

**STATE OF KANSAS)
WYANDOTTE COUNTY)) SS
CITY OF KANSAS CITY, KS)**

SPECIAL SESSION, THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2018

The Unified Government Commission of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, met in Special Session, Thursday, April 26, 2018, with eight members present: Bynum, Commissioner At-Large First District; Burroughs, Commissioner At-Large Second District; Townsend, Commissioner First District (arrived at 5:05 p.m.); McKiernan, Commissioner Second District; Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; Markley, Commissioner Sixth District; Walters, Commissioner Seventh District; and Alvey, Mayor/CEO, presiding. Murguia, Commissioner Third District; Johnson, Commissioner Fourth District; and Philbrook, Commissioner Eighth District; were absent. The following officials were also in attendance: Doug Bach, County Administrator; Ken Moore, Chief Legal Counsel; Bridgette Cobbins, Unified Government Clerk; Gordon Criswell, Joe Connor and Melissa Sieben, Assistant County Administrators, Tib Laughlin, Director of General Services; Greg Talkin, Neighborhood Resource Director; Wendy Green, Assistant Counsel; Wilba Miller, Director of Community Development; Erin Downing, Demolition Coordinator; Chris Slaughter, Land Bank Manager; Lynn Melton, Assistant to the Mayor; and Officer Doleshal, Sergeant-at-Arms.

MAYOR ALVEY called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL: McKiernan, Kane, Markley, Walters, Bynum, Burroughs, Townsend, Alvey.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL SESSION of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, to be held Thursday, April 26, 2018, at 5:00 p.m. in the 5th floor conference room of the Municipal Office Building, for a SOAR quarterly update.

CONSENT TO MEETING of the governing body of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, accepting service of the foregoing notice, waiving all and any irregularities in such service and in such notice, and consent and agree that we, the governing body, shall meet at the time and place therein specified and for the purpose therein stated.

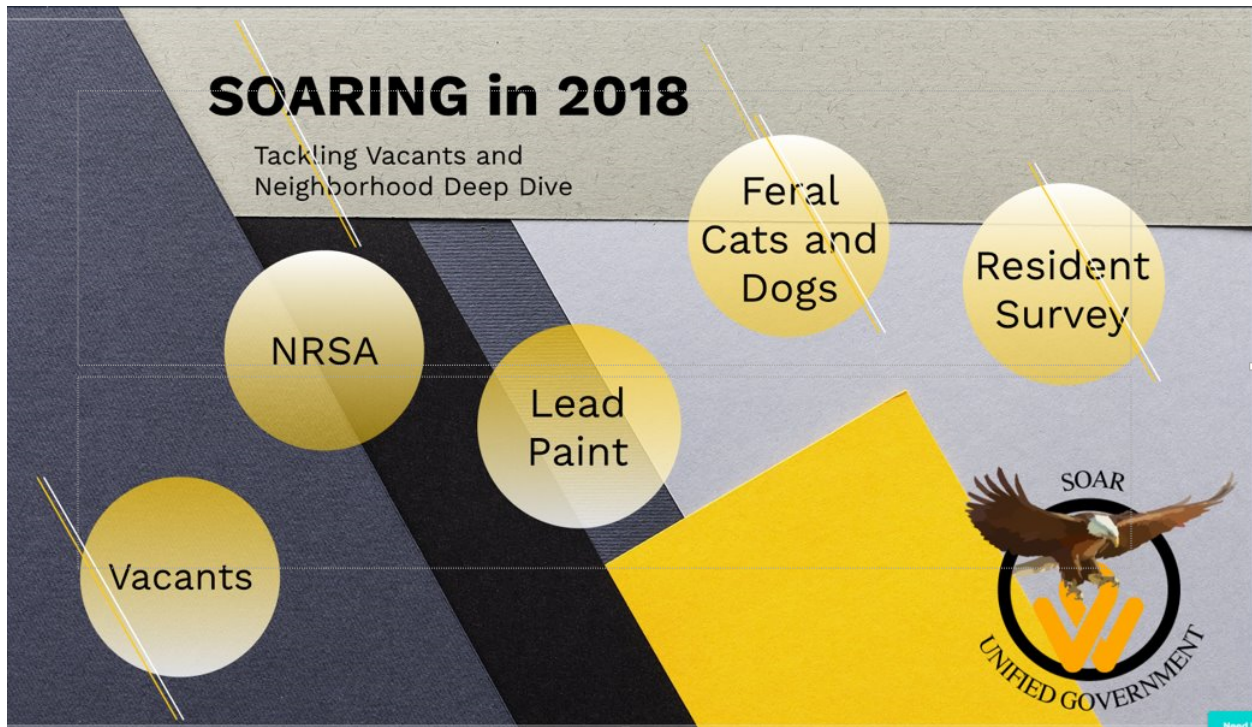
Mayor Alvey said tonight we are here for a quarterly update on the SOAR Program.

Doug Bach, County Administrator, said that is where we're at as we move into 2018. We have all our departments active and working on all the different missions we have set forth that are under the heading of SOAR. We have our team here to give our quarterly update as to what's been going on so far this year and looking ahead to what we're going to be doing. With that, I'm going to turn this over to Assistant County Administrator Melissa Sieben.

Melissa Sieben, Assistant County Administrator, said we have a new format for our presentation tonight, but we did manage to get it printed out for you. We did miss two slides, I noticed, in printing so I do apologize but we will cover those on the screen and the actual full presentation will be uploaded later if you need those two slides for some reason.

Without further ado, I'm going to go ahead and turnover our first quarter update which actually ended March 30th to Tib Laughlin, General Services Director and Tax Sale Extraordinaire today.

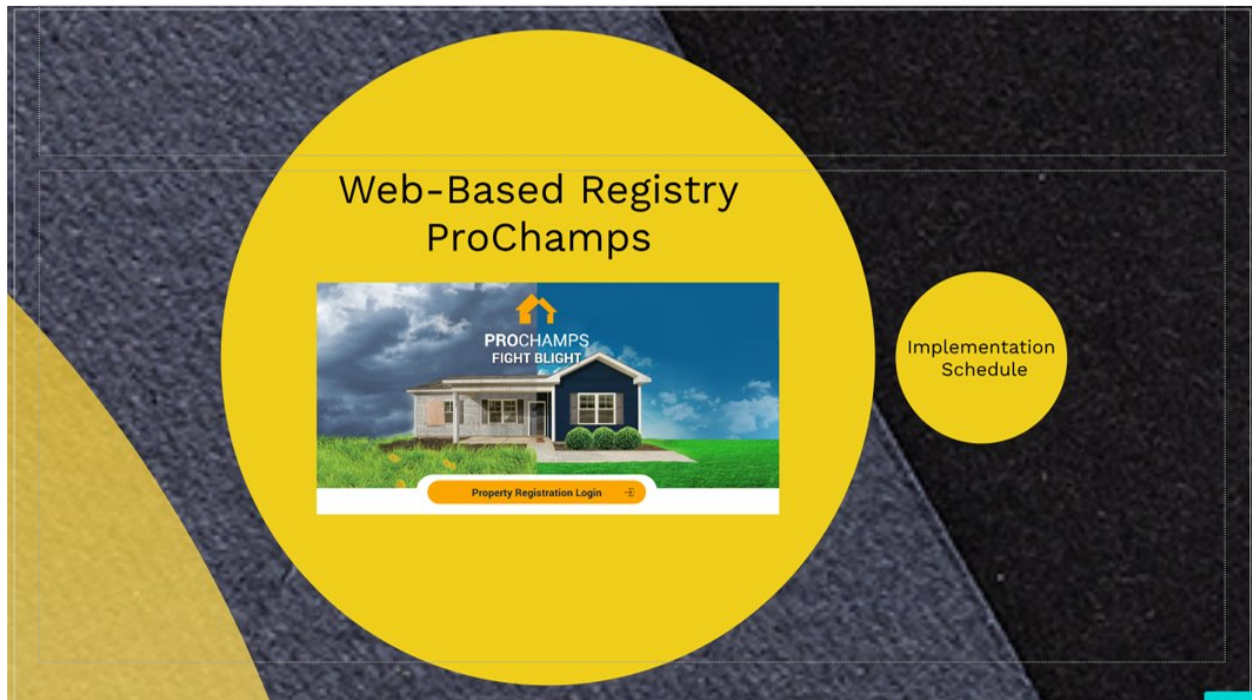
Tib Laughlin, General Services Director, said first I would like to thank all the staff and elected officials who came over to support the tax sale today no matter what the natural necessity that drove you there might have been. We had a successful tax sale day. Last count we had taken in \$1.2M in delinquent revenue before we started the work day this morning and we were at about \$600K in sales while we were waiting on those lists, people to come in and pay for what they bought.



