

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

SPECIAL SESSION, THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 2021

The Unified Government Commission of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, met in Special Session, Thursday, June 24, 2021, with ten members present remotely via Zoom, by phone or in person. Bynum, Commissioner At-Large First District; Burroughs, Commissioner At-Large Second District; Townsend, Commissioner First District; McKiernan, Commissioner Second District; Ramirez, Commissioner Third District; Johnson, Commissioner Fourth District; Markley, Commissioner Sixth District; Walters, Commissioner Seventh District; Philbrook, Commissioner Eighth District; and Alvey, Mayor/CEO presiding. Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; was absent. The following officials were also in attendance: Doug Bach, County Administrator; Bridgette Cobbins, Interim Assistant County Administrator; Alan Howze & Melissa Sieben, Assistant County Administrator's; Brett Deichler, Interim Unified Government Clerk; Misty Brown, Chief Counsel; Angel Obert, Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation; Ashley Hand, Director of Strategic Communication; Jeff Fisher, Executive Director of Public Works; Dave Reno, Public Information Officer for Public Works; Rob Anderson, Public Works Asset Manager; Alley Porter, Commission Liaison; Rocki Mayes, Program Supervisor in County Administrator's Office; and John Kelly, Director of Buildings & Logistics.

MAYOR ALVEY said before I call the meeting to order, I want to announce that due to COVID-19, we have individuals attending remotely as well as on-site. All participants joining by phone should mute their phones when not speaking to avoid background noise. During the meeting, please make sure that you announce yourself by name and title every time you speak so the public that is participating knows who is speaking. This is critical given the number of remote participants in his current guidance from the Kansas Attorney General.

MAYOR ALVEY called the meeting to order.

MAYOR ALVEY said I would ask the Clerk to announce the meeting and call the roll.

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, Townsend, McKiernan, Ramirez, Johnson, Markley, Walters, Philbrook, Bynum, Alvey.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL SESSION of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, to be held Thursday, June 24, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. in the fifth floor conference room for a Commission Infrastructure Committee meeting.

Due to COVID-19 the public will be able to observe or listen to the meeting live on YouTube or UGTV or through Zoom for the special meeting portion only.

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 we are attempting, as a Commission, to grapple with the very significant infrastructure needs that face our community. I know that each one of us continuously receive questions and emails from constituents asking for our help to solve a particular infrastructure problem whether it is poor street conditions, drainage ditches, culverts, street lights, and so most of the time our answer is, well, we would like to do this, but it has to go through the process and, of course, we have limited resources. In an attempt to try and help us solve those problems that our constituents face and to really have a long-term strategy of improving the basic infrastructure of our community to improve the quality of life throughout our city for our businesses, for our residents, we decided to put together this infrastructure overview and then we ultimately will break out into small committees to look at specific topics and take a deeper dive.

This structure, this was suggested by Commissioner Philbrook a few years ago, and it seems to be the right time now for us to really come together as a Commission and work with staff to, first of all, identify the general areas of need across the community. We've identified generally six buckets or six areas of specific interest: Streets, bridges, Unified Government facilities, parks and recreation, street lighting, stormwater/sewer and sanitary sewer. So, those six general areas are the basic infrastructure of the community that are under the direct control of the Unified

Government Commission. Of course, there is also the electrical infrastructure and the water supply that is handled by the Board of Public Utilities.

The way we're approaching this, as I said, this is a very high level overview—tonight's session is a very high level overview of the needs—infrastructure needs in our community. We put them into kind of three general areas. The first are those emergency needs, so there might be infrastructure out there that is already at the point of failure, has failed or is close to the point of failure. That would be, for instance, a culvert that was overwhelmed by recent storms and now has caused a collapse in the roadway or perhaps even the—we've seen pictures of the guardrail falling off the side of the road because the culvert has collapsed, that is an example of a failure, or a street flooding because the culverts and the ditches were not able to be maintained sufficiently so there was significant water backup, which again, causes damage to the road infrastructure and to neighboring properties.

The first thing we want to look at are the emergency needs, those that are in failure or at the point of failure. Secondly, in general, we would look at those needs that are urgent. That is those things that if we do not address them within the next several years, will deteriorate and become emergency needs, that they will then fail. So, that's a little bit further out, perhaps, a three to seven year look, but again, those are the urgent needs that have to be addressed or they will continue to deteriorate into an emergency or a failure situation.

Then, finally, a longer term look, 15, 20, 25 years out, things like our combined sewer overflow that is under the regulation of our consent decree or partial consent decree with the EPA, what are our needs there? So, we want to see—wrap our arms around the total complex of infrastructure needs in our community, but we also need to know what financial resources are available to us, what financial resources are sufficient currently, what are not sufficient, and have to be somehow supplemented and then where might we look for that funding.

Again, this is meant to be a very high level look and as a Commission we will take roles on subcommittees and those subcommittees will divide into three general areas just for convenience to combine and that would be streets and street lights, UG facilities and parks and rec., and stormwater and sanitary sewer. Given that introduction, I now will pass it on to Mr. Bach.

Doug Bach, County Administrator, said, Mayor, with that very eloquent description of the topic that we have tonight, I'm going to go ahead and turn this over to our Assistant County

Administrator Melissa Sieben who oversees our Public Works area and other areas of infrastructure for introduction of her team to make presentation tonight.

Melissa Sieben, Assistant County Administrator, said we're really excited tonight to kickoff this conversation and this process that the Commission and the Mayor's Office have set upon and to start to really try to figure out how we can help the community address the needs that it has with infrastructure.

Tonight, we have with us Jeff Fisher and his crew, and I will let him introduce because I'm not quite sure who all is speaking.

Jeff Fisher, Executive Director of Public Works, said I will make quick introductions and then we'll need the staff to be made presenters. I have Dave Reno, Public Works Public Information Officer; Rob Anderson, Asset Manager; and Angel Obert from Parks & Recreation. We also have staff from Public Works on standby joining us in case later on they need to participate, but at least they will be here to listen because they will be involved helping Public Works and the elected body of those subcommittees.

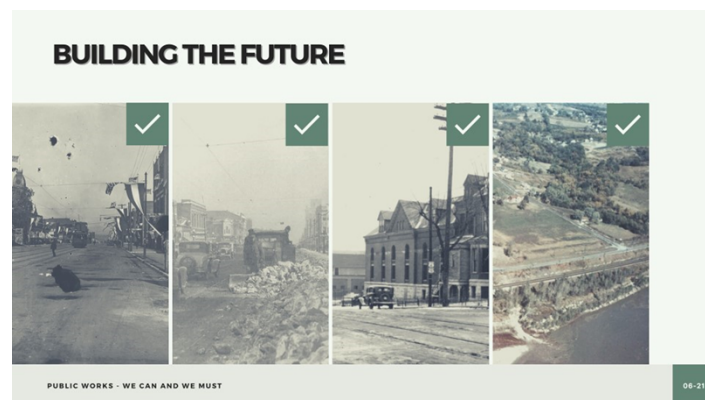


As stated already, this is exciting. This is a big challenge ahead of us. The Steering Committee, we believe, will be very helpful in developing strategies and so the Public Works team and Parks & Rec is ready to go. This is a result of a lot of work from staff of three years of data collection, evaluating that data until—what is that story it's telling us and then sharing that with the Commission and then the Commission listening and engaging this problem. It's very exciting.

I believe we have a good chance, the UG, to be uncommon in the world of local government and really use this initiative to actually change the trajectory of this community in a meaningful way regarding infrastructure. Public infrastructure, streets, bridges, buildings, sewer, water, etc.; it's the foundation of a civil society and the quality of life for a community. It's necessary for economic vitality. Without dependable and reliable infrastructure a community cannot thrive, it cannot be enduring.



