighborhood information
- Enhance **transparency**



<http://yourdata.wyockck.org>

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Jud Knapp, Data Analyst, said what are we doing with open data. Well, the first goal is to make data available to everybody in a machine-readable format so they can easily get to it.

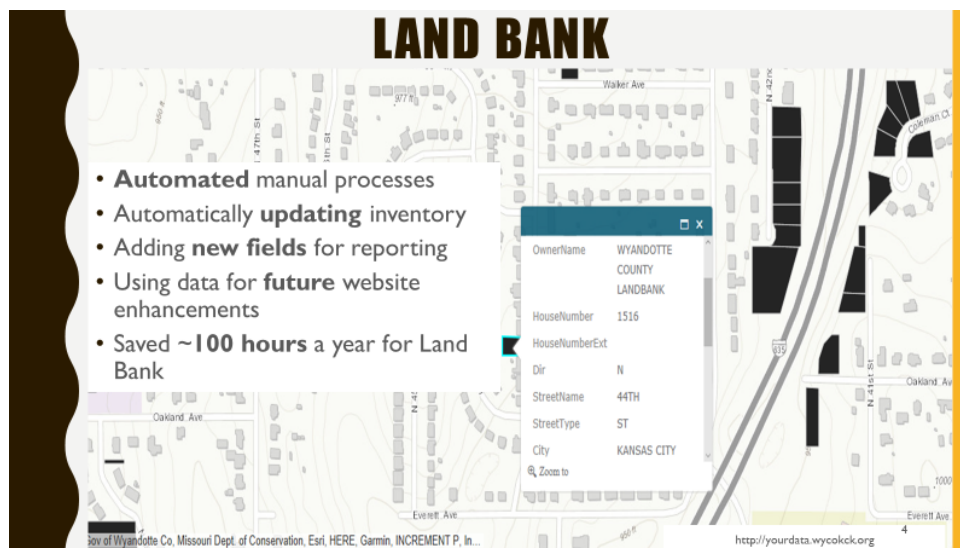
Secondly, use data as an enterprise-wide resource. Before, departments really weren't hoarding the data, but they just couldn't get it out in an easy way. Departments would have to call on other departments to get their data and they would have to run reports and send it back to each other. It wasn't very efficient, but now we have an open data portal where those people can just go get the data without asking the department.

We support the SOAR initiative. There's eight datasets that go into the 10,000 count. We've automated five. We're going to work on the next three this year. Hopefully, I'll get that 10,000 count automated without staff doing anything; it just runs saving staff time so it gives me more time to analyze and people get an updated count constantly.

Drive data-driven decisions. If we have all of the information in front of us, we can make better decisions. This is going to be—I'm going to show you a demo dashboard that we've made that we'll run.

We give residents neighborhood information. I see open data. As you open, you look at your block to see which houses are currently—you can see which houses are unfit and you can see vacant lots. Hopefully, within this next year, we can see which ones are rental and which ones are vacant.

Enhance transparency, that is just enhancing the trust in government.

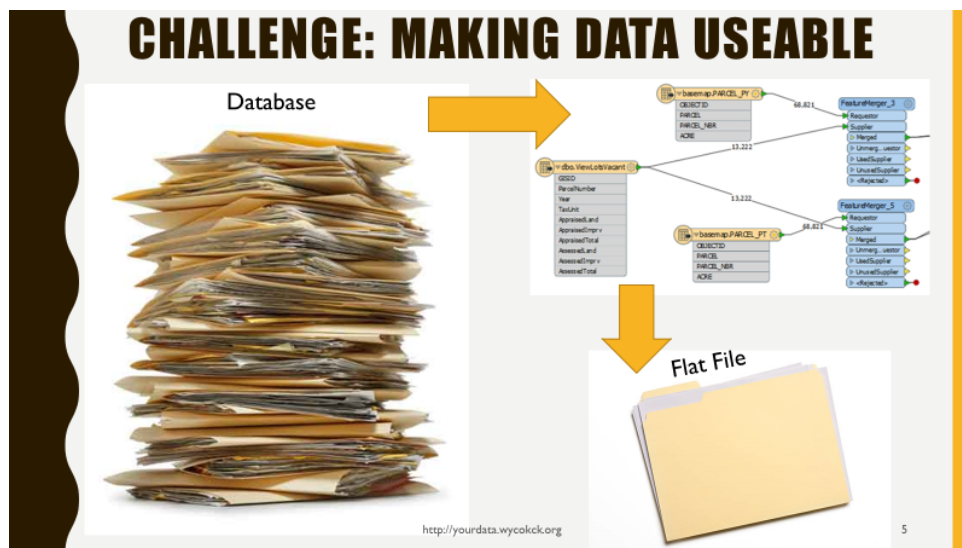


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I want to start with a success story. We were trying to figure out what the first dataset we were going to automate. I knew we had eight that we needed to do for the SOAR 10,000 count. The Land Bank seemed like low-hanging fruit for that. We met with the Land Bank and found out that they were doing manual processes; keeping an inventory outside of CIC. We automated that process saving him time, and we are automatically updating his inventory currently. We're going to add new fields for recording. We haven't done it yet, but we're in the process of it.

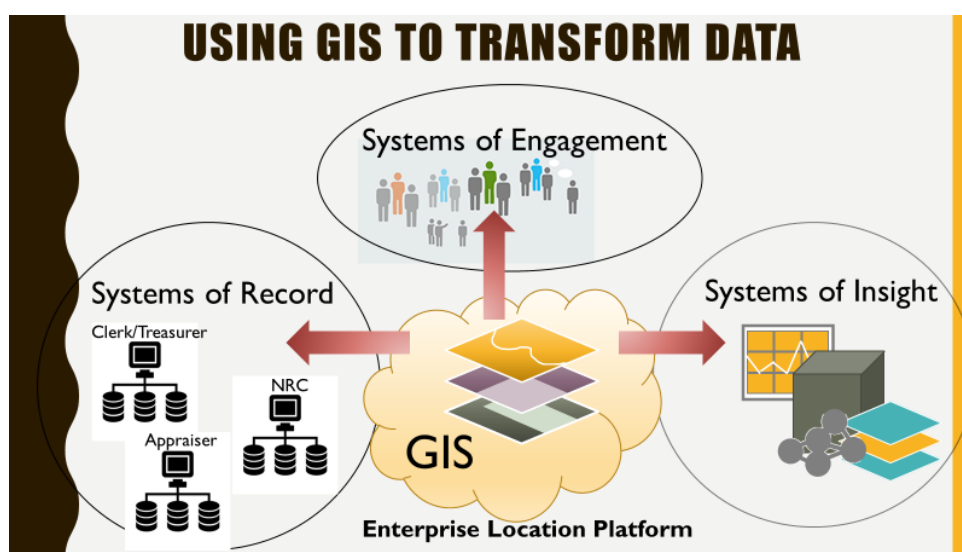
As we were going through it, that means I have these reports that I run. Can we automate these reports? I was like, if we just add two more fields, we could probably do it. We're currently working on that to increase the Land Bank's efficiency.