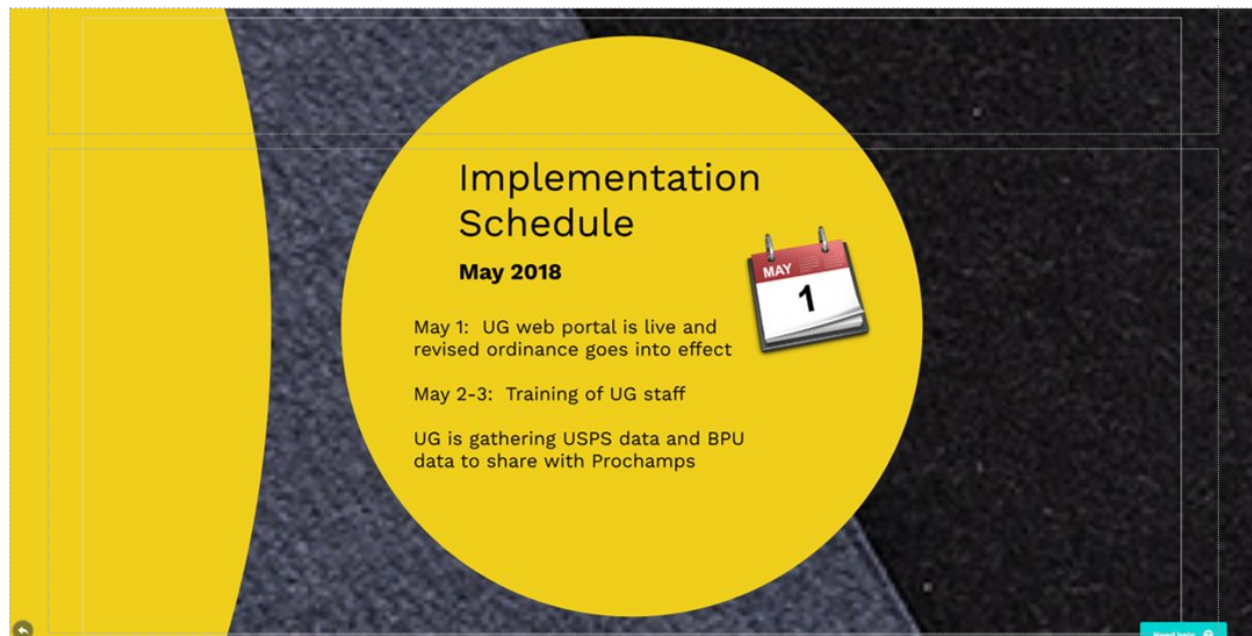
Now, to what you all have been waiting for, our quarterly SOAR review in the new format where we're going to touch on the NRSA District, Lead Paint Abatement, Feral cats and dogs issue, the very popular and well received resident survey, and my personal favorite, vacants.



We have an exciting activity in the area of vacants. As we've touched on before, it's my opinion that blight issues, unmowed grass, weeds; those are annoyance and they are a very valid annoyance, but vacancy is an actual danger. There is a danger posed by fire, there's a danger posed by crime, there is the danger to the value of our neighborhood.



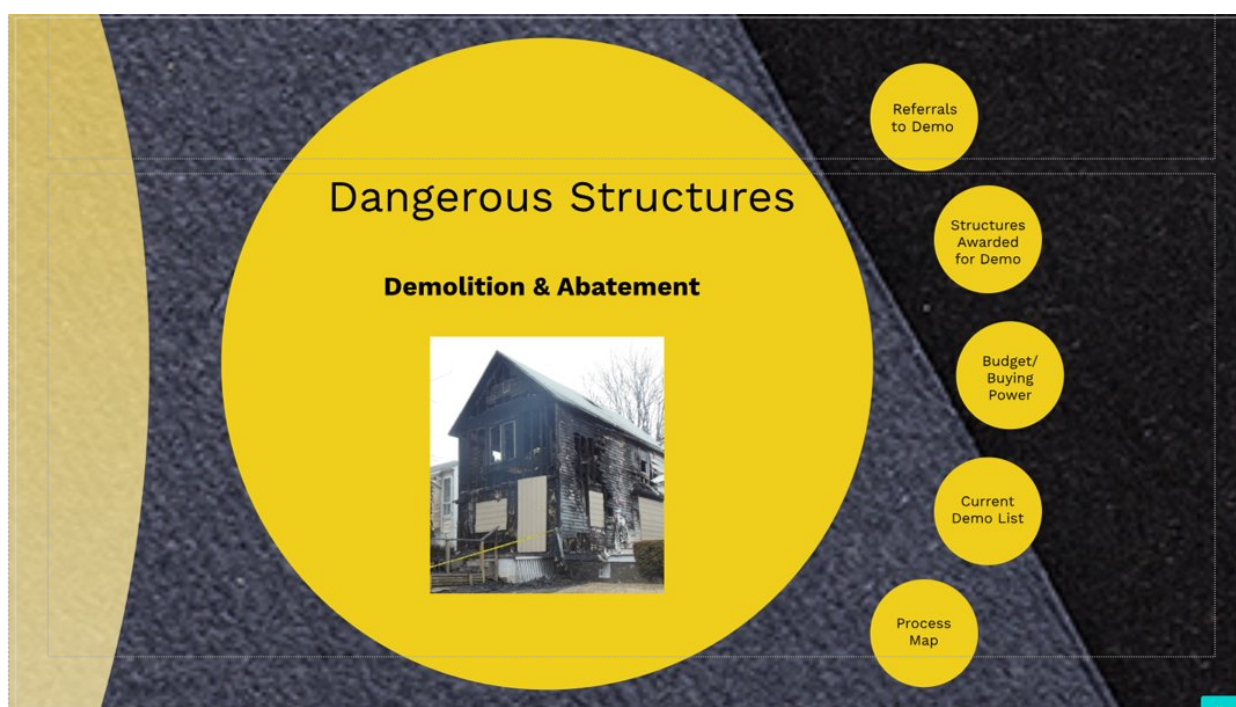
We are moving into an exciting time where our web-based registry comes live next month. We are in position.