A little story here. A couple months ago the Public Works team was working on things that required our strategic plan and we were referencing that plan and our vision statement at the time and we realized that our vision statement did not fit, and it did not fit us, and did not fit our circumstances we're working in. After some discussion, we're real excited about our new vision statement. It's positive and it's urgent and it fits the circumstances. So, this will be our vision, our motto, this is what we rally around to do the work that the community expects from us, so we're excited about that.



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Of course, much of the community infrastructure is decades old, some over 100 years old. These assets require constant maintenance every year. The name of the game in our business is invest wisely and the way that gets the most out of that infrastructure.



20-Year Vision

01 Thinking deeply
Minnesota Avenue was constructed more than 100 years ago, and it is still used today. What can we do to help future generations?

02 Understanding needs
How do we balance our current and future desires with our current and future needs?

03 Prioritizing our direction
How can prioritization and clear objectives help us plan for future generations?

PUBLIC WORKS - WE CAN AND WE MUST

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In order to be most meaningful, I'm suggesting the committees think deeply and broadly. We'll take whatever time is necessary to understand the issues so that we have a solid short-term and long-term set of strategies in the end. I would also suggest we think with outcomes in mind so that strategies are properly prioritized.



Enterprise Utility Funds

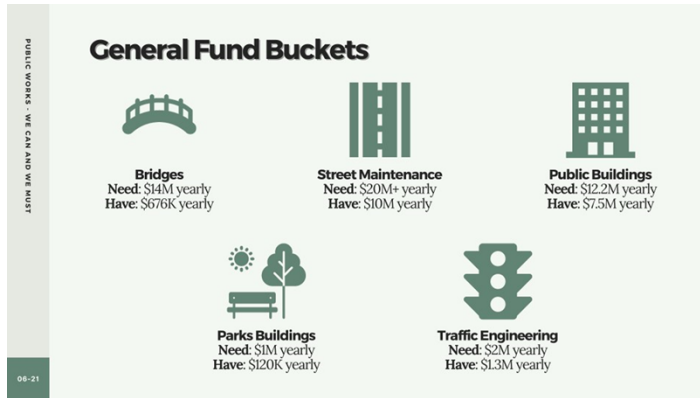
Wastewater
Need: \$36M yearly
Have: \$36M yearly

Stormwater
Need: \$10.8M yearly
Have: \$3.4M yearly

PUBLIC WORKS - WE CAN AND WE MUST

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Enterprise Funds, the Wastewater Funds, Stormwater Funds, are functionally different from the other buckets that we're going to be discussing. Wastewater, as was mentioned, is a very mature program, the needs are being funded. There is a plan, there is a consent decree. Stormwater; however, as we know it, the needs are far greater than the funding. We're well aware of that and I know we still have work to do there and staff is prepared tentatively to make a presentation on July 15th to talk more about stormwater.



These are programs here that are competing with each other and competing with other programs within the General Fund and competing for those same dollars so this is the bulk of the challenge, I think.

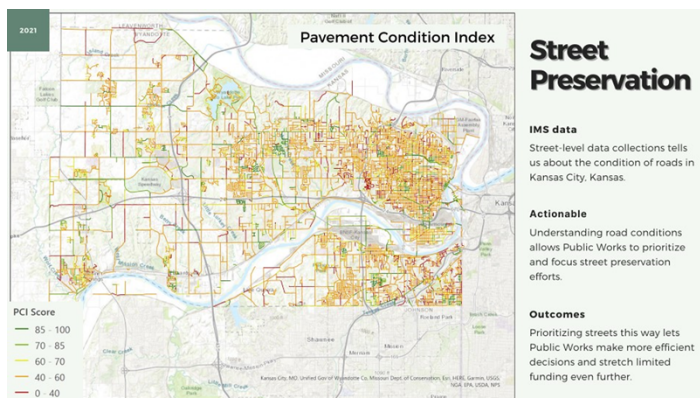


Now Angel Obert is going to join us and quickly highlight the issues of the Parks & Rec Department.

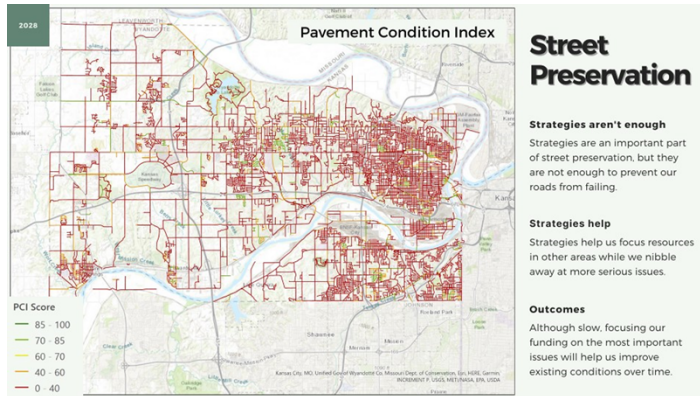
Angel Obert, Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation, said similar to what Jeff and his team has been doing, I know our Parks & Recreation we began doing the research back in 2017 through the master plan process. I know we've been presenting that information, but you'll see the three buckets here that we presented before and it's important to know that these three buckets are also ranked—they were ranked very highly from the community from the 2017 Master Plan. Each one of these three buckets being in the top five of the community's priority needs so you will see here what Parks & Recreation currently has funding for these buckets and then versus what really we need.



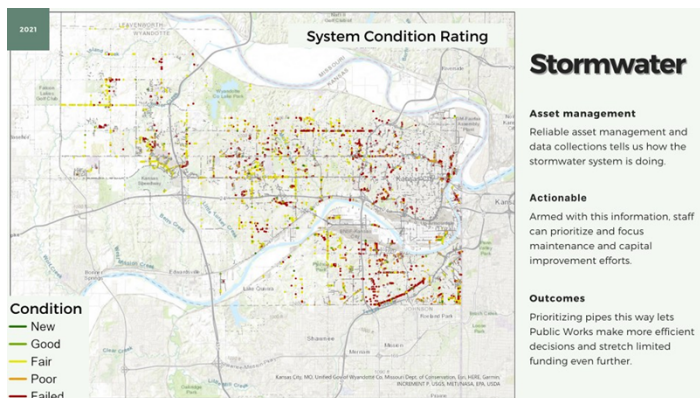
Mr. Fisher said the last discussion, a few months ago, I described the infrastructure situation as a crisis. Believe me, I thought long and hard before I made that statement. The fact is the community is experiencing deteriorating and failing infrastructure at a faster and faster pace. There is no doubt the UG is becoming more systematic and strategic about services it provides. There's been a lot of great work there and there's a lot of work to do.



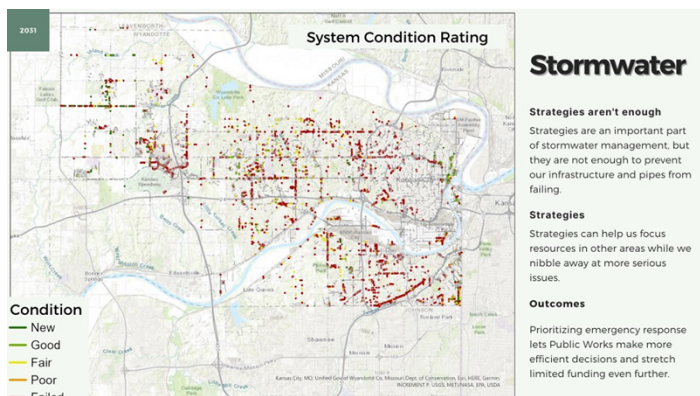
Street Maintenance continues to be the public's number one priority in citizen survey's, I believe, for the last three cycles and I think we would all agree it's warranted. Our street system is deteriorating faster than we can keep up with it. Our average pavement condition index rating is around 53 right now. We're getting ready to update that this year and that's out of a scale of 0-100, that 53. We've identified the goal to be 65. That doesn't seem like a big difference but that takes millions more per year every year for quite a while to get to that goal. In fact, we've been stating \$20 plus million a year for streets.