Using data on their future website. It would be nice to have Land Bank properties available for sale on their website and like a map they could search through and click on and take them to the property. Some fun things I really want to put on there is go back in history and find out Land Bank parcels like that sold say three years ago and see how much like if people have built houses on them, like what they've done with them. Are they tax current? Do they have code violations? Kind of prove that the Land Bank is working, and we could tell our data story through it. All of these enhancements are estimated to save the city about 100 hours per year in the Land Bank. That gives him more time to stop data entry and making reports and actually do Land Bank work.



How do we make this data usable? This is a little visual that we created. The databases are the giant stack of folders there. Each one of those are a table in the database. We transform that data with this tool, the FFMME and we create flat files. We basically summarize that giant stack into a flat file. It kind of gives you the scale of what we're doing and how difficult that actually is.

Mr. Howze said it's a significant technical challenge. Part of what the team has spent a good bit of time on in 2017 was working through these technical hurdles associated with that. One of the things we're really excited about as we head into 2018 is the team collectively has solved for a lot of those technical challenges and now it's really getting the data out there.



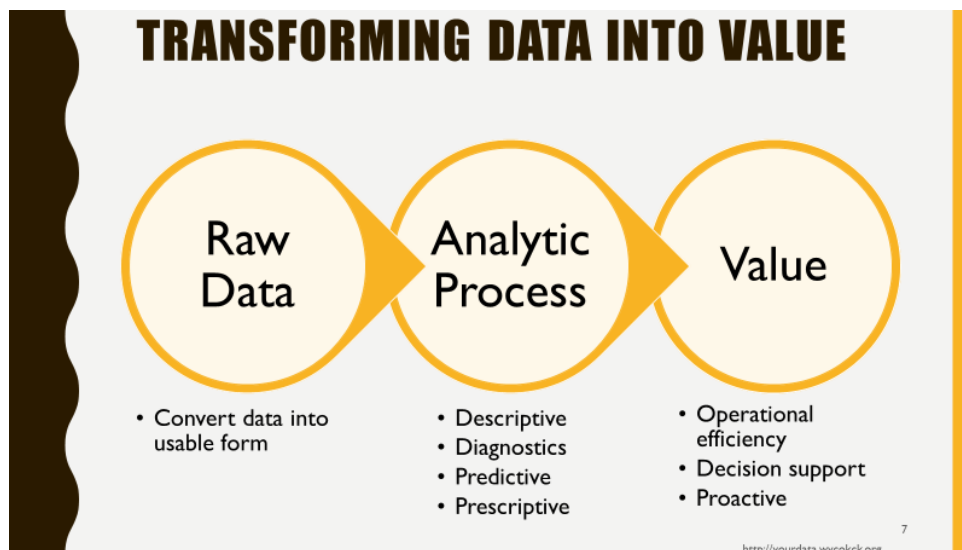
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Chris Cooley, GIS Analyst, said we're talking about kind of the underlying technology we're using to enable us to do this. We've got these systems of record. The ones we've been looking at most common today are things like the Clerk and the Treasury use for taxation, the things that we use at NRC for code enforcement and things the Appraiser uses for appraising property values.

The Land Bank data we just talked to comes from the Clerk and the Treasurer where they're maintaining ownership and taxes and things like that in there today. Those are systems of record; a front line business system that departments are interacting with on a daily basis.

Years ago, I did some efforts into looking at this stuff and the integration and the capabilities we may have with these at the request of these committees. We recognized several challenges and barriers to doing that. We're making an investment in GIS and Enterprise Solutions with GIS and using that as our enterprise location platform. In using that as the glue to integrate and tie these datasets together from this pair of datasets, most of these datasets are usually—there's very little that we do as a government that we aren't delivering something that can't be mapped. We're usually issuing a permit, we're issuing a license, we're doing an inspection, we're delivering a bill, we're issuing a fee, or something like that. All those things that we do for a business process, we're doing to an address, to a service address or something like that and we're tracking that in our system of record. We can take those addresses and locate them using GIS and related technologies and transform them and display them to people through systems of engagement and systems of insight.

A system of insight is really the things that we're getting to with the dashboard to allow us to make some daily driven decisions and follow along with that. Then are systems of engagement are allowing you, as commissioners, or the citizens of our community, to interact with that data and dig into it a little bit more and potentially answer their own questions and come up with new things and new ways to look at the data and see where we need to be heading.



Mr. Knapp said how are we transforming this data into value. The first circle, the raw data, is where open data is. That's where you just flatten out those files and you push them out to open data and let others transform them and use them. We kind of want to take it a step further and actually analyze these datasets.

When we analyze, we can describe a problem, we can diagnose an issue and predict a problem that might happen. You get the value out of operational efficiencies where we found automating the Land Bank's inventory so he doesn't have to do it. Decision support as with dashboards and data-driven decisions and being proactive—we have history of all these property values. We can go back and see when property values started to slip and we can go see why that happened. That would kind of send up red flags for current areas if we see current trends going that way. Before problems happen, we can address them.



Driving efficiency with data. With the self-service reporting, departments can get their own data from other departments where they couldn't before.

We can create dashboards to track performance metrics like the demo dashboard has a number of days on demo list. We can track those that automate by themselves.

Reducing duplication of efforts. We currently enter owner name in three different places. If we could work on a way to maybe enter those in one place so the data is correct over all three systems.

Improve staff productivity by automating their processes and giving them access to datasets they've never had access to before.

TO ACCOMPLISH, WE HAD TO

- Work closely with data owners
- Learn each data set
- Clean the data
- Check for accuracy
- Check for sensitive data
- Iterate – try, fail, learn, try again

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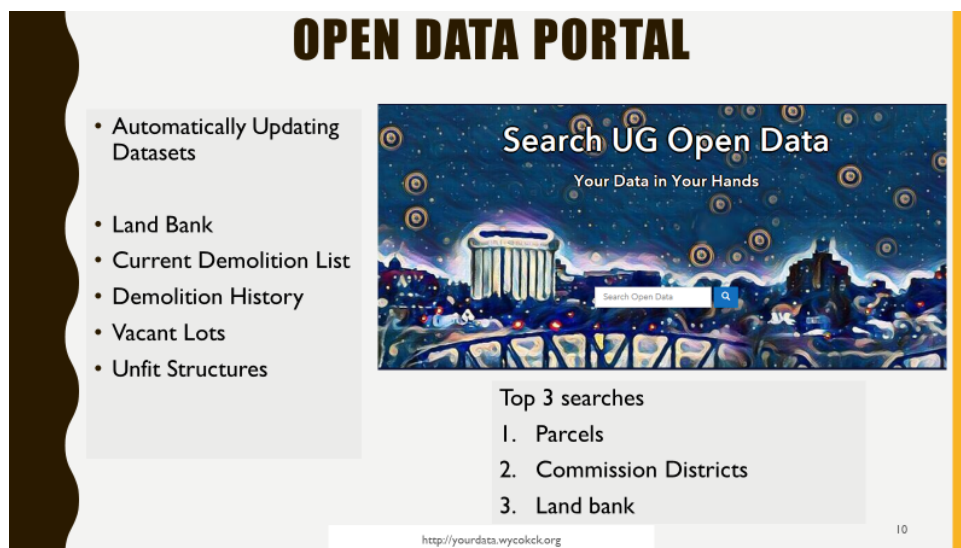
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To accomplish this, we had to work closely with the data owners. We had to learn each dataset. For example, the demo dataset is just one table. We had to go in and find out what's the difference between a torn down house and a house that's still standing. We had to know how to filter that data to give you a current list and a demo history.