We will have that live on May 1st. For everybody that calls in on May 1st we will start registering those vacants on May 2nd after we've trained on how to do that. We have a company that this is all web-based. We do not have to host it. They will be providing us with the big missing link

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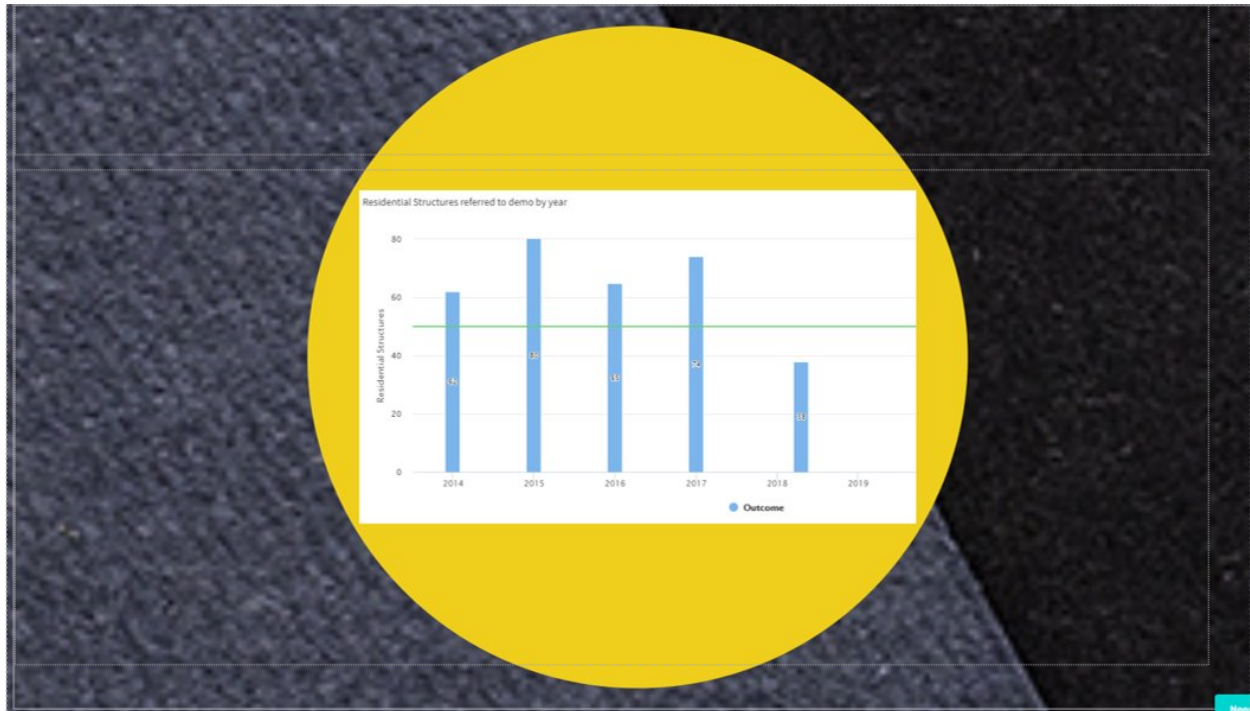
piece that we have not been able to get on our own which is all those mortgage company-own vacants that are sitting out there or as people like to call them those zombie mortgages. These people specialize first and foremost in contacting mortgage companies about their vacant property and there are thousands of those out there we have not been able to find. There's no trace, there is no way to find it. Mortgage company vacants traditionally don't catch our attention because they don't need boarding. There are not rundown, they have somebody mowing the lawn, but they are sitting out there and they're lowering our values and diminishing our neighborhoods and now we have a way to get to them.



Dangerous Structures; we have until now referred to this as simply our demo list. Our demo list does not capture the actual significance of what's on there. We have subdivided our demo list into those dangerous structures. Those are the ones that are imminently going to fall down. They are going to fall on a neighbor's house, they're going to fall on someone; there is no saving those. Those are treated differently than the ones that will fall down in 10-20 years if we leave them alone.

We have worked on shifting some of our—we've got a huge budget for demolition and we have been doing a great job at demoing houses. So great, in fact, some people have asked, should we be knocking all of these down. Further down the list we will be talking about our

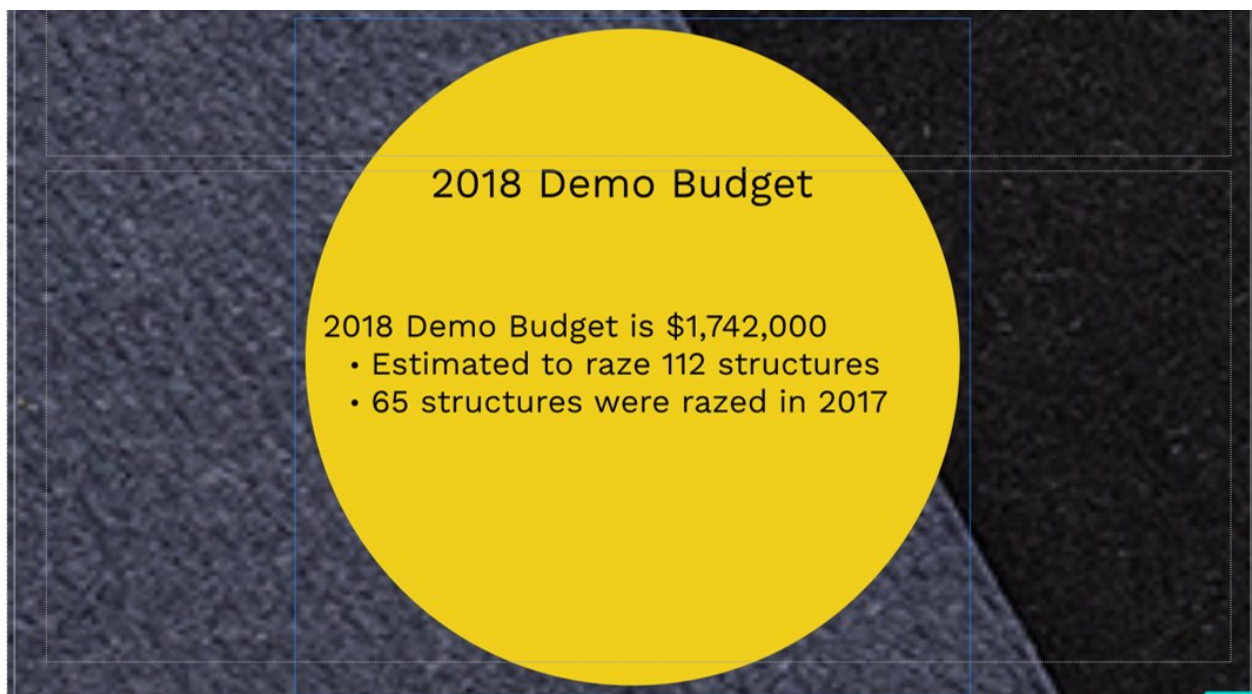
process improvements where we are taking a second look at whether we should be knocking all of these down or if they are salvageable.



For everybody who can read that, we've had 38 referred this year. You will have to take that on faith until the magnifying glass comes out.