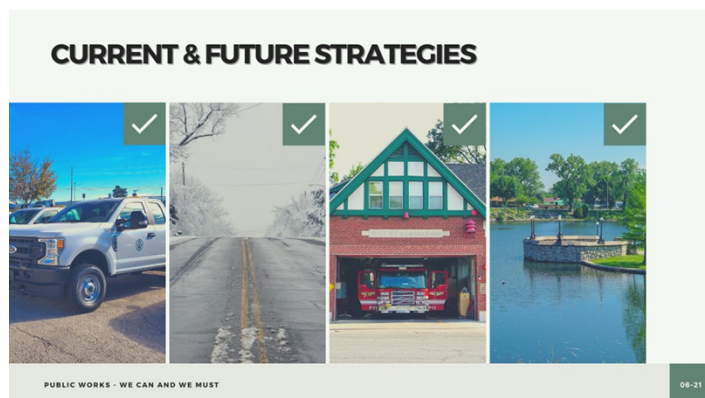
If we continue to invest at the same rate that we currently are, within the decade, the system made up primarily of poor and failed streets.



The stormwater system is a similar trajectory as the street system and they are very closely linked as we talked about before.

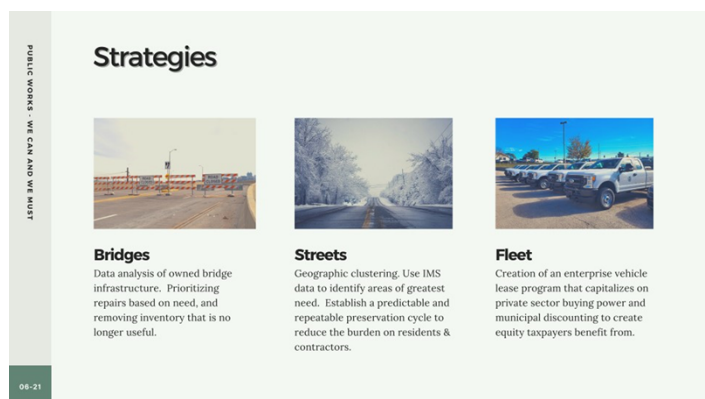


If we continue to invest in the stormwater system as we currently are, the same thing will happen as streets. Within 10 years the system will largely poor and fail.



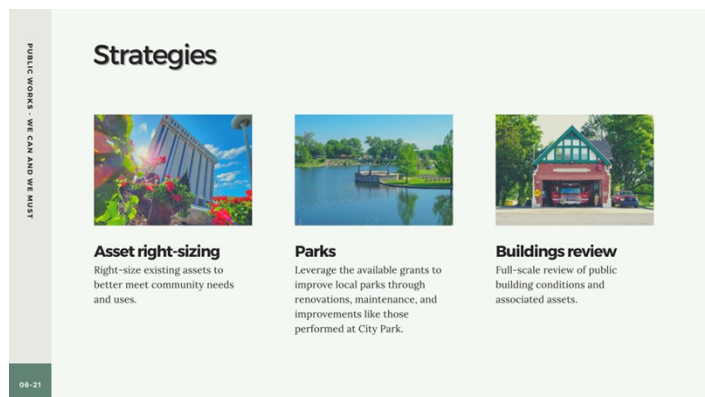
Dave Reno is going to highlight some of the new strategies and ongoing strategies and future strategies to support the committee's work ahead of them.

Dave Reno, Public Information Officer for Public Works, said as a team strategies play an important part in the work that we do and they have helped us deliver better service to the community. Strategies are also consistent with our vision, We Can and We Must. Strategies help us move things forward and they help us do so in a positive manner. I'm going to run through some of the strategies we've deployed over the past several years and a few more that we're working to put into action now.



As Jeff called out, we have serious challenges before us both on the streets and bridges fronts, but we are beginning to understand these challenges more fully and we're approaching them in new ways. IMS data collection combined with geographic clustering has helped us establish a predictable and repeatable street maintenance cycle that stretches dollars further while simultaneously reducing the construction burden residents and contractors field.

Data analysis of our own bridge inventory is helping us prioritize repairs and we do that based on need while also identifying those assets that the community may no longer need. Fleets is another important area where we've made great progress. Their enterprise vehicle lease program capitalizes on public sector buying power and municipal discounting to obtain, use and build equity in vehicles, but saves taxpayers money through reinvestment.



We've also taken a greater interest in our public buildings. How much does it cost to maintain City Hall or one of our community centers, how many light bulbs does Memorial Hall need, and are there more efficient bulbs we can use to reduce energy consumption. A full scale building review is a strategy that will help us make better data-driven decisions about the public spaces our community wants and needs.

We'll also work hard to leverage available outside funding. An excellent example of this is the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, WIFIA, which we were recently awarded by the EPA. The Turner Diagonal Federal Bill Grant and, of course, just leveraging the available grants to improve local parks through renovations, maintenance, and improvements like those performed at City Park here not too long ago.

Strategies

Stormwater
Transitioning the stormwater user fee will slow system deterioration and protect streets from unnecessary additional damage.

Inspections
Increasing inspection efforts and associated fees can prevent problems down the road and re-coup funds for taxpayers.

Asset management
Understanding the full extent of the Unified Government's assets and using data to make better maintenance and improvement decisions.

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Public Works is also always looking to the future. We're always asking ourselves about how we can do business better, how we can be more efficient and where can we improve. One of the strategies we would like to deploy in the future is the possibility of increasing inspection efforts to prevent problems from developing down the road and thinking about what may happen down the road, it really is something that we're obviously very interested in.

As Jeff mentioned, having a strong vision helps us craft our mission. It helps guide our activities and inspires us not to just think outside the box, but to think about multiple boxes and how they're related to one another.

As we've continued to work through our challenges, it really has become increasingly clear that asset management is the tool that helps us think about multiple boxes and how they're related to each other. Excellent asset management helps us step away from the realm of lone wolf strategies and into a place where we can understand the full extent of the Unified Government assets and then use data to help us create better maintenance and improvement decisions.

THE FOUNDATION OF STRATEGY

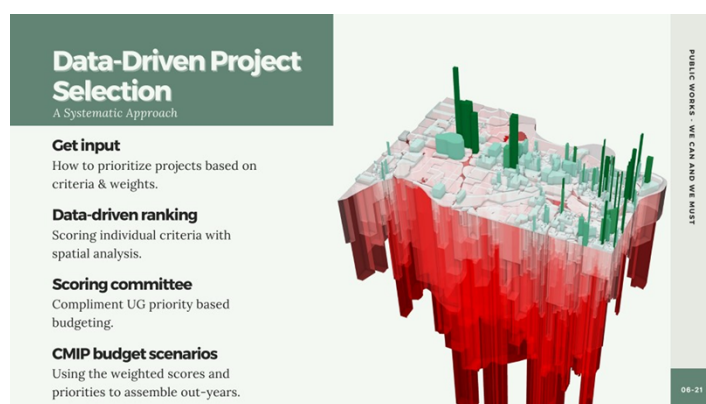
PUBLIC WORKS - WE CAN AND WE MUST

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I'm going to hand it over to Robbie and let him tell how asset management plays really a foundational role over the next several slides.