We had to clean the data and check for accuracy. I was trying to do an average days on demo list and there was one that was in 2041. I was getting 13,000 on that days on list. I called the data owner and said this one is a little wacky and they changed it; it's just checking for accuracy, making sure our numbers are good.

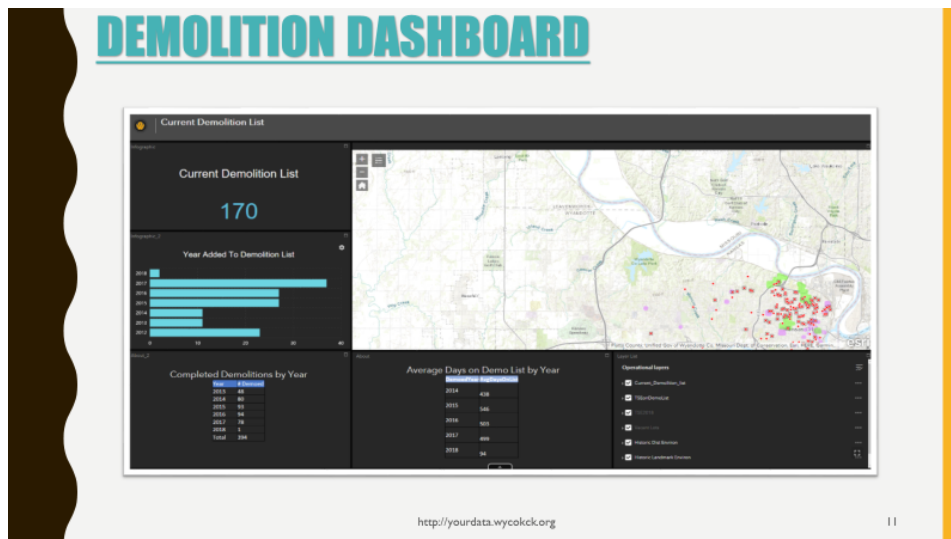
We check for sensitive data and make sure we don't release anything that's sensitive. In our little chart, our little comic, is exactly what we do. We try, we try again. Like the Land Bank, we were going through it three or four times sending back emails to the Land Bank—how does this list look. We were checking it and we finally got it right.



The open data portal. We opened this in November 2016, but we've loaded it up with datasets that weren't updating. Now, we currently have five datasets that are automatically updating.

The top three searches on open data, Number 2 was Commission District and that's because there's a link on the Commission's website that goes to the commission districts.

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This is our demolition dashboard that we created. This is a dashboard that automatically updates. If you noticed this number on this slide was 170, now it's 172. I did nothing to make that happen. It just automatically loaded. This is the years on the demo list. This is the year that the property was added to the demo list. You see 2012, what's left are 25 properties out there waiting to be demoed. Complete demolitions by year and the average days on demo list. These aren't currently updating now, but we're working on those and we should have those up really soon.

This is an example of how we're adding value to our data. I would sit in meetings and they said we need a demo list that has tax sale eligible on it and vacant lots and historic and by districts. I layered all of them on top and this is what we got. This will be used for decision—

You see all the dots currently on the demo list. The squares are the ones that are tax eligible there on the demo list. If you zoom in even more, all these little crosses are all the tax sale eligible parcels that we have in a certain area. If you click on one of these, you get more data about them; demo stats and complaint issued. If you click on that number, you can bring up Landsweb and you can see this person has back taxes from 2005.

Chairman Markley said Commissioner McKiernan, I believe, has a comment. He used to make these same maps, but he used scotch tape.

Commissioner McKiernan said first of all, I love, love, love, love, and love the way you can layer on and layer off all of these different datasets. That is fantastic. It really is great to be able to drill down. I do have some questions though. It appears that this data isn't—we have some

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display issues with data. For example, a year 2008 is displayed as 2,008. It looks like we might need to go back and just clean-up display formatting on some of this stuff.

Then I wondered, how often are these—now I picked a house that happened to only be tax sale eligible. It's not on the demo list, but it's displayed on this map. When I found out I could click the parcel number and go to Landsweb, I loved that as well, but then that brought up something that was odd. If there's a mismatch between the current—when the little information dialogue pops up when you hover or click on a particular item, the current taxes due displayed in this black box don't match Landsweb. The total delinquent tax due doesn't match Landsweb so there's a mismatch between the Landsweb record and what's displayed in that black dialogue box.

It's a great start, but we got to make sure that the datasets are actually current. What I found in the Landsweb report doesn't match what's displayed up there. I did say love twelve times. I picked one at random. If one's broken, then that suggests that there could be others that are broken.

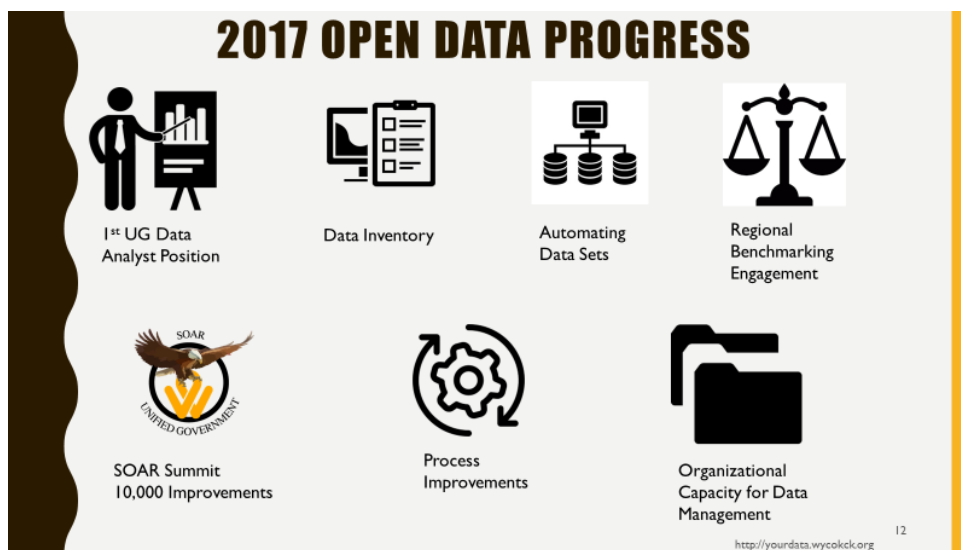
I'll pick another one. The year formatting issue is still the same. Let's go to Landsweb. There's a mismatch again. It underestimates the total taxes that are due both delinquent and current. That dialogue box is underestimating. Anyway, I don't want to take any more time other than to say love one more time.