We currently have 42 structures that are out for bid and we are ready to go as soon as Erin awards those contracts. They are being looked at and ready to go. Nineteen of those are Land Bank, three are on the dangerous list which are on a shorter timetable.

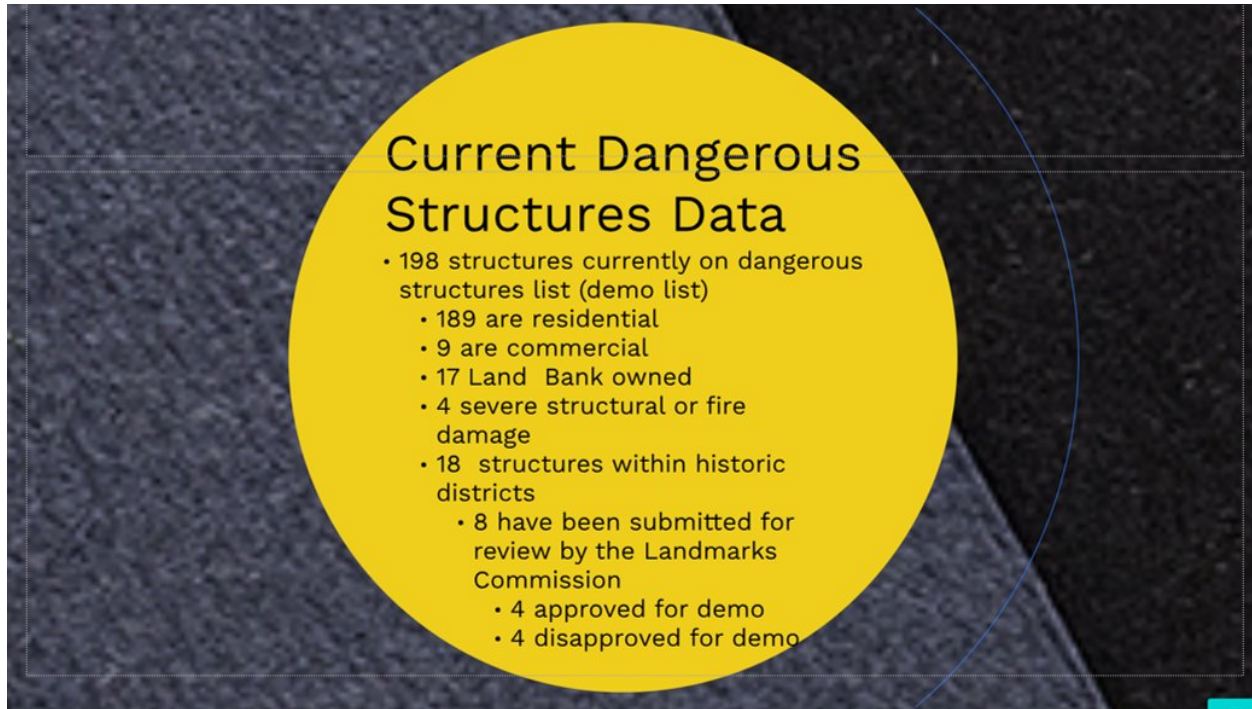


Our very lush demo budget is still healthy. We estimate we can do at least 112 structures with that money and last year we did half that.

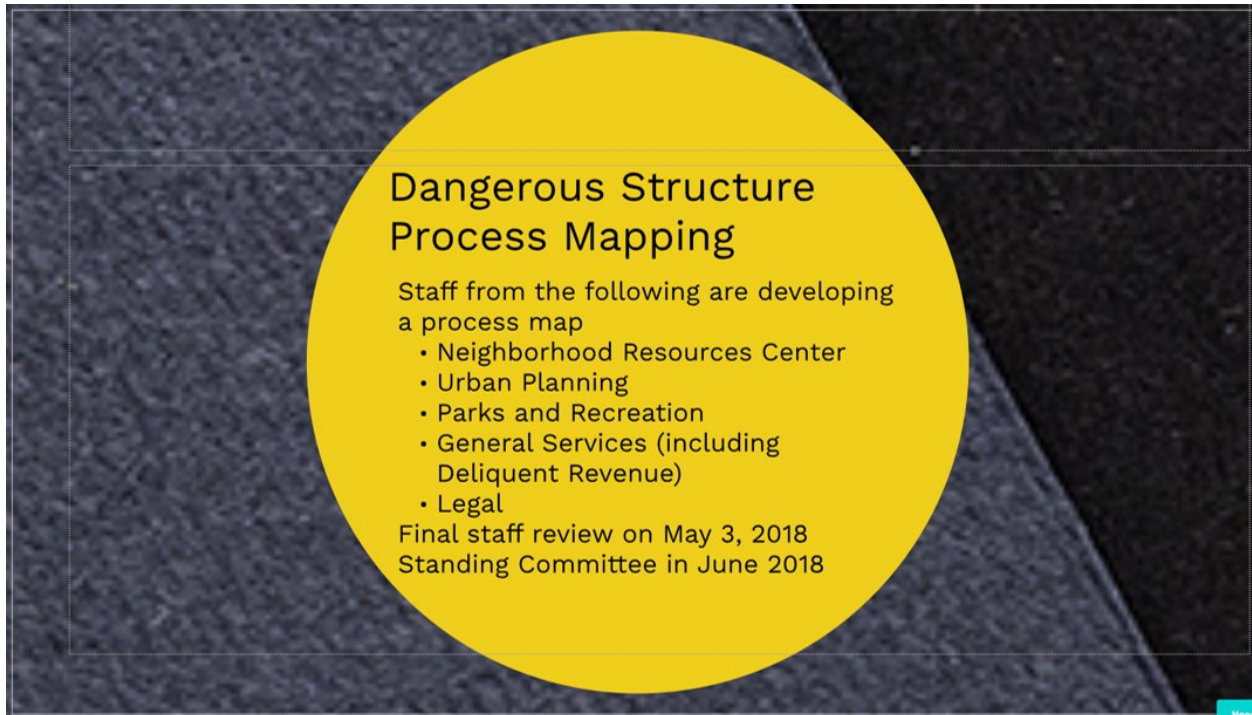
Now we are going to move away from just reading slides to—because I think you all can read.

Commissioner Bynum said can I ask you a question now that relates to demo? Commissioner Townsend and I and Commissioner Johnson was involved to a degree and had brought forward basically a whole list of Brown Avenue addresses and I know some of those have made their way to the demo list. This would be a good time for me to ask if any of those are in the 42 structures ready for bid or awarded. **Mr. Laughlin** said I'm going to go to the phone a friend option. **Erin Downing, Demolition Coordinator**, said of those 42, none of those are structures that are located on Brown. **Commissioner Bynum** said okay. I know that some of the Brown Avenue structures are on the demo list. **Ms. Downing** said yes. **Commissioner Bynum** said not in this group that's going to get taken care of soon. **Ms. Downing** said correct. There are a few commercial structures that are on Brown that I'm looking into that will be coming down soon. **Commissioner Bynum** said I will defer to Commissioner Townsend. We've asked for priority on these, but I'll let you take it from here.