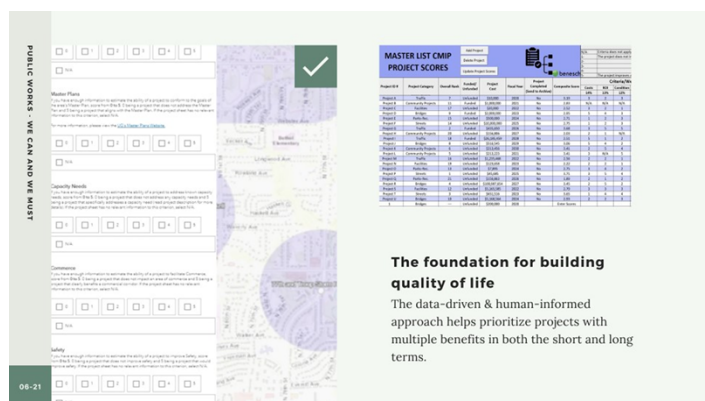
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Rob Anderson, Public Works Asset Manager, said over the past several years the Unified Government has conducted condition assessment surveys. First, I want to thank you for supporting that collection of data. It requires funding for us to do that. Second, this is the foundation of how we prioritize our path out of the crisis. We use the condition data and combination of other metrics outlined by the Planning Commission and the UG Board of Commissioners to plan outyears in the Capital Budget.



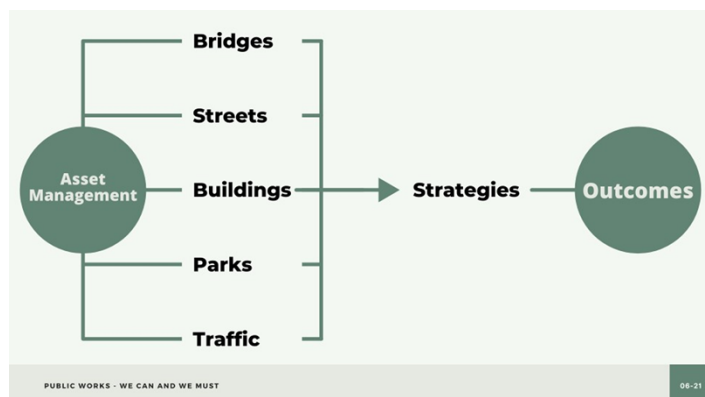
The key portion of your role in the process is to set the weights on the data-driven system. We will re-engage the Commission on the weights of the system later this fall. The system produces a data-driven ranking queue for unfunded projects. The list is reviewed by you in presentations and communicated with other utilities operating in a similar space. This process allows us to address multiple agencies needs in one sequence so we can reduce disruption to the community.

Based on budgets, we align different scenarios for outyear budget planning.



We, in Public Works, hear the community's concerns. We too believe in producing quality of life for our citizens and businesses. Considering current funding levels, the need to select projects that

produce Commission goals is amplified. Our ability to meet the needs of different parts of our community is wholly dependent on the funding levels.



Using the principals of asset management, we have to look at the totality of Unified Government needs to consider which asset categories we need to emphasize in both short and long-term strategies. We have needs across multiple asset categories here: bridges, streets, buildings, parks, and traffic. We need to know what outcomes we want to work backwards from to produce the society that the Commission believes in and what the community deserves. I'm going to pass it back.



Mr. Fisher said we'll finish—you know, staff is very excited to support the Commission and this committee and we're ready for that and I believe it can change. It can be really effective and instrumental in changing the trajectory of this community regarding its infrastructure, so we're ready to go.



We did make this presentation relatively short and simple knowing we had a couple hours if needed and wanted to leave that time for the Commission to ask us questions or have that dialogue, whatever you believe we need.

I'll pass it back to the Mayor and County Administrator and happy to entertain questions.

Mr. Bach said, Mayor, that does conclude our presentation and we are happy to stand and kind of work through what the expectations of the Commission are as you go into your committee structure. That way we can work through some of those issues and prepare information in advance as we come into that.

Mayor Alvey said thank you, Jeff, thank you staff for all of that. I'm open for questions from the Commission. Again, what we're doing is trying to prepare for us to go into sub-committees to really do a deeper dive into these areas. I think one of the things, certainly, I'm going to be expecting going into committee is, what are the current funding sources that are generating the revenues, the fund, whatever we're doing; how much more would be needed and then what are opportunities for additional funding.

For instance, Jeff, you mentioned the Water Infrastructure Financing Innovation Act and that comes to the EPA. I know there are certain requirements for that. For instance, it only funds up to 49% of the bill. It also requires that we have a dedicated revenue stream to pay off those bonds over time, but it's very favorable terms to us from the federal government, I think it's the treasury rate I think is how they determine that. If you could describe, for instance, the WIFIA and how that will work for us on our stormwater.

Mr. Fisher said it was exciting news to find out the UG was approved for that program and you're right, it is a very low interest loan program. You're also right that it does require that dedicated revenue source or in this case, the stormwater rate structure needs to be—we need to support that and be sustainable. It's a 49%--51% match from the local government and it allows us a lot of latitude to leverage other revenue streams, other needs so that we get—can create the most impact on the area as we can. It also gives us a lot of time, up to five years, to start paying on that once the construction is over.

So, it give's a lot of flexibility and there's a lot of advantages, and I believe we can get a lot more impact for the community than we normally would.

Mayor Alvey said so the comparison—you showed the contrast really between stormwater and wastewater. Wastewater if fully funded and that is done because the wastewater fee is sufficient to generate the revenues to take care of those needs. So, would we do it going to committee—what we're going to be looking for—what I would be looking for anyway, is right now it is sufficient long-term, do we have the structure in place to continue to maintain that infrastructure so it doesn't become urgent or fail. If not, long-term, what can we expect we would have to do in terms of additional funding sources for that? Again, as we move through this, at this point, wastewater is in—obviously, the funding source is sufficient to maintain maintenance. Will it be the same moving out seven years, will it be the same moving out 15 or 20 years, are there other systems that we will have to—capital projects, we'll have to take care of maybe 15 years out. Just so we know these in advance so that we have a good grasp.

I think that's really kind of what we're looking for as we move into this because I think so much of what we have to do moving forward is change the narrative in our community that we're worth investing in. That your neighborhood, your business deserves protection, deserves support, deserves the level of investment to improve the quality of life because when we back away from that and we see things deteriorate and fail, we're really ultimately saying it wasn't important enough to us.

We've really, even as an elected body, we have to come to that but perhaps even more so our community needs to come to that understanding that our community is worth the investment.

Commissioner Marley said we might have been going down a similar path in terms that I think the committee should be considering—I mean these discussions primary to these discussions has to be where is the money going to come from for the project that the subcommittee recommends. I know there is some American Recovery Plan money that could be applicable to some of these projects. Every subcommittee could probably spend every single dime of the money that's available from that source so, obviously, it's important that we balance those things, but whether that's the source or there's another source of funding, I think the subcommittee should be considering what do we do today that has both a short-term and long-term benefit because it's really easy to do a project today and say that's done, yay, good us, we're awesome. But for each project, different types of projects have different type of long-term benefits as well. Some of those may be financial in terms of just freeing up future money for our use for other things, but there are a variety of other things that might be impacted.