Mr. Howze said the conversation we just had is exactly the kind of iterative nature by which we can improve these. Chris mentioned the notion of systems of record and systems of engagement. This is a great example of both systems of engagement that gives you that visual, but also the insight. It prompts a bunch of questions like what are the current locations on the demo list. Are there some that are in a historical districts and maybe shouldn't be or shouldn't be the first priority. It doesn't tell you the answer to those questions, but it can often prompt those questions in those conversations. This is the sort of thing where we look to do a lot more of in 2018.

Now that we've done the foundational work to get the datasets together, the actual configuration of this is relatively, from a time perspective, not that intensive. I should add too that this is utilizing the GIS platform. This is not an additional went out and bought a tool, this is something that we got that we're using and utilizing the expertise of Chris and his team.

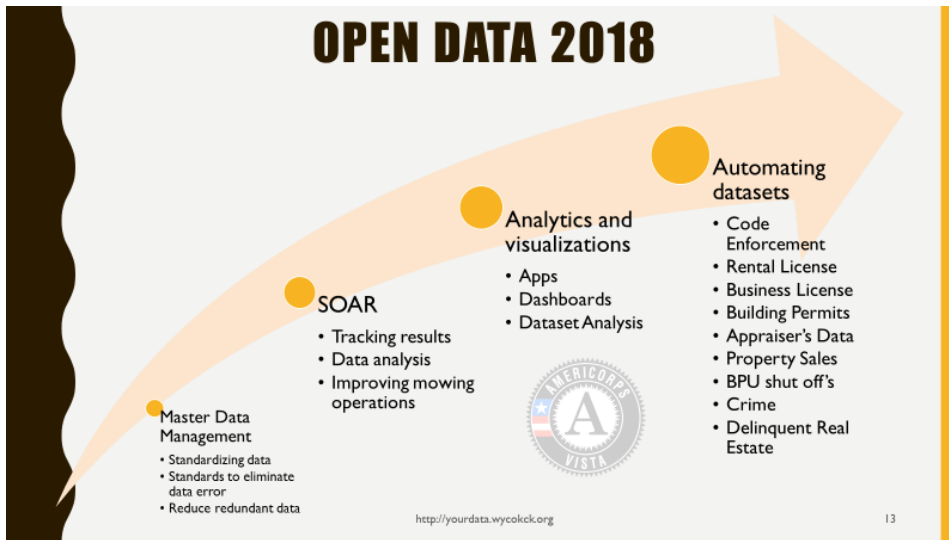
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Mr. Cooley said I was going to make a comment on your observation and I'm making an assumption here. I haven't tested this. I'm assuming this is tax total delinquent due and may not be considering current year taxes which aren't necessarily counted in the delinquency. So, '17 taxes, even if they're unpaid, may not be adding to that total number you're seeing here. We need to go back and investigate so it's much clearer. You shouldn't be looking at the two of them and be scratching your head, why don't they match. **Commissioner McKiernan** said I did differentiate delinquent versus current. There's a mismatch on both numbers. **Mr. Cooley** said we will certainly look into them and try and figure out what we're showing there. It's close, but we need to be hitting the mark right on.



Mr. Knapp said so in 2017, we hired the first UG Data Analyst position. We have a data inventory, that's an inventory of all the datasets we have in the city. There's 372 of them. We automated five so we have a ways to go. We have five automated datasets. We are part of a regional benchmarking engagement that compares our city to other cities in the metro like Public Works is an area like when do you plow your streets. When you get an inch of snow, two inches of snow. Just compare yourself to other cities.

In the SOAR Summit and tracking the 10,000 improvement count, processing improvements with the Land Bank and our organizational capacity for data management is just entering data in three different places and making sure it's correct.



In 2018, we actually have a vista coming on next week that's going to help us add capacity so we can push out more and more of these datasets.

The first one is master data management. That's the three-owner name, again, where we're just standardizing, making sure it's correct and eliminate redundant data.

In SOAR, we're going to continue tracking results. Any data analysis like a demo dashboard that needs to be done, we're going to make a mowing app of the mows that are—with the current, we're going to make a parcel map that highlights when a parcel is mowed. The public can go in and look at their block and see when the last time that lot has been mowed. It enhances our communication and tells our data story.

We're going to continue making dashboards. We're going to have a list of automating datasets that I hope to get released in 2018.

Mr. Howze said I'll add on the Americorp. Commissioner Bynum, this is an area that you're involved in as the Community Health Improvement Plan. That's one of those areas in 2018 as well that we're bringing physically to help us enhance the data across all four pillars of the Community Health Improvement Plan and support that effort as well. There's a lot going on in 2018 that we're excited about.

Just to re-emphasize that we're really utilizing existing resources across this effort. We're really tapping into the expertise of our staff that know the data, know the technology, and are putting the pieces together in new ways to provide new insights and help us address the challenges the Commission has laid before us.

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Commissioner McKiernan said this is just and, again, I randomly picked a red dot which is demo list now. When I pull up the Landsweb it say's, I guess, that we already own this property. It kind of looks like when I look at the Landsweb record, it looks like it's already a vacant lot, but the demo status doesn't show demo, it shows utility disconnect last week as if we're still waiting for demo. Again, cross-checking and cross-linking all of our data to make sure that it's displaying correctly would be wonderful. That's it.

Chairman Markley said I'll just say that there was a time, not so many years ago, when we often had the question: well, is there a list for that; like do we keep that anywhere, where can I find that information. The answer was usually kind of like a shrug of the shoulders. Nobody knew. Nobody knew where anything was. This is an amazing step forward in a really short amount of time. We appreciate all of your efforts toward putting data where we can get it and not have to ask you those questions.

Action: **For information only.**

Item No. 2 – 1847...REPORT: REPETITIVE LOSS AREA ANALYSIS

Synopsis: Request approval of the report prepared by the Department of Urban Planning and Land Use to help property owners reduce their risk of future flooding by providing an understanding of flood risk, flooding sources and resources for mitigation, submitted by Robin Richardson, Director of Planning. This is part of the Community Rating System (CRS) Program.

Rob Richardson, Director of Planning, said thank you. I have Kim Portillo with me this evening. She is our DRC Coordinator and Floodplain Manager, so if you have any detailed questions, Kim will be able to answer them.

The CRS Program that we participate in is called CRS, that stands for Community Rating System. It's a federal program we participate in that allows our residents to purchase flood insurance to receive a 20% discount on their insurance rates. Those rates have gone up recently after the hurricanes. That's a pretty important aspect of our community.