Commissioner Townsend said some of those items, I'm going to go back and check by specific addresses. I think more of them were really needing to be followed-up on other code enforcements so the good thing is I don't think the majority of them were to be demolished, but we will certainly follow-up on which ones we have asked to be demolished and were scheduled to be and we're talking about a year ago. As you say, with a lush budget—**Commissioner Bynum** said I have the whole list and I forward it again and some were definitely demo and that's why I stopped to ask if any of them were in this group. You can proceed. **Mr. Laughlin** said the good news is, none that were only meant for code issues have been demolished or imminently going to be, maybe, maybe.



We started the year with 198 on the Dangerous Buildings list formerly known as the Demo list, 42 of those are posed to go. We are making big progress. We've seen a lot of demolition around town though Erin points out to me that not all of that is ours. Apparently, other people are following our lead and knocking down buildings that have needed it for a long time. Eighteen of those are sitting within the buffer zone of historic districts. We are giving those a much harder look at how we handle those. Erin is taking those in front of the Landmarks Commission. If it truly needs it, it truly needs it, but if there is any other option; that is what we are looking at, is what we can save. For years, because the final stop for codes because they could not get things into the tax sale in a timely manner was to put the things on the demo list as desperation. In our new world, when you request it, it goes in the tax sale if it's eligible so we are reviewing how we move things through this process and making sure that nothing salvageable is being knocked down.



As part of that, you see the departments that have worked together on a process map. Instead of pushing things in desperation to codes, we will first go to the tax sale. The net result of that is going to be either it's salvageable by someone in the public or it ends up in the Land Bank where we then show it to our demo pool. We're taking to our rehab pool when opportunity knocks so we're taking two more bites of the apple of trying to solve this problem. When it comes down to time that it actually has to be demolished, we own the building which makes it a vastly simpler process to demo it. It is not as if when we demoed it while you still owned it, we ever collected those demo fees from you. In fact, it's an impediment to the tax sale process if we have to knock your house down, add that \$15K to your tax bill, we now have to wait an extra year for that to become delinquent before we could move that to the tax sale. So, if you've got somebody who wants to build on that, they can't for at least another year. This process takes a little more time on the frontend, much more affective on the backend. Oh yes, and it saves buildings.

We are working up a list of our Demos to Diamonds houses. Houses that we had given up on either privately or through our Rehab Program people have turned around when we thought they weren't salvageable.



Boarding; one of our most exciting topics. That is one of the things we hear most about from the public that we are getting out there and boarding. Now, we've have consolidated our Boarding Program. Parks and Rec is doing all the boarding now. We used to do that through both Code Enforcement and through the Land Bank. We now have one person managing our boarding contracts, we have previously established one set of standards, you all saw those last summer. We now treat boarding as if we are handling something that is an asset instead of just an albatross.

Now, for those buildings on our Dangerous Buildings list that are an imminent danger, we board to a different standard. We get that boarded up because it's going to be boarded for less than 30 days. When we treat this as an asset, we board it securely in ways that preserve the windows and the frames. We don't screw into the frames anymore and we put a door on that thing so we can open it up and show it to our rehabbers. It's a huge change from how we've done business. It does cost us about twice as much to board.

Abatement Boarding Challenge

Abatement Boarding:

\$28,000 in abatement boarding for 2018

- average structure costs \$500 or around 56 structures under prior boarding process
- new process averages \$1000 or only 28 structures for 2018
- 41 on the list currently for boarding
- 14 have been bid to date
- Funding will run out soon..
- 2017 funding ran out on 9/18/17,

We used to board houses and it would cost us about \$500. We would take a sheet of plywood and a box of screws and we would screw those into whatever frame is available. It's not the most attractive thing, it's not the most secure thing, but it quick. It would cost us about \$500 each.

Land Bank Boarding Challenge

2018 Land Bank Boarding Budget: \$79,786

- Spent \$45,311 to date - averaging \$1000 - \$1200 per structure

2017 Land Banking Expenditures totaled \$128,160 for ~95 structures

To do this properly it costs us about \$1,000, that's a combination of---\$1,000 to \$1,200 based on our Land Bank experience, that's a combination of the fact that we are now boarding second-story windows when we can get at them, anything that is either already compromised or accessible is getting boarded. We've never touched second-story windows until this year.

We're also boarding more securely in ways that salvage that window frame so we're not compromising a thing that we're going to turn around and get back on the market. We're not damaging our own stock. The downside of that is that it costs more. We had \$28K at NRC last year for boarding. We ran out of boarding money on September 18th. We simply did not have boarding money. We scavenged in couches, we looked in drawers, we passed the hat to come up with boarding for the rest of the year, but we still fell short of what the need is. Remember, right now we are boarding when someone complains. I have had a commissioner, I'm not going to name names, say to me if I see this I know staff sees this; why do I have to call and make it a complaint before we act. Part of the reason is, there is not the budget to address it at anything but a complaint driven basis right now.

It looks even worse when we move to the Land Bank budget. They had a bigger budget, almost \$80K, but they've been using the new system all year long that costs twice as much. They spent \$128K of their \$80K last year on boarding. You can see, they start almost \$50K short. By my estimate, about the time we reach July even though we've combined these two budgets, we will be out of boarding money again.

Now, I will turn it over to Melissa and move on to less gripping topics.



Ms. Sieben said on to some exciting neighborhood work.



This year is also the neighborhood deep dive and our exciting news about our Park Drive Neighborhood is that we received our NRSA designation from HUD. We have never had one of these. We've gone for them before, but never were approved. We did receive approval back in

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February as some of you may know. We're really excited about this. It is going to be a great amount of work for staff and we have a cadre of working on this. Wilba Miller from Community Development is leading the group with myself and Logan Masenthin who is our Intern currently and will become our SOAR Donator here shortly and other CD staff and folks throughout the UG are also helping us.



So far, this year we've hosted three subcommittee meetings with our external stakeholders. These groups range from 10 to 20 participants and they are helping us set out our neighborhood work for this year. We're being very deliberate about what we're going to do because we know we have only one or two shots to get people's attention and when we do that, we want to be as constructive as we possibly can be.

Partnered with Girl Scouts to create the Grandview Park Girl Scout troop - 9 girls now. These girls have received:

- A programming robots badge
- A health badge

They have also conducted a cleaning service project to give back to Grandview Park.



With that being said, one of the great things that started this year through some kind of connections through our Rotary Club here downtown is that we actually got a partnership started with the Girl Scouts in this neighborhood. They are already doing things like building robots and doing health badges, which is great, because part of the NRSA is also improving educational attainment and helping people kind of move beyond where they're at to be more successful.



Replaced 21 street signs
and a guardrail

We have also done some infrastructure work, not the kind of clamorous street stuff, but we've replaced 21 street signs that the neighborhood told us were missing or not in good shape as well as a guardrail in the area.