I think as subcommittees we should be thinking about, for each decision, for each project or opportunity what is the impact today and what is the long-term benefit. In my mind, if there's no long-term benefit, that's probably one that should go further along on the back burner because we need to set out a long-term strategy and I think that's really critical with that American Recovery Plan money for us to be able to say we've got this extra pocket of money. The reason we're going to use it on this project and not another one is because there's a long-term benefit that we can articulate. So, just my thoughts.

Commissioner Bynum said I think I would appreciate a more drafted timeline of big picture projects which I think Jeff and his team have given us in the packet of information and the presentation that we've seen here, but a deeper dive maybe into the more specific needed projects and buckets of money that can and could be used for the variety of projects that are all sitting on our to-do list. I also think that identifying the tools that we have in the toolbox to use against these projects, for example, I feel like maybe we have more opportunities than we've seen in a long time but to tackle some of the projects.

Mr. Fisher, you can correct me if I'm wrong, but I think we're going to see a remodel of the stormwater fee structure come forward soon, so obviously, the goal there is to—number one, put more equity into that stormwater collection system but, obviously, add additional dollars into the pot we use for stormwater. I think that's going to come forward. The WIFIA opportunity with

the very low interest is an opportunity we've not seen and then the rescue plan, the American Rescue Plan dollars that I think—I would be surprised if we didn't already have consensus among the Commission that, you know, a great majority of that money be spent on infrastructure.

It's exciting actually to know that there might actually be some solutions at hand rather than just raise taxes or cut something else away so that we can do some of this needed infrastructure. So, what I'm looking for with the subcommittee and full commission as we move through our kind of parallel budget conservation is putting more structure around building on the plan.

Commissioner Ramirez said thank you, Jeff, to you and your team for all that you do. It is a great feat for what you do currently and I'm happy and I thank you, Commissioner Philbrook, for reviving this and, Mayor, for wanting to do this and bringing us together. I think Robbie said it perfectly, we're either nearing or at the door of an infrastructure crisis and so I think it's incumbent of us to work together as a Commission and do what we can. Also, to the community, be patient with us, work with us, we all want the same goal and so we will get there if we can work together.

I'm excited that we're doing this because I know especially in my district, and I'm sure in all districts, infrastructure is the number one issue I hear a lot. I may talk to a constituent and it may be a completely different issue, but towards the end of the conversation, oh, but there's this problem with the street or there's this problem with the sewer, so it always comes back around to infrastructure no matter what issue they may have.

I'm happy and excited that we are doing this and we're doing a deep dive into this issue because we can continue developing—we can continue building houses, bringing entertainment to this county, but if we don't have a suitable infrastructure, no one is going to want to come to Wyandotte County. I'm excited. I can't wait to get to work and for us to find—finally have a long-term plan of a to b. It may not be a straight a to b, but we will get there somehow.

Commissioner Philbrook said for me I believe that—and probably for everybody on this Commission, the timing is perfect because now we at least have the data so our decisions can be made with that data that has been collected. Up until recently, we didn't have specific data that we could rely on. Sometimes it was guessing, so now we do have the data and we can look at the monies to see where they're coming from, where they can come from, and then work as a team

because that's exactly what it's going to take to bring us out of this. It's going to take a lot of work and it's not going to happen overnight. So, as Commissioner Ramirez said, be patient with us because we have a lot of work to do and I think some of us realize it's going to be a lot more hours, you know, talking about this and studying it, and I think everybody on this Commission is ready to jump into this and try to get something accomplished because that's one of the reasons, I think, most of us ran for office, was to help our community.

Thank you so much for administration, Doug Bach, and Jeff Fisher, you know, for getting these things in place and for our Mayor moving this forward and everybody on the Commission willing to work and all of our team, so I just had to say that. It's been a long time coming but it finally came. You know, I just don't know what to say, this is wonderful. We can really start working on this and we can all own what happens to our city.

Commissioner Burroughs said I do see that the 41% and 59%, the grant monies versus the UG contribution is a benefit to our community moving forward dealing with infrastructure, but I think what my concern would be is the amount of monies available and the revenue stream associated to those so that we do have a understanding of the impact to the finances of a project as we move forward. I would hope—that we all, as commissioners, have issues within our individual districts. I know I'm a Commissioner At-Large, I've dealt with a number of issues in all the commissioners districts at one time or another since my service here and we should be mindful that those dollars can only go so far. But I truly believe that every district that we, as commissioners, represent, should have a fair opportunity to see some remedy to some of the concerns that's been raised whether it be parks, roads, public buildings; whatever it may be.

First and foremost, I think it's important that we do it in a transparent manner and that any bids and contracts go out, go to the lowest qualified bidders and that we as a local unit of government have a chance to ensure that we're getting the best return on investment particularly if we should invest in local community businesses that can do some of this work so that dollar will turnover multiple times within our community. I think over the next two year period, because we don't get all this ARP money at one fell swoop. As you know, it's spread over two years.

I know everyone's hand will be out in trying to get as much as they possibly can to projects they want to put forward, but everybody says this is a great opportunity, it's a great opportunity if we make it great. It's a missed opportunity if we don't do our work diligently. The

prudent thing to do is to continue to work in a collaborative manner as partners at the table to ensure that we get the best return on this investment for any infrastructure needs and any future investment within our community.

With that, Mayor, those are my comments and that's what I'll be looking at as we move forward in our groups.

Mayor Alvey said, Jeff, and maybe its also maybe to Budget, Chief Financial Officer. I think when we get into our committees so much of what we have to do as elected is we have to translate what we learn here and what we're working on here to the community—bring it to the community. Bring the community into the conversation, engage them, so they understand what we're working with, what our limits are, what the problems are, what the potential solutions are, and the timeframe as well that we're dealing with.

Commissioner Ramirez, it's interesting because when I get constituent calls so often it's not—it's about an infrastructure problem and when I get a compliment it's because something got fixed in infrastructure. So, it shows that people really do attend to that. You know, when we drive through our neighborhoods, if we have folks who come from outside the county, we want to be able to show it off and there are certain places, frankly, that we're a little embarrassed for our friends and family from outside the community to drive through. That's just because we are at a point of failure in some place, deterioration, and we want to do better. We all want to do better by our constituents. We all want to say, yes, that can be fixed but, again, with limited resources we just simply have to say no, it's not happening, or it won't happen for a long time.

But to help our community understand what we're going through, I think as we come forward in our committees, it's going to be interesting to hear, so what are the alternative costs. If we don't do this, then what? If not this and something else is going to happen, what are the costs of failure? If you have—when you showed the, for instance, that culvert failure, it was just not cleaning out the basin that fed into that culvert, now it's repairing the road, the sub-structure. That's far more expensive.

Just by not taking care of those emergency failures, we're in even deeper. It's the same as if I have a leak in my roof and I don't fix the leak in my roof, then I'm fixing the drywall, I'm taking care of mold, I'm replacing appliances and furniture; that's what happens. Too often we're at that point of failure because we haven't been able to do the basic maintenance.

This is really a long-term narrative with short-term importance but long-term narrative. We need to see what are the costs and finances, but also safety risks by not taking action. If we don't take action, if we don't solve these problems, in the very near term—in the mid-term or long-term this is what it's going to cause. I think one of the things that we have to realize is that the long-term cost is loss of economic development, loss of population growth, loss of population which means we have a narrower tax base that has to support higher and higher needs, that's the wrong dynamic. We have to get to the place where we have a broader tax base, more investment generating—more people generating more revenues to help us take care of more needs.