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One part of that CRS rating requires us to look at our properties that have had a repetitive loss. Now, they don't tell us exactly where those properties are, they just tell us the general area. You'll notice in your report on page one there are twelve of those, and on page three of the report there's a five-step process that we go through with each one of those and those are included in this report. To receive our points, because this is a point-based system, this is one of the activities we participate in. We need this report to be approved by the Board of Commissioners, so we request your approval this evening.

Action: Commissioner Bynum made a motion, seconded by Commissioner McKiernan, to approve.

Commissioner Philbrook said this is kind of one of those 90-degree angle things. You mentioned that this talks about floodplain and that sort of thing. I have a question. What brought this to light was the poor people down in Texas who bought property, property was developed whatever, and they were never informed that they were in a floodplain. Are there things in our state laws or our local ordinances that demands that when property becomes available for buying or developing that it's noted in there that it's floodplain property?

Mr. Richardson said it's really a real estate agent question, but I believe there is a box that's checked for floodplain when you buy a property. They don't have to check it, but it should be. You would have a cause of action if they didn't, but that is part of the property evaluation that is important to the purchaser. Sometimes your property can be in the floodplain, but your structure isn't. We have a lot of properties where a corner or even half of the property is in the floodplain, but the structure is not.

Commissioner Philbrook said I'm just curious. We do a lot of development in Wyandotte County now, and I was just kind of curious as to that. That's okay, Rob. **Mr. Richardson** said for new properties, we require them to be moved out of the floodplain and then they're built upon. For a new development, we won't have that issue. We know where these repetitive loss areas are. They are all in a floodplain. You would be aware that the previous person was buying flood insurance. If you had a mortgage, you would be required to buy flood insurance on that property. The system takes care of that part of it. I don't know how that

happened in Texas. I haven't read that article yet. I'll go find that and I'll get back with you if I can find anything that applies to us.

Commissioner Philbrook said I appreciate that. I'm sure that if it crossed my mind, it crossed a lot of other people's minds. If you could get something back to us kind to kind of tell us a little bit more about that so our public knows that they're relatively safe. **Mr. Richardson** said we don't have very many repetitive loss areas. They're generally very small. You can see the maps that are included. We don't have a huge issue with that here. After the '93 flood, we bought a bunch of properties that had that problem. **Commissioner Philbrook** said thank you.

Roll call was taken and there were five "Ayes," Philbrook, Johnson, McKiernan, Bynum, Markley.

Item No. 3 – 1848...AMENDMENT: MOBILE GROCERY STORES

Synopsis: A new provision to Section 27-612 Planning and Development of Kansas City, Kansas Code of Ordinances, to amend where mobile grocery stores may operate without a special use permit, submitted by Robin Richardson, Director of Planning.

Rob Richardson, Director of Planning, said Jamie Hickey is with me for this item. She's one of our Planners and you all have, I'm sure, have met her at the Board of Commissioners' meetings before.

This is a request for permission to put this item on the agenda. You'll recall 24, 30 months ago, we went through a revision or process on how we add items to the Planning and Zoning agenda for ordinance work. This was discussed in another standing committee, but this is kind of my planning standing committee for these kinds of things. We thought just to be safe, we would come back and tell you that we're putting this ordinance on. The ordinance still has a little bit of tweeking to do with it, but it would be on the Planning Commission Agenda here in a couple of weeks.

Chairman Markley said so to be clear on the process, it would go from here to the Planning Commission, Planning Commission will continue to work on the ordinance, and eventually it will arrive on our agenda at a full commission. **Mr. Richardson** said that's right.

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Action: Commissioner Bynum made a motion, seconded by Commissioner McKiernan, that we approve this ordinance amendment to move to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Roll call was taken and there were five “Ayes,” Philbrook, Johnson, McKiernan, Bynum, Markley.

Item No. 4 – 1865...PRESENTATION: CONTINUED PARATRANSIT RIDERSHIP DEMANDS

Synopsis: Presentation on the continued paratransit ridership demands, submitted by Justus Welker, Director of Public Transportation.

Unified Government Transit (UGT) Paratransit Service

Paratransit is a shared-ride transportation service that supplements fixed route service by providing individualized rides that are scheduled in advance without fixed routes or predetermined timetables.

UGT operates 2 types of paratransit service, **ADA** and **SENIOR**.

ADA

ADA service is **federally required** to be operated within ½ mile of fixed bus routes. ADA paratransit service is available to Wyandotte County residents who have a certifiable disability that prevents them from using the traditional fixed route service. ADA service parameters (hours, wait time, ride time, etc.) should be comparable to corresponding fixed routes. The fare for ADA paratransit service is \$3 per each one-way trip. Traditionally we have operated this service county wide.

SENIOR

No federal requirement exists to operate this service. Senior paratransit service is available to Wyandotte County residents 65 years of age or older. Senior paratransit service is designed for medical, nutrition (congregate sites) and work trips. Trips for other purposes have traditionally been allowed if capacity exists within the system. The fare for senior paratransit service is \$2 per each one-way trip. Traditionally we have operated this service county wide.

Current State of UGT Paratransit

- We average 1.95 paratransit boardings per revenue hour
- The average of the 20 largest paratransit systems in the U.S. is 2.0 paratransit boardings per revenue hour
- We have 10 dedicated paratransit routes
- We average 7 revenue hours per route
- Our maximum carrying capacity is 136.5 passengers per day (70 revenue hours x 1.95 boardings per revenue hour)
- We average 138.2 passengers per day
- We experienced a net gain of 153 paratransit customers in 2017 (70% seniors)

Justus Welker, Director of Transportation, said this is information only. It’s kind of a report on the state of what’s going on currently with our Paratransit Program. I’m sure there will be lots of questions. I’ve tried to come as prepared as I can, so I’m ready for you. I’ll just run through the presentation briefly, and then we’ll get into the questions if that’s okay.

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Paratransit is a shared ride, a service. It supplements fixed routes. We provide individualized routes that are scheduled in advance without fixed routes or predetermined timetables.

We operate two types of paratransit service. One is ADA. This is federally required to be operated within three-quarters of a mile with a fixed route. It's set up, again, to supplement that fixed route. It's for individuals who have a certified disability that prevents them from using the traditional bus service. The service perimeters should be comparable to the corresponding fixed route times, and the fair is \$3 for each one-way trip. That fair is set up that it can only be double the base fare on the fixed route system. Our base fare is \$1.50. We can charge up to \$3 for the ADA paratransit service.

Traditionally, we've operated this service countywide. I believe that came about—we talked about this when the unification happened and the county and the city combined, we opened that up countywide.

We also provide senior paratransit service. There is no federal requirement to operate this service. It is available to Wyandotte County residents 65 years of age or older. It's designed for medical and nutrition, which is congregate sites and work trips. Trips for other purposes have traditionally been allowed if the capacity exists. The fare is \$2 for each one-way trip. Again, traditionally we operated this service countywide.