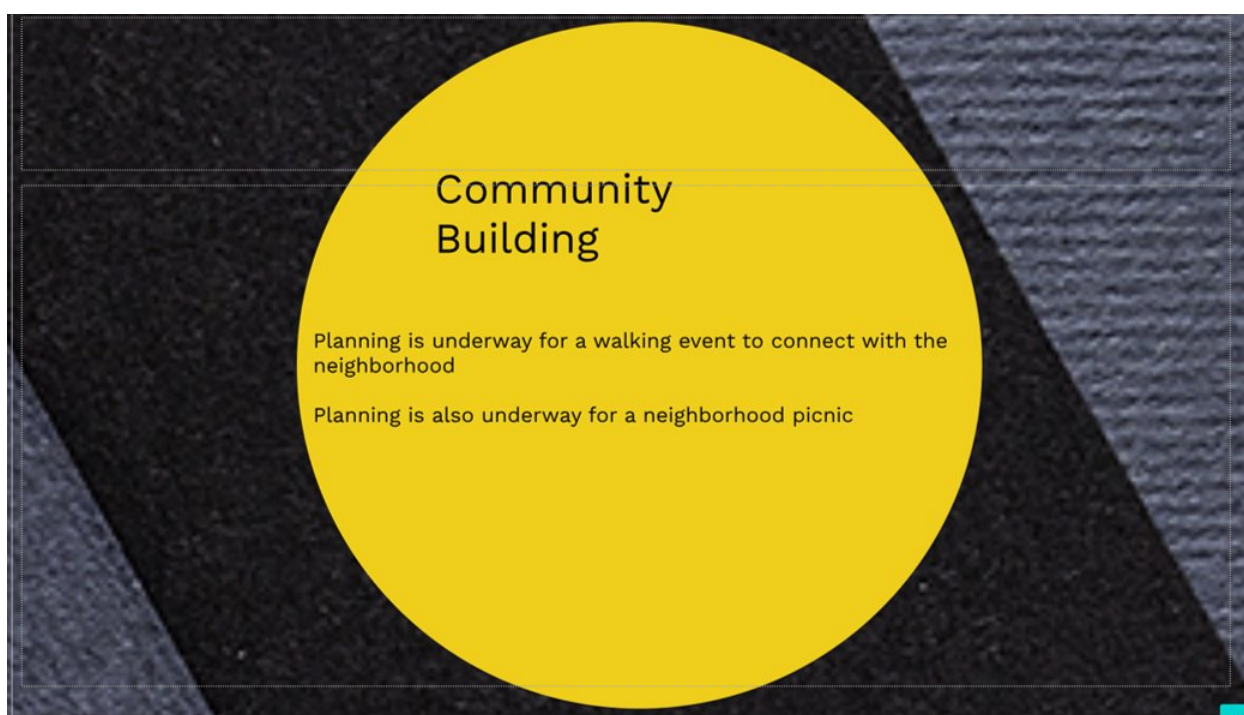


Preparing for 2018 street repair (including
street resurfacing, curb and gutter repair,
and sidewalk improvements) at:

- North 27th Street from Park Drive to Riverview Avenue
- Ridge Avenue from 18th Street to 26th Street

Lastly, for this year, we're currently bidding out and getting ready to do some construction work on North 27th Street from Park Drive to Riverview Avenue as well as Ridge Avenue from 18th Street to 26th Street. If you've driven any of those, they are definitely ready for some much-needed love and tender care.

Commissioner Bynum said in the NSRA work, is there any traffic study underway of a part of the initiative? I have two different specific traffic complaints from that area. **Ms. Sieben** said not that I'm aware of, but Public Works is often doing traffic studies. **Commissioner Bynum** said so, I can just share those—**Ms. Sieben** said if you share them with me, I will make sure we get them to them and we want to track that as work we're doing in this neighborhood to report to HUD so please share.

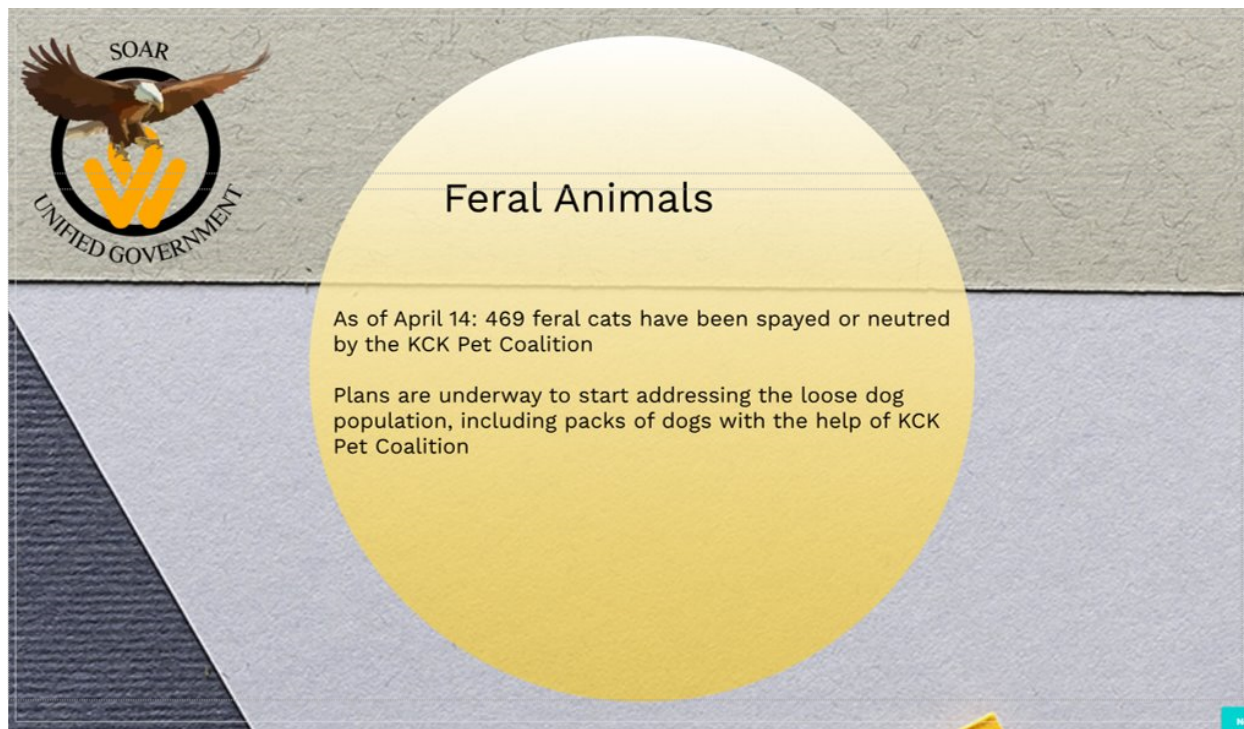


Ms. Sieben said our community building events as planned right now including walking events, one which will be done by NRC staff and then the other will follow by a combination of folks from our Community Development Department as well as our partners like Habitat for Humanities. We're going to come in and talk to you about what you need to do to keep your property maintained and then we're going to follow that with a group of us who can actually help to keep resources to do that. After that, we're going to host a community event where we are there to talk and have fun

with the neighborhood and maybe help connect each other in the neighborhood with resources such as their neighbors. So, that's what we have on the NRSA area so far this year.