That's why I think, Commissioner Burroughs, to your point, we do have to be strategic, we have to be careful, we have to monitor this, use the data that we've got and continually monitor the progress of this. This has got to be something that goes beyond my time as Mayor or your time as commissioner or Mr. Bach's time as County Administrator; this is a long-term strategy or set of strategies for our community to become who we really deserve to become, what our residents, our businesses deserve to come. That's the vision we're holding out and if we can articulate that vision, hold that vision out of what we can be and look and feel like, how we can function; if we can put that out there, I think we will attract more and more residents to say, yes, that's the right thing to do. If that's the right thing to do, then we will have the capacity to say we must do these things and we must not do these other things and that's the sense of really being strategic and our priority's being very clear about our vision, attracting people to that vision, so that they are willing to come along and get behind this. Not just for now, not just for next year, but over the long-term. If we can do that, then this community really has no bounds.

Mayor Alvey asked, any other comments or questions from the Commission. Anything else that the Commission would like to see from the staff who is going to report to our small committees, specific questions, topics that you would like to see explored?

Mr. Bach said I would ask if it's alright, with our staff working on this and being broke up into the six areas that you have, if any member of them may have a question back to the Commission tonight to ask. We have several members on here, the few that did the presentation, but John Kelly from our buildings and Vincent from our streets are all on this and they may—do any of you have questions in putting together your information and how you want—think you need to share it for

what you want to bring forward. If you have questions tonight, I would ask you to bring those questions forward and work this. This is a working session, a workshop, and I know the Commission wants to engage with you in the same way that you may need to engage back with them and that way we're better prepared to go into those committees.

Mayor Alvey said I'm going to take that one step further and then I will call on Commissioner Bynum and Commission Townsend before staff responds. Staff sometimes—obviously, we can't see what you see. We don't grapple with these problems day in and day out so you have to be frank with us, honest with us, to say well, you know, Mayor, you're missing this piece. I'm okay with that. We need to hear that because this is a workshop. We're working together. If we're going to come together on this, then that's what we're going to have to do in order to really move this forward. If we're missing something, if there is something we need to be looking at that you need us to do, we need to hear that, again, in a collaborative cooperative way. The Commission is here to support you in your efforts so that together we can provide our residents and businesses with what they need.

Commissioner Bynum said I just wondered if now was an appropriate time for the Commission to be weighing in on thoughts on the Rescue Plan presentation that we were given. We know the total dollar amount and I know that we are scheduled into sessions across the summer where we are going to be having that discussion, but again, infrastructure is a blinking red light and we all know that some of these dollars need to be spent on infrastructure. I'm curious your thoughts on if now is the time for some of that discussion as we get ready to move into our budget conversations. **Mayor Alvey** said just from perspective, it would seem to me that it would be preferable to go into our deeper dive in the committees and then we would have more specific questions and concerns and recommendations, but that in those small committees we would also have the presentation about what revenue sources are available, what might be available from that rescue plan or from any infrastructure act that might be passed, which is know is maybe hanging out there, so maybe that would be—but I'm not saying don't bring it up, but I think it might be more productive if we wait.

Mr. Bach said I might add, as we move to the next workshop for budget on the first, just from the perspective of what some of you saw during the on-three's, that is our intent to bring that back to comment. You know you were able to comment to us in smaller settings, we're still finishing some of those up, but for those priorities we thought that would be good during a workshop session when all of you could comment together on that toward those, toward the overall project prior, or toward the priority, not necessarily on the individual project level but toward the priorities that we're looking at.

Commissioner Townsend said going back to the question that maybe was you, Mayor, that was just raised a few minutes ago or maybe it was Administrator Bach about what things we might want Mr. Fisher and his group to consider. One of the things I'm thinking about is the fact that I'm sure we're not the only governmental entity who's dealt with this, so it might be helpful just to see if there's any way how other municipalities similar to ours may have dealt with this. Now, I know everybody's dealing with different budgets but that just might give us another insight or another view of, you know, what funding sources or how things strategically could be handled.

This is to just consider any and everything and I appreciate you, Mayor, and Commissioner Philbrook and anyone else who wanted to drill down and make this a specific target of focus because every one of us, as commissioners, deals with this in some way or another. Maybe culverts have sunken in, maybe potholes, so I think now is the time to look at any and everything that might help us solve this short-term and long-term.

Mayor Alvey said until another commissioner raises their hand, I would ask staff to kind of fill us in, give us a sense of how you think this ought to—how this ought to work, how we ought to work together on this. What kinds of questions or information that you really want to communicate to us, want us to dive into.

Mr. Fisher said if I might, it looks like Brandon Grover, Dave Reno are in the lobby and can participate if possible.

John Kelly, Director of Buildings & Logistics, said when Doug started talking about staff being on the call, I just want to say from a Buildings & Logistics perspective I'm extremely happy we're

at this point where we're able to get the Commission together to talk about these things, especially when we have potential funding on the horizon to be able to address some of these things. Over the last couple of years working with Ameresco, from the Building & Logistics perspective, we've got a lot of data that will help the Commission make good decisions along with administration and my staff knowing that we're looking at some of these facilities that are in the deferred maintenance. I'm excited, and like I said, I think we've got a lot of data that's going to be able to help us make the right decisions in keeping some of our vital facilities up and going. That's just my little piece that I wanted to add. But, like I said, I'm extremely excited for this process and just ready to get it underway.

Mayor Alvey said I'm going to ask a pointed question, John. Is this something so if you would come, when you come to the committee, would you be willing—and we're going to give you the freedom to say frankly in my opinion based upon the data we have, I would recommend that facility x or facility y be shutdown and consolidated and then we would say that's going to save us on maintenance costs and we can do this. Are those the kinds of things that you feel the data has prepared you to recommend? **Mr. Kelly** said, yes Mayor, there's some of that data but then, like I said, as we've been looking at these reports and data that's been provided from Ameresco—we have some of our key facilities like the Courthouse and City Hall and Memorial Hall that have some things that are urgent to get done right away. So, some of the facilities that we know that we're going to be keeping for quite some time, those issues are going to be brought up that there is funding out there that can help facilitate getting some things done, but that's also part of the study we're doing, the Tiering Study, looking at the buildings and right-sizing. But to say through the working session we'll have some of that detail, but that information is being worked on as we speak and that will be over the course of the rest of the year. That's all part of the processes that I have in place to be able to look at what buildings we may not need or consolidating maybe into one building that will serve the needs to the public and the UG staff themselves.

A lot of our outlying buildings, we have some leases that maybe aren't the right fit and maybe have some buildings that we own that aren't the right fit, so there's a mixture of things, Mayor, that we are looking at. Like I said, it will all be data-driven that will be able to best help us to make the best decisions.

Mayor Alvey said, John, this is just a good reminder that, as you said, that maybe all the data may not be present but data is going to be coming in, it's something you're working through and so this committee, again, is not a one and done kind of action. It's over the longer term and that we need to be patient for the data to come in so we can make the right decisions, but we have at least some sense that we're working towards the data, we're looking towards the data that's going to be able to make those kinds of recommendations, those kinds of decisions. If we just continue to come together in this kind of structure, we can get there.

Mr. Kelly said exactly. Like I said, there's must do's that we know that on some facilities we just have to get after and address things and then some stuff over the long-term that will still help us—say this as potential funding source that we keep referring to, to be able to help ourselves get some things done. As those dollars are being spent, that data is going to be coming in and will still allow us over the next, I feel, 8 to 12 months still making some of those decisions as that information comes in.