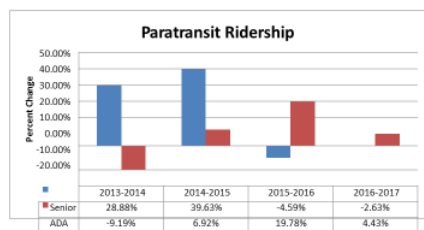
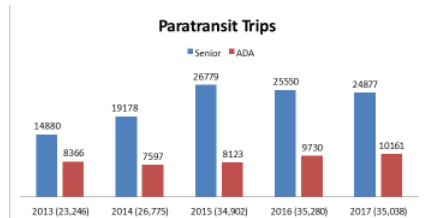
Current state. We average 1.95 paratransit boardings per revenue hour. The average of the 20 largest in the nation is 2.0, so we're right there on par with some of the larger agencies. We have 10 dedicated routes. We average 7 revenue hours per route. Our maximum carrying capacity, this is calculated carrying capacity is 136.5 passengers per day. We frequently perform in excess of that number. That's just kind of the average calculated rate of service. We average above our carrying capacity. This is reality. This is what takes place on a given day but, again, we frequently exceed that number. We experienced a net gain of 153 paratransit customers in 2017 with 70% of those being senior citizens.

How did we get here?

Silver Tsunami – More eligible senior paratransit clients

Elimination of private community transportation service

- Catholic Charities eliminated transportation funding for their foster grandparent program
- Kansas City, KS Housing Authority eliminated transportation funding for their Public Housing and the Section 8 Housing programs
- Senior Community Centers (Victory Hills, Delaware Highlands, Crosslines, etc.) discontinued transportation options for their residents



How did we get to where we are today? Everybody has heard about the silver tsunami. We have 10,000 people turn 65 years old everyday, with experienced influx of additional people who are eligible for this service. We've had some elimination of private-community transportation services and this dates back to 2015. Catholic Charities eliminated transportation funding for their Foster Grandparent Program. We absorbed those clients. The KCK Housing Authority eliminated transportation funding. We absorbed those clients. Some senior community centers discontinued transportation options for their residents and again, we absorbed those clients.

We've got two charts here that show our trips from 2013 essentially, and you can see it increased significantly. We show the percentage increase based on that same time period. Overtime, ridership has increased, but our resources remain the same. In some instances, actually decreased because we're down buses at the moment.

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Challenges

The oversubscribed paratransit service has exposed our lack of dedicated **STAFF** and **VEHICLES**.

STAFF

- 580 days of paid employee leave to schedule in 2018/ 250 working days
- ✓ 2.32 employees scheduled off each working day

PERSONNEL PROJECTION – TRANSIT OPERATOR	PEAK SERVICE		GENERAL RELIEF	Total Needed	*Current Actual
	Normal Daily	Scheduled Standby			
Fixed Route	10	2	2	14	12
Paratransit	10	2	2	14	12
MOW	5	1	1	7	6
TOTAL	25	5	5	35	30

Scheduled standby employees are used during periods when ridership exceeds capacity or during periods of substandard on-time performance. General relief employees operate routes that are vacated by unscheduled employee absences.

**One T.O. on work comp., One T.O. vacancy and using one T.O. to fill vacant dispatch position*

VEHICLES

Existing fleet is old, undersized and requires constant maintenance. A lack of adequate maintenance staff results in lengthy repairs (vehicles out of service). Vehicles sit for long periods of time before being attended to.

While federal grant money does exist; the highly competitive process, local match component, lengthy process and buying limitations (like replacement) make the entire process extremely difficult and arduous.

Bus Fleet Projection	Peak Service Vehicles		Spare	Contingency Fleet	Total Needed	Current Actual
	Normal Daily Service	Scheduled Standby				
Fixed Route	5	2	1	3	12	6
Paratransit	10	2	0	2	17	10
TOTAL	15	4	1	5	29	16

Scheduled standby vehicles are used during periods when ridership exceeds capacity or during periods of substandard on-time performance. Spare vehicles are put in to service during periods of repair or maintenance. Contingency vehicles are stockpiled and used during catastrophic maintenance events or emergencies. Contingency vehicles have already met their useful life.

Shaded cells indicate current actuals

The challenges we're undergoing currently that oversubscribed services has exposed our lack of dedicated staff and vehicles. We have a lot of tenure staff. I think our average age of service is 12.5. These folks have a lot of paid time available to them so trying to schedule accordingly has been a struggle. The chart here kind of breaks out what we have on a normal basis and what we'd like to see in terms of having standby employees and general relief. If you look at that total needed category versus the current actual, and the current actual does include one employee who's on workman's comp right now and we have one vacancy we're attempting to fill. We're also using one of our transit operators to fill a vacant dispatch position.

As for the vehicles, the fleet is old and requires constant maintenance. A lack of adequate maintenance staff typically results in lengthy repairs which means vehicles are out of service. Vehicles tend to sit for long periods of time before being attended to. While federal grant money does exist, the highly competitive process, local match components, lengthy process, and buying limitations—we have to buy like replacement when we use this federal money. It makes the entire process of trying to get federal money extremely difficult and arduous.

Again, I provided a chart here that breaks down to where we stand in terms of fleet vehicles. We are undersized for the services that we provide.

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Steps taken to address oversubscribed paratransit service as of 12/15/17

- For all new ADA paratransit clients, provide service within ¾ mile of fixed bus routes
- Placed a moratorium on new senior paratransit clients
- Senior paratransit service will only be used for medical, nutrition and work trips
- All paratransit trips must be scheduled the previous day
- Strictly adhere to hours of operation
- Will call return trips are only for medical appointments
- Continue to borrow service vehicles (KCATA) as necessary, depending on availability.

Additionally, UG transit has been forced to cancel non-essential senior paratransit reservations/ trips when demand exceeds capacity of ability of resources (staff/ vehicles).

Next level of options to address oversubscribed paratransit:

- Further restrict and/ or eliminate paratransit service that is not federally required
 - Reduce hours of operation
 - Only perform essential (medical) senior paratransit trips
 - Designate service areas
- Hire additional staff to accommodate current and future growth
- Continue to request replacement vehicles through UG's CMIP
- Continue to pursue federal grant money for the replacement of vehicles that have met their useful life

Some steps we've taken here recently, for all new ADA paratransit clients, we're providing service within that three-quarters of a mile federal requirement. We placed a moratorium on new senior paratransit clients. Senior paratransit service will only be used for medical, nutrition and work trips. All paratransit trips must be scheduled the previous day. We were trying to do demand-based trips where people would call the same day and we'd provide that service. Now, it has to be scheduled the day before.

We're strictly adhering to hours of operation. Again, before we tried to accommodate as many people as we can. If they need be out later, we'd provide that service. Will call trips are only for medical appointments. Again, we have allowed will call trips for anybody in the past. A lot of agencies don't provide any will call trips, but now we're limiting that to medical appointments. Most folks don't know how long they're going to be at a doctor's office or dialysis, for instance.