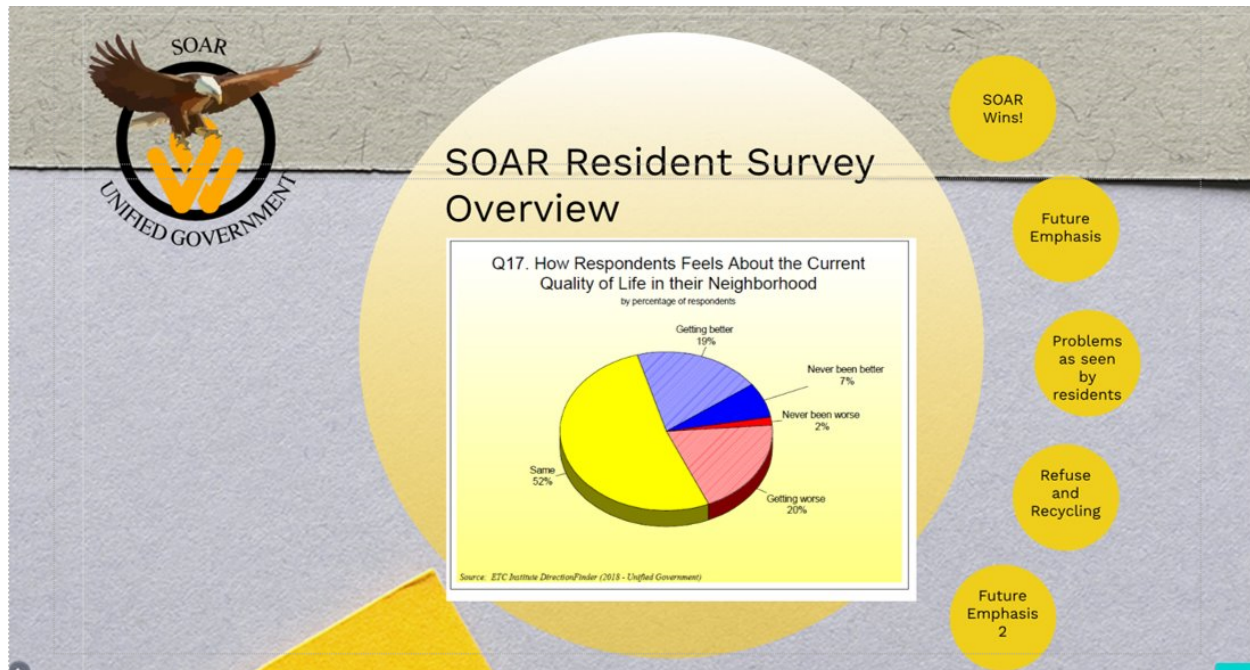


Another big initiative, which we will be working in the NRSA, but also throughout the community is our Lead Hazard Control Grant. Wilba has a tag line that her and her staff has developed, U.G. KNOW LEAD KCK Paint Program, which I think is quite cool and it actually kicks off on May 1st so next week. So, May Day, get ready for your KNOW LEAD.



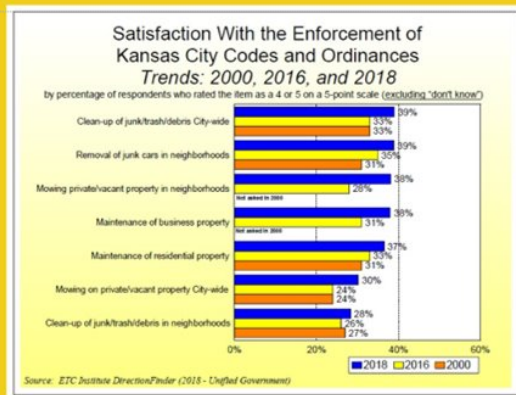
Another area that we're also covering with SOAR is our Feral Animal issues that we have throughout the community. I have been working with Commissioner Bynum and Commissioner Philbrook with the KCK Pet Coalition with our Animal Services Division and I'm pleased to report that so far this year we've spayed and neutered almost 500 feral cats in the community and there is a very deliberate process on this going on to help control that population. It's just amazing the love and care that all these volunteers are taking to help these animals in our community out. Also, we want to report that there is planning now underway, starting in this last quarter, the reporting on to how we're going to start to attack our loose or feral dog population in this community which I believe you will see in our *Citizen Survey* is definitely a concern of our residents.

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The last area that I'm going to cover today is just what we see as SOAR related Resident Survey results and we just did get our final information. I hope you all have received your documents either via email or hard copy. We want to highlight on this slide that a lot of our residents, 19% of them, think that things are getting better in their quality of life here and another 7% said it's never been better so we feel pretty good about those results. We're hoping we can move that 52% this next go-around.

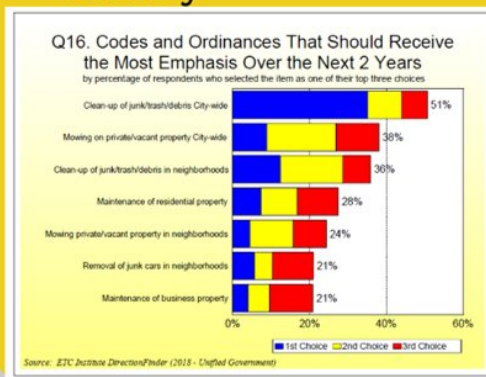
SOAR Wins!



Some of our SOAR Wins, we've discussed these before, but these are all of our code enforcement statistics which actually cover everything from Public Works to Parks to NRC. You can see the blue. The blue is where we moved the needle and most of these were more than 3 to 7% which is really impressive just in basically a year and a half worth of work trying to make our community look better and have it be noticed by our residents.

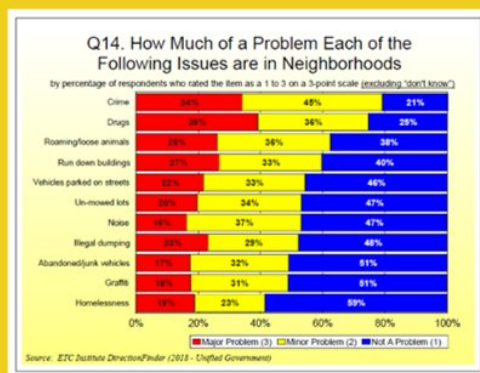
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SOAR Emphasis requested from Survey