Mr. Anderson said I just want to add that the other thing that the data allows us to is to envision what buildings in the future should look like. Things like elevators that are an annual expense items that tax the UG tax revenue structure to the point where we can't move funds around. We should envision that data as driving the next type of City Hall. It's not just about maintaining existing, it's about using that data to envision what the next structure looks like.

Mayor Alvey said do you have anything else from staff? Again, what is it that we need to know as commissioners to be able to just understand the process you're going through? You know, we need to be speaking the same language, help us get into your world a little bit more.

Mr. Fisher said I don't know that I have anything for you on that. I think to your point, we need to be bold and think big and I guess I would suggest leave no stone unturned. I don't know if initially maybe there's some ground rules that this Commission wants to operate under. Maybe there's sacrifices that the Commission doesn't want to touch, so I think those are discussions that might be helpful in the beginning to set the tone for the rest of the committee's work.

Commissioner Philbrook said, Jeff, thanks for that suggestion. I have two words in mind. One is candid and the other one is that while we're working together, that we all be candid about what's going on. It doesn't mean what we say we know exactly what's happening, but if we don't ask and if we don't make it clear that it is a concern, then how can we address it? The other is being kind to each other. We have to respect each other for knowledge and the fact that we're all here because we do care and so those are the two basic rules I think we need to have. I think we could build off of that, but that's the beginning for me.

Commissioner Ramirez said, Commissioner Philbrook, you took the first candid, your first point out of what I was thinking. To staff, be frank with us. As the Mayor said when he was asking Mr. Kelly about the facilities, if you have recommendations, if you have thoughts, give them to us. Don't hold back. Give them to us because then that creates a more broader conversation we can have, a more specific—it can be more broader but then it can help us get specific. So, bring recommendations, bring your thoughts, be candid, be frank with us because we want that to be with you as well. If we don't have that, we're not going to get the best long-term plan that we could have.

Commissioner Johnson said thank you Doug, Jeff, and your staff for this presentation. I think I heard this somewhere along in the presentation, but I think it would be good to just double down on the fact that as we're moving forward the concept and the reality of equity needs to be ever present in what we do. Not only present in the conversation, but as we move things forward and are actually applying these and expending funds, we need to make sure that the community recognizes that equity is part of how we are making decisions and applying funds to the betterment of our community. Again, I think I already heard that somewhere, but I think—you know if I would say anything, that we need to make sure that word equity and getting inclusive tying back to what we were talking about even as we were talking about training, that those concepts are evident and clear as we are moving forward.

Mr. Bach said I would just add too that per the Commission's request, we have built a structure of Commission tours to go out through the community. I think we have those almost finalized at this point. The intent on those was to show projects that have worked, but also really to spend

more time emphasizing and showing projects in areas where we have needs and then let commissioners kind of see, touch and feel a little bit different on an hands-on perspective of where those are and what kind of impact and then what kind of changes can be made through those. You all requested that and I think now its really just getting to the point of figuring out how we schedule those, whether we do those in big groups or smaller groups as we go along. I believe we'll be ready for that fairly shortly.

Melissa Sieben, Assistant County Administrator, said I would also just like some understanding of kind of the formality or not lack of formality around these subcommittees. We started kind of talking about some ground rules, things of that nature, for how do we want to facilitate this and I guess each group may be slightly different but definitely that's a skillset that we can bring to the table to help you all meet those goals that were just discussed by the governing body.

Something Jeff and I talked about we were actually sitting down trying to formulate that facilitation, but wanted to hear what you had to say and figure out how we would do that.

Mayor Alvey said I think that's going to be up to each committee. I think definitely there will be certain questions that each committee will submit to staff so you can prepare and also staff should prepare what they believe needs to be presented and then, obviously, it will be a back and forth. I don't—in terms of the formality, you know, it's going to be small groups of 3 to 4 commissioners at a time with staff. Each committee or some small committee will be scheduling. I will have my assistant Ana help schedule those or Commission staff will help schedule those. I will be attending each of those committee meetings as much as I can because I think it's important to have some cross-pollination. I can hear what's going on the rest and bring it back and forth to each one so I don't know that it's going to be that structured. It's going to be fairly informal, really fact-finding, just kind of a study session more than anything.

Anything the Commission thinks ought to happen with that, I'm good with. I think it's really just good conversation, discussion about data that's coming forward and giving further direction and coming back.

Kathleen VonAchen, Chief Financial Officer, said one suggestion that I would like to see is to incorporate our Planning and Urban Design Department into the conversation. I'll just remind you

back about two years ago, Alan Howze worked with a consultant that—Urban3 where they gave a presentation on the value of property tax collected by parcel. It really demonstrated the distribution of where that wealth or that revenue was coming from across the UG. I think there's a very—we need to evaluate how our past practices with Urban Planning have contributed to the number of roads, the miles of roads we have and whether that's sustainable or not. Obviously, it's kind of not you know. So, what would be a more sustainable model, how to urban design, land use planning, transportation system impact financial sustainable. Those are things that I think we also need to consider. That's what I would like to see.

Ms. Sieben said Kathleen does bring up a good point and I would say that as all this work is being done, there is a lot of dialogue going on between a variety of departments within the Unified Government as you saw Parks, but even Transit is also kind of part of that planning and looking at how we use infrastructure. So, there is definitely a multi-disciplinary conversation that will—you know without guessing any further, that will occur. And I think part of the other thing that we've been discussing recently more around here with WIFIA and other things that we've been working is also how kind of doing right by the environment also may have infrastructure benefits long-term. I think those things are all going to crossover. I think as we dig into this, it's going to unravel another set of strengths so I think we're fully prepared to do that and work with you and definitely Gunnar and his team as well as Justice, his team, and the Parks Department are all going to be part of how we get the community where we are desiring it in the future.

Commissioner Townsend said I want to go back to something that was on my mind, and Commissioner Johnson brought it up, and that would be the issue of equity in this process. I really like the idea that the committee will be evaluating emergency needs versus urgent needs versus long-term needs as a mechanism on what to attack first. But, even within those categories, we're going to have to be very clear on what the ramifications and choices are for why there may be an emergency a, or an emergency b, or an emergency c; so all of our constituents feel as though in their district these necessities are being taken care of.

For instance, we mentioned the culvert that collapsed, well, what's the ramifications if that isn't fixed, if somebody drives off the road versus another emergency that may have a slightly less traumatic impact if not fixed. It will be very important in this process to make sure that it's

communicated within even those subgroups why something may be handled before one situation is handled before another, so looking forward to that. That is something we need to be thinking about in the process.

Alan Howze, Assistant County Administrator, said I was actually thinking kind of along those lines of what Ms. VonAchen spoke about just a minute ago which is that this Commission has looked at various measures of productivity and the analysis of tax productivity per acre in thinking about the city like a farm or like a business and what are the productive yields. I think that may be one of the challenges for each of the subcommittees to think about and look at, you know, what is the return on investment. That's a familiar concept, return on investment. What is return on infrastructure in these different buckets and what does that mean to measure it to look at it. I think that's something staff can provide a lot of data to help to chew on, but I think that's going to be where the elected officials and policymakers to think about. What does that mean to talk about to land on measures that look at return on infrastructure.

Mayor Alvey asked, are there any final questions or comments? That concludes our Special Session. That concludes this report on infrastructure and I will be sending communications to each of the commissioners on committee assignments and then helping to coordinate setting up meetings with staff. Again, we have time on this. This is not something that has to be done in the next month. This is a long-term thing, data will be coming in to give staff an opportunity to continue doing their work on budgeting in general. This is a parallel process and it's going to require staff time, so we want to be respectful of their time in a collaborative way.