We're trying to continue to borrow vehicles from the KCATA as necessary depending on availability. We have one ADA accessible vehicle we've borrowed now. We recently took possession of two vehicles that don't have a lift so they're just for ambulatory clients. We're trying to use those in instances where our fleet is extremely small or limited.

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The next level of options we're looking at is: further restricting or eliminating services that are not required, further reduction of hours of operation, only performing essential medical trips.

Designate service areas. Ride KC Freedom on Demand is the service that is in the region here and we're looking at perhaps bringing that over into our region. They have a couple of service areas now that serve over on the Kansas City, MO, side. There's nothing specific to Wyandotte County at this time. We're looking at incorporating that Ride KC Freedom on Demand service for our people in the community.

We're going to look to hire additional staff to accommodate current and future growth. Continue to replace vehicles through UG's CMIP Program, then continue to pursue that federal money for the replacement of vehicles that have met their useful life.

This is the presentation in general. Where we are described now, on a daily basis, we're struggling in terms of having enough vehicles to provide this service. We're forced to tailor our services to the resources we have on hand. The complexation of our programs has kind of changed over time. It's more dialysis and medical now than it used to be. It used to be more social trips, recreational trips for a few short shopping and that kind of thing. In the last, I'd say four to six months, we've seen a transition to dialysis. We're taking up to 80% of trips on a daily basis can be for dialysis and other medical needs.

Commissioner Bynum said Mr. Welker and I have communicated a couple of times over the last few days about the issues that the transit is facing over ADA and paratransit and particularly senior transit. I have visited with a couple of commissioners about the issue. We know that the baby boomers, or the silver tsunami as it's called, is a direct part of the issue that we currently face.

There's a lot of prongs to the issue. Number one being the baby boomer generation. As we talked just this afternoon, we know that population bubble has a good decade to go before it begins to trend back downward. This is not a problem that's going to go away. We've seen the problem coming for quite some time. The problem, however, is coupled with the length of time that it takes to acquire the new vehicles from the vendor. That, for whatever reason, is an extremely lengthy process. You've got equipment issues, you've got staffing issues, and my request to us is that we, as a Commission, look long and hard at providing the financial resources

that are needed by this department, both through CMIP and through the General Fund to fund the staff people that Mr. Welker needs in order to do his job and serve this community.

Again, I reiterate. We are not at the peak of that population bubble yet. We've got a decade to go before that population bubble trends downward. This problem is not going to go away. It is a multi-pronged problem. Unfortunately, Mr. Welker is now in a position with his department, given the resources that he has and the length of time it takes to get new buses, that he is forced to make these decisions. I really wish we didn't have to make these decisions, but that's where he is right now.

He's looking at Ride KC Freedom on Demand as a potential stop gap measure, if you will, which is the use of Kansas City Area Transit Authority's program reaching over here into Wyandotte County and giving us some relief. I don't want to take away anybody else's time that wants to talk, and there's probably folks here from the public that want to address this issue.

What I want to say to all of us is this is a serious problem in our community. The thing that I think pains me the most about this situation is that this problem is directly affecting some of the most vulnerable people that live here. These are people that have already dealt with other cuts in other programs and other services, and now they are living through the contraction, if you will, that we've had to impose on this transit situation and that's not acceptable.

I commend you for bringing it to us, and also for being really committed to looking for solutions and whatever the outside the box solution is as well. If anybody's got an idea, you know, I think Mr. Welker and Melissa Sieben are willing to hear it. I won't belabor the point. Other commissioners might have a comment.

My request, is to wrap up my piece of this, is that as soon as is allowable for the Commission, whether that be the next full commission meeting, whether that be the next meeting of this standing committee, whatever is legally allowable, that we bring back whatever potential solutions there might be so that we can alleviate this situation as quickly and painlessly as we possibly can.

Commissioner Johnson said I have just a couple of questions. In terms of, I heard the word we've been oversubscribed. How long, Mr. Welker, have we been oversubscribed to your knowledge? **Mr. Welker** said it's difficult to say exactly. As I mentioned to you the other day, it's a fluid program where we have a certain number of people who subscribe to the service on a

daily basis; but then, again, we have people who use the service just as they need. Depending on the day and the resources we have available, we, for about the last six months, we've been really struggling in terms of staff capacity and resources available. That's why we're looking at additional options. I look at Ride KC Freedom on Demand, just not a stop gap, but an additional mobility choice for our people. I look at something like that that we put in place. It's not a perfect system, but it is another mobility option for our folks to use when programs such as ours are struggling and having issues.

Commissioner Johnson said and then you couple the over subscription of persons that need rides with the fact that we have vehicles that are being serviced right now. Are we expecting some of those to be available in the near future or is there no way to tell? **Mr. Welker** said we did get some service vehicles back today so as of tomorrow morning, we should be back at full capacity but, again, we're at the mercy of that older fleet. We experience the constant maintenance issue so depending on what goes down on any given day we may be limited.

Commissioner Johnson said which leads me to the replacement vehicle. How many—do you have some order? **Mr. Welker** said we do. We were able to order some using federal money through the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority. As Commissioner Bynum mentioned, the lay time on those vehicles is three to six months. It's not something that just comes off the lot. They are custom built vehicles so we're at the mercy of the provider. **Commissioner Johnson** asked how many? **Mr. Welker** said we did order 10 vehicles through a federal grant. Hopefully by summer when these vehicles arrive, again, that will provide a lot of extra help.

Commissioner Johnson asked then the measures that we're taking, I guess the biggest thing to me is how we're going to communicate that to the public. What mediums will we use to communicate that information? **Mr. Welker** said we'll work through Edwin and his team to roll out those messages. We'll use social media when possible. Of course, this mechanism tonight, hopefully, we're reaching some folks and getting the word out.

Again, we schedule our trips so at 5:00 every evening we schedule trips for the following day based on ridership demand. If we lose vehicles overnight, and I come in like I did this morning and I'm down a significant number of vehicles, all those trips have already been scheduled and assigned to those vehicles. If I don't have vehicles available, that's when we have to restrict that service. It's kind of just a day-by-day basis which is extremely unfortunate, but we

don't have the forethought and the ability to determine when a vehicle is going to go out of service. That's why we try to borrow vehicles and have them available.

Commissioner Johnson said I guess my last comment would be to make sure that staff beneath you are communicating that and appreciating a predicament that it puts a person in when they're expecting it to be there and it's not there. To their chagrin, they're told well you can't ride or whatever the case may be. That creates public problems for us that I think the way that we handle it will be very much to our benefit if we take those measures.

Commissioner Philbrook said thanks for asking those questions, Commissioner. That means less questions I get to ask, thank you. **Commissioner Johnson** said you're welcome. **Commissioner Philbrook** said no problem. What should our total fleet look like? I'm missed that. **Mr. Welker** said as of this morning, we were down to 13 vehicles. We need 15 to provide minimal service and we were at 13 this morning. We had received some additional vehicles back so I should have one spare tomorrow. **Commissioner Philbrook** said for the 15, that would be for the restricted suggestions that you're talking about or how you change. **Mr. Welker** said even at 15 without a spare, we'd have to restrict some service. As I mentioned, we have 10 dedicated routes, but then we have two that are kind of on demand routes for when we're oversubscribed, additional capacity. We don't have the ability to use those vehicles then we're limited on the number of trips we can provide.