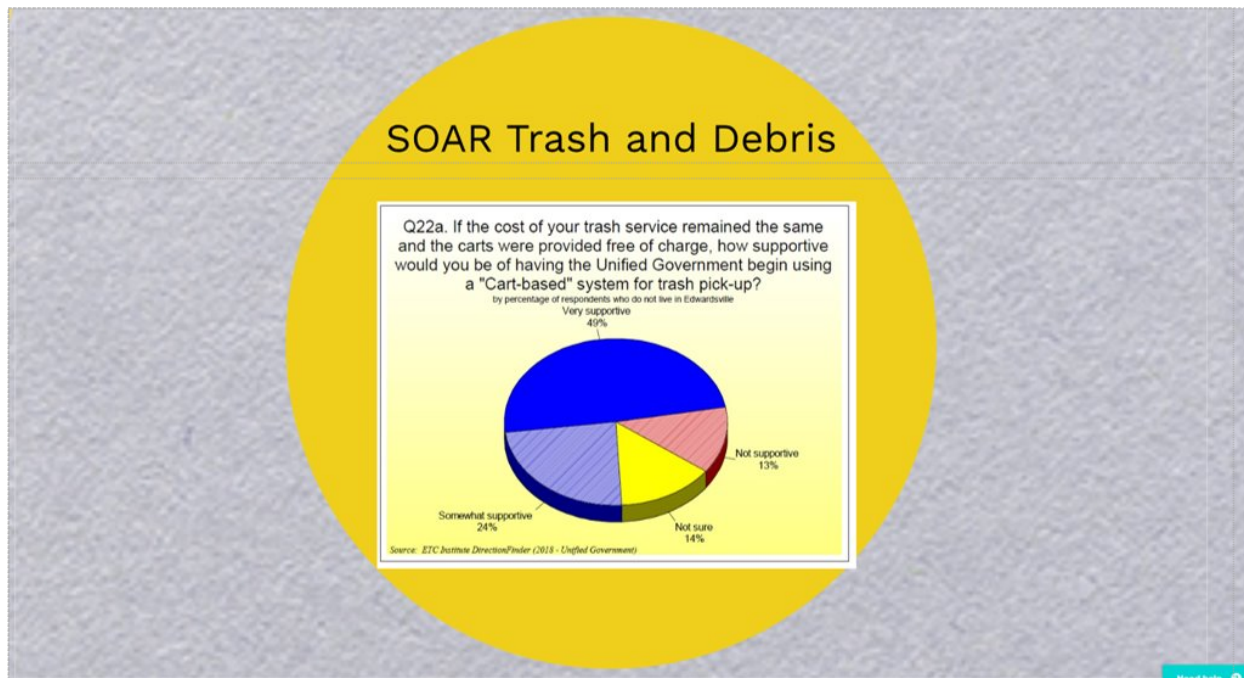


We did want to note that we feel like we are on the right track here again with what we're seeing and a lot of emphasis that folks are wanting to see is that clean-up of trash and debris. We feel like SOAR is poised to help do that over the next couple of years before we take this again and also just continuing to work on those vacant properties.

SOAR related concerns of residents



We did do a specific code related question in here that relates to the SOAR blight initiative and we just want to highlight Question 14 when you go into your Resident Survey just to kind of see where residents feel the impact of our blight in our neighborhoods. Crime is right up there, drugs, but then right after that is the animal issue that I was just talking about and then from there it is rundown buildings. So, I definitely think we're on the right track again.



One of the items I wanted to highlight because we were just before standing committee earlier this week talking about a pilot program for trash and recycling was Question 22a which we did ask in advance this year because SOAR was looking at how could we cut down the amount of junk and debris in our neighborhoods. Residents responded quite positively. Almost 50%--49% very supportive and 24% somewhat supportive on actually moving to a cart-based system which is why we felt confident to bring forth and that's we felt was the next phase after we asked this question which was consideration of a pilot program which we will be talking about on May 10th.

Why SOAR work is important...

2018 Importance-Satisfaction Rating
Kansas City, Kansas & Wyandotte County Community Survey
Neighborhood/Community Services

Category of Service	Most Important %	Most Important Rank	Satisfaction %	Satisfaction Rank	Importance-Satisfaction Rating	I-S Rating Rank
Very High Priority (IS > 20)						
Maintenance of City streets	59%	1	32%	13	0.4019	1
Code enforcement	30%	2	30%	15	0.2088	2
High Priority (IS 10-20)						
Communication with the public	27%	4	33%	12	0.1798	3
Storm water runoff/management system	22%	5	39%	10	0.1363	4
Public transportation	18%	8	38%	11	0.1148	5
Planning & zoning	16%	10	31%	14	0.1100	6
Parks & recreation facilities	21%	6	50%	5	0.1064	7

The last thing is why SOAR work is important and this is what I'm ending on. You can see here that out of all the things we surveyed our residents about, the top two priorities are the maintenance of streets and code enforcement and we feel that the work that is set out between the Commission's goals and the work of SOAR is truly trying to move the needle in that area.

Commissioner Kane said the comment you just made about the trash barrels, go to the *Wyandotte West* newspaper and see the response of the people and what they thought about that. They had the same thought I did, they didn't like it either. How much money is set-aside for SOAR? **Ms. Sieben** said I don't have a way to quantify SOAR because it's all our departments works. We put a number on it a couple years ago, but it's not—I don't know, Doug, I don't have a good answer for that. **Mr. Bach** said we tag different things that we're doing in there that are probably over a million dollars that are going towards SOAR. **Ms. Sieben** said they're not new initiatives. **Mr. Bach** said I mean some are towards trash or mowing which was one of the big ones that we started with. **Commissioner Kane** said I would like to see a map with little dots of where we've done the work. We do that in a lot of other things that we do and I think that would be interesting what we've done six here, five there, four there. **Mr. Bach** said okay. We will look and see if that's something that makes sense with how we're doing some of these programs. **Commissioner Kane** said it would help me explain how we spent X amount dollars in X amount of areas because I don't

want to just say well we spent a million dollars, but I can't tell you where it was at. **Ms. Sieben** said mowing would be on every Land Bank property and any property the UG is currently mowing. That was also to create additional rounds of mowing in UG parks in addition to Land Bank. A lot of the initial dollars was mowing dollars, probably half of that was mowing dollars. **Mr. Bach** said we will be able to put some of it for sure on the map.

Commissioner McKiernan said one thing you didn't put on your Resident Survey slides that I was looking at that I thought was also very heartening is that if you go back, and it's in the benchmarks area, where we're benchmarked against the metro and against, I think, it's the entire United States; the average in the Kansas City metro. Things like overall quality of life in Wyandotte County from 2016 to 2018, it's only a 2% increase but it's an increase. How well the county is planning for growth, increase. Overall quality of city and county services, increase. Overall image of Wyandotte County, increase and so there has also been in those benchmarking as we think about globalling regardless of each individual city and county service, as we think globally about it, I think we should also be encouraged by the fact that there is an overall increase in the perception of the image and the quality of life here. So, good job.

Commissioner Townsend said I too would like to commend everyone who has worked on this project. There were things that this Commission started a couple of years ago like the mowing all over the city to take better care that now we put under the umbrella of SOAR, but there are so many other things. You're right, a small victory is a victory and an improvement is an improvement and we want to keep moving that way.

Going back to money needed for the particular purpose of boarding, what would be the number? If we could average what we did last year, what we didn't do because we ran out of money, so as we go into budget we can kind of get a number in our mind? If we want to do X houses, how much that's going to take and I'm not asking for that number now, but just to more specifically quantify like the Commission did last year when we said we're going to increase the budget specifically to do additional demolition. Let's budget for that. I would like to see later some number to equate what we want to strive to do for the next year. **Ms. Sieben** said that is why we're trying to get a firm handle on the conversion to Parks handling the boarding for the Unified

Government and that coordination and create some efficiencies. We should have a solid number here within the next few weeks.

Commissioner McKiernan said I do have one more thing. Tib, you said earlier you wouldn't rat out the commissioner who says if I drive by it and see it, okay it was me, but if in fact one of the things that is stopping us from making progress in those areas, as you said, hey we all see it but we don't have the budget to go after it then we should have heard two months ago about the specific budget needs. I mean, we're building the budget right now and so I think we should hear in the process of building the budget—so it doesn't come as a yellow sheet item, so it's built-in from the very beginning. It's not a late change, oh, we need more; oh, where is that money going to come from, but it's built from the very beginning. **Ms. Sieben** said it's not a yellow sheet yet. **Commissioner McKiernan** said okay, good.

Mayor Alvey said thank you for the presentation. We will now proceed to the Commission Chamber for the graduation ceremony for the Wyandotte County Sheriff's Office that starts at 6:00 p.m.

MAYOR ALVEY ADJOURNED
THE MEETING AT 5:31 p.m.

dt

Bridgette D. Cobbins
Unified Government Clerk

April 26, 2018