Thank you all again for this and thanks to the public who are viewing in. I'll now turn it over to Mr. Bach for an announcement.

Mr. Bach, County Administrator, said after considering a very unique situation that Katherine Carttar is in with the pregnancy of the birth of her child and decision to marry and live with the father of her son who is also the Mayor of Kansas City, Missouri and Katherine is our Director of Economic Development for anyone watching that does not know that. I found myself considering a temporary residency exception unlike any, I believe, I or my predecessor ever considered. As you do know, I do make exceptions to our residency policy for various hardship cases or special

conditions that come about through the course of a year for many employees. These situations all plan a path for the employee to move or return to their residency in Wyandotte County and in many cases allow for significant investment in our community on the part of our employee.

We've even had a couple of exceptions over the years, over the past 20 years, where I would say we had special needs situations of children or medical conditions of a spouse which resulted in a multi-year extension of their residency requirement.

In the case of Ms. Carttar, she wants to live in Wyandotte County; however, due to her husband's employment, he also has a residency requirement. She has expressed her clear desire to keep her job but also would like to live with her husband and raise their son together. Being that her husband is the Mayor of Kansas City, Missouri, I believe this is a situation where his residency requirement trumps ours and I believe a temporary waiver of residency requirement is in order while he is the Mayor of Kansas City, Missouri.

The special agreement I would do with Katherine will be in place while Mr. Lucas is the Mayor and at such time he no longer holds this position, it is my expectation that she would resume her residency in Wyandotte County. While I believe this falls under my authority to grant special exceptions to our residency requirements, I wanted to make sure you were all informed in advance and if there are concerns and decision, it can be noted. Just in the end, I will say I do believe this is the right thing to do for this employee.

Commissioner Burroughs said, Mr. Bach, have we had situations that have required us, that has challenged us legally to do this with other employees? **Mr. Bach** said we have had legal challenges in the past when we have terminated an employee for failure to comply with residency and I believe those are all in relationship to cases where someone—there was no ask. They just simply did not live here and those were terminations. Ms. Brown, any clarification or exceptions to what I said? **Misty Brown, Chief Counsel**, said you have summed it up correctly. The legal challenges we have had have been on termination aspect of it, not challenging the residency itself and to my knowledge none of them have been for a request for a waiver. It was simply that they were discovered living outside of the county and then were terminated for that.

Commissioner Burroughs said if I may, Mr. Bach, the question I would have is we have been trying to recruit Public Safety personnel because of the shortages we've had and many times they have spouses that have jobs outside of our community and it has not allowed us to consider

them for employment with us if they are not willing, or the spouse is not willing, to move into our community over a period of time. How is this different than that? I just want to make sure that if we make an exception that we are doing it 1) within the realm of our policy and 2) that we're not setting precedence to chip away at our residency requirement. **Mr. Bach** said thank you, Commissioner, that's a good question. I'm thinking the difference to the unique situation with Ms. Carttar is that she was already employed with the Unified Government and with the birth of her child had a situation with her spouse who is also under a residency requirement which puts her in a position of whether she has to leave her job, her career, with the Unified Government or not live in the same household with her spouse.

Now, as you referenced, there could be other people in Public Safety, an area that we are working to recruit, someone that has a spouse located in another community and that's not an option for them to say, okay, now I'll put in an application to come here. A little bit difference in the sense that one was preexisting employment in the relationship that came to play versus somebody that was not before. I think there are things that we could consider in the future regarding our policy that could be based on maybe reciprocation to other jurisdictions that have residency requirements, but that's not what I'm seeking tonight. I'm thinking that would be more of a policy change in general and maybe those are things that could be discussed in the future.

Commissioner Burroughs said first and foremost, I want to say how much respect I have for Ms. Carttar in having the opportunity to work with her these last three years on economic development and watch her grow in this job. I see the valued asset, so by no means are my questions here geared towards anything other than to ensure that as we move forward on this, should you deem this necessary and the Commission support it, then I just hope that as we move forward with additional personnel that we don't start seeing an exodus by spouses who may have a requirement in another community that requires them to leave our community and go live with another spouse. I just don't see how this is much different than what we've already dealt with with residency requirements that, Mr. Bach, you've articulated your position on this. As I stated, I have a tremendous amount of respect for Ms. Carttar and for her husband, Mayor Lucas of Missouri, that, you know, our responsibilities to the citizens of Wyandotte County and to the personnel, so I will just leave that with you Mr. Bach and the rest of the Commission for consideration.

Commissioner Bynum said, Mr. Bach, said I just wanted to express support for the policy decision that you're making here. We have a professional employee who I think we can all agree is performing at a very high level. In 2020 we were not only experiencing a pandemic but our employee was instrumental in bringing our county to a near record level of capital investment. Historically, we have examples of allowances being made for other Unified Government employees and why would we ask this professional to choose between her child and husband and a job that she performs at a high level that benefits every single one of us. So, that's the question I put in front of everyone. It's a highly unique situation, it's a spouse who absolutely cannot move, so there is no option on the table for her husband. Other situations have included the ability to make a choice. This situation does not. It forces a choice between a professional choosing between her spouse and child and her job. I think that's patently unfair and I think what you're proposing is a very narrow carveout and it has a finite ending to it. It is not in turpitude. I'm explaining why I can stand in support of this policy decision that you're making for this employee.

Commissioner Ramirez said I have thought a lot about this, you know, ever since it was brought to our attention. The residency requirement has always been an issue that has been around in our community. I know when I was originally in the beginning campaigning, it was an issue that I heard a lot from people. People for it, people against it, and I'm still within myself trying to figure out where I stand on it. I mean, at this point, I know where I stand.

When Mr. Bach presented the possibility of him granting the exception, I was not in support of it because the majority of our community based on the community survey, it supports the residency requirement, but knowing and hearing tonight that it is a temporary exemption and as Commissioner Bynum has said, there is a finite end. It's based and tied to her husband, Mayor Lucas's, term as Mayor.

The one question I have for Mr. Bach, is it tied to just this—his current term or what happens if he were to rerun for Mayor, would that spill over into his next term as well? **Mr. Bach** said I feel like it's tied to his—while he is in office as the Mayor of KCMO. I believe they are limited in terms over there so they would only have one additional term that he could run for and then that would be it. It would not be tied to any other elected positions he may choose to hold. It would just be specifically about this job.

Commissioner Ramirez said I'm still on the fence with it and it's nothing against Katherine in any way, shape or form. She is an amazing employee. She has—last year was one of the best years for Wyandotte County economic development wise, and that was because she was at the helm of it along with her staff and all the other staff here at the Unified Government. She is amazing, she knows how to do her job, she's passionate about Wyandotte County and about this community and making it the best that it can. I'm on the fence, but I will support it as it has, as Commissioner Bynum said, a finite end. It's hard to find an employee like Katherine. It's hard to find any employee that we currently have—employees that are compassionate and passionate about the work they do in the community that they serve. It was in my mind and I'm sure many other commissioners on this board would second what I'm about to say, it would be very hard to replace Katherine for all the work she has done, so I would support the temporary exemption for Katherine.

Mr. Bach said thank you Commissioner. I appreciate all the comments. I do want to stress that my exception is being made for her unique situation, not based on her skillsets or uniquely looking at her while she does bring great skills to the table for the position. What I'm looking at is, I believe this is a very unique situation regarding her situation and that's the evaluation as made of her as an employee which could be done if she was in a different position as well.

MAYOR ALVEY ADJOURNED

THE MEETING AT 6:24 p.m.

Brett Deichler
Interim Unified Government Clerk

dt

June 24, 2021