Commissioner Philbrook said so those restrictions—so now we're down to the point where those folks that need a ride to get groceries are out of luck. **Mr. Welker** said correct. **Commissioner Philbrook** said I just wanted to bring that up and remind people that's one of those many things that are kind of important to folks to be able to sustain and do well and have a healthy life is to be able to get food. Even though the medical part is very important, you've got to have that too. I just wanted to beat that one home. Thanks.

Commissioner McKiernan said in addition to the questions Commissioner Johnson just asked, you know I have dozens more. I'll just catch up with you later. There's no reason for us to go through those now because I know that you have outlined the problem. I know you're on the route toward possible solutions. I'll just catch up with you later on those questions. **Mr. Welker**

said Commissioner Bynum was able to forward some of your questions, so I'm prepared when we get together.

Chairman Markley said we have a number of folks in the audience. Being this is our last agenda item, it's a pretty good guess that they are here for this item. I'd like to just start by saying anyone who's here to support the need for service, if you'd like to just stand to express that support, that will give us an idea of who's here for that purpose. Then I'll invite those who'd like to speak to kind of get in a row up here in the seats near the microphone and then you'll have three minutes. I'll keep a little timer up here on the laptop. If you'll start by giving your name and the city that you live in, and then make all the comments you'd like. Welcome.

Sheila Freeman, Foster Grandparent's Coordinator, said our question is, I guess, is this on a day-to-day basis that, the transportation gentleman, is it on a day-to-day basis. I think that's what our foster grandparents have been told for them to get back to and from their location. **Mr. Welker** said that is correct. We're at the mercy of the vehicles we have available on any given day. Unfortunately, as I mentioned, we can't predict which vehicles go down so it's going to be hopefully on a temporary, short-term basis. It will be day-to-day until we find a solution of stop-gap to put in place.

Ms. Freeman said they may call tomorrow and set up a time to go to their school or wherever they may need to go and if you have the transportation available. **Mr. Welker** said a majority of the trips we do provide for the foster grandparents are subscription-based trips so they're scheduled in advance. Like this morning when we found out we didn't have enough surface vehicles available, I was in the office at 7:00. We made that phone call to these folks as early as we could. Hopefully, they could find an alternative if available. We try to notify them as soon as we can. Unfortunately, I won't get that information until I arrive in the office on a given day.

Ms. Freeman said I think some of them were able to get to their school, but then some were not, correct? It just depends on where they were located that they were able to get there. So it's on a day-by-day. I just need to know because they're ringing my phone off the hook. We just need to know that it's on a day-by-day basis, correct? **Mr. Welker** said correct.

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Jacqueline Catrell said this morning we were notified about ten minutes to the hour that we weren't going to have any transportation. I'd just like to know, you said you are going to let us know. Another thing I'd like to ask, you said medical. What if our prescriptions are out to Walmart; we still can't ride or we can ride? **Mr. Welker** said I've advised my dispatchers that if anything is medically related, we consider that as an essential trip, so a prescription would qualify as an essential trip. **Ms. Catrell** said thank you.

I just want to say it just seems like our senior citizens are being pushed to the foreground. We, as senior citizens who were asked to vote and to come to the meeting, sometimes we get answers that we can resolve and thank you for that. Sometimes it just seems like we're just being pushed to the back of the wall. Me, myself, I don't think it's fair because we have a voice and we're looking to you ladies and gentlemen to help us solve our problems. I just want to say thank you for listening to me. That was the question that I needed to hear in my head. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Bynum said I just want to make one last comment. I apologize. I'll let you make yours and then I'll make my last comment.

Joyce Herring, Foster Grandparent, said I did not get a call until this morning like 10 minutes before I was scheduled to be picked up. The only thing that I have a problem with is that it's not like we're riding the bus for free. We have to pay also. The Foster Grandparent, as you know, it does not pay a lot of money so we're actually giving it right back. I'm just concerned because we are volunteers for the children. It just seems like nobody is really caring about the children because the teachers really do need us in their classrooms. We don't have other transportation to get back and forth to schools and we depend on your transportation.

I just don't know what the teachers are going to do without us because the schools are falling apart. The children are out of control and we are there to help the teachers with the children because otherwise, some of those teachers would not make it through the day without us.

I appreciate your services, but I would also like to be notified if we can or cannot ride the bus anymore, you know, before, like a day, like you all want a day, we would like a day too so we can maybe do something different, maybe take the public bus or something like that. I would not

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like to be notified 10 minutes before it's time for me to get to the school because I do have to call and let the school know. Thank you for your service.

Tom Williams said I think one thing that I heard, and I recommend what you're doing on this issue, but one thing I heard, and I think I would just like to see it addressed a little bit differently and that's the priority that you're giving some of these things. Work, many of your senior citizens have to go to work. You don't have to worry about taking them to the doctor's office, grocery store, or any of those other places if they don't go to work. That needs to be a priority because they don't go to work, they're not going to have the copays or whose ever plans we address these days. They're not going to be able to get these prescription meds, so forth and so on. That needs to be a priority for your senior citizens. I'd just like to make that observation because many of those people rely upon these things as a livelihood. I think that was well expressed by the lady who just sat down before me. Thank you.

Commissioner Bynum said just one closing comment. I appreciate all of you who came and waited for two meetings so that you could hear what's happening and share your hardships and your ideas. It just makes me want to reiterate that this is not okay. This situation that we are in is just simply not okay. For an older adult, in this community, to express that they believe that they are being pushed away or not treated with the respect or as a priority, is both heartbreaking and infuriating at the same time.

I'm going to reiterate to the commissioners that sit here on this committee with me just how critical this is. Staff does know and understand what a problem we've got on our hands. I appreciate the problem-solving that's happening. I'm just trying to impress upon my fellow commissioners that this is not okay, and I think you all agree.

My final comment is, Mr. Welker, I don't know if it's possible to rearrange the way that you know in advance what you'll have for the next day. I don't know if it's possible. I would encourage you to check into whatever that process is so that if the day before we can tell them we simply don't have you for tomorrow; we can't do that. It just gives at least a little more lead time while we solve this problem. Thank you.

Mr. Welker said I think in some instances we will be able to give them more advanced notice. Again, we're limited on the fleet capacity we have on any given day. If it's a major issue

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and we know that vehicle is going to be out of service for a long period of time, we can provide that advanced notification. Situations such as this morning where we came off the weekend, I came in and we had limited vehicle capacity. Unfortunately, we had to make that phone call this morning.

I will address Ride KC Freedom on Demand also. We are meeting extensively later this week to talk about that program and we hope to bring you back something, in some capacity, real soon.

Action: For information only.

Adjourn

Chairman Markley adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

tk

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