STATE OF KANSAS)
WYANDOTTE COUNTY)) SS **SPECIAL SESSION, THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2022**
CITY OF KANSAS CITY, KS)

The Unified Government Commission of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, met in Special Session, Thursday, June 16, 2022, with eleven members present: 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 Four (arrived at 5:30 p.m.); Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; Markley, Commissioner Sixth District; Stites, Commissioner Seventh District; Davis, Commissioner Eighth District; and Garner, Mayor/CEO, presiding. The following officials were also in attendance: Cheryl Harrison-Lee, Interim County Administrator; Misty Brown, Chief Legal Counsel; Monica L. Sparks, Acting Unified Government Clerk; Bridgette Cobbins, Assistant County Administrator; Brett Deichler, Interim Assistant County Administrator; Kathleen VonAchen, Chief Financial Director; Debbie Jonscher, Deputy Chief Financial Officer; Reginald Lindsey, Budget Director; Mike Peterson, Assistant Budget Manager; Alley Porter, Commission Liaison; Ashley Hand, Director of Strategic Communications; Judi Her, Budget Department; Taylor Wash, Organization Effectiveness Coordinator in County Administrator's Office; Troy Shaw, County Engineer; Sarah Shafer, Public Works CMIP Program Manager; and Rob Anderson, Public Works Asset Manager.

Mayor Garner said before I call this meeting to order, I want to announce that 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 and is current guidance from the Kansas Attorney General.

MAYOR GARNER called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL: McKiernan, Ramirez, Kane, Markley, Stites, Davis, Bynum, Burroughs, Townsend, Garner.

AMENDED NOTICE OF SPECIAL SESSION of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, to be conducted in a hybrid format on Thursday, June 16, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. in the 5th floor conference room for a Budget Workshop, immediately followed by an Executive Session regarding labor, litigation, and personnel.

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 Garner said our Special Session this evening is a Budget Workshop. I'll turn it over to the Interim County Administrator to proceed with the meeting.

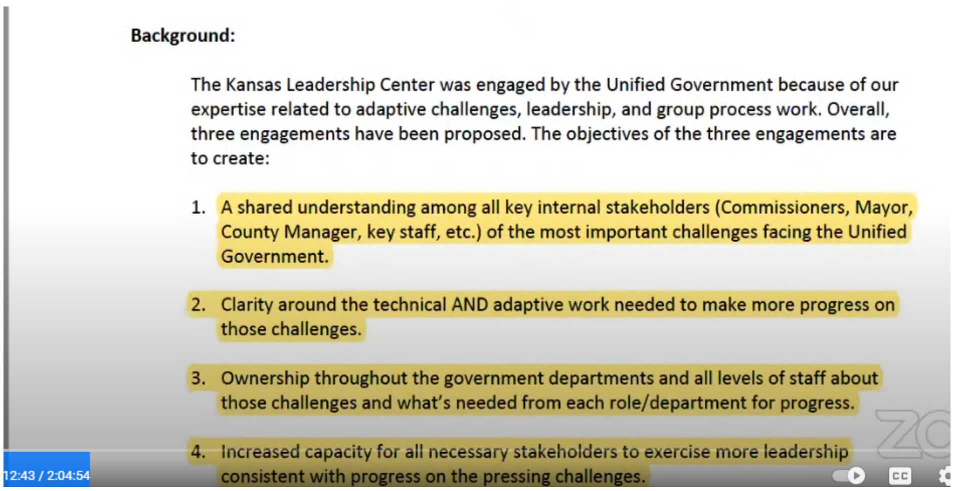
Cheryl Harrison-Lee, Interim County Administrator, said in front of you is the agenda for tonight's budget workshop. First, we will have Ed O'Malley and Tina Khan with the Kansas Leadership Center presenting their findings from the interviews and subsequent meetings with you after the facilitated session they conducted. We will then have our Strategic Communications Director, Ashley Hand; and Michael Peterson from Budget, present the community's feedback from the budget from the Dotte Talks as well as the budget simulator.

The main topic for tonight is hearing from you all of what your budget priorities are for 2023. Once we have agreement, we can move forward with building the budget, so we'll spend a significant amount of time getting your feedback and engaging you in an exercise that will get your feedback on some additional guiding principles. Lastly, we will close with a few outstanding follow-up items from Public Works. At this time, I will turn it over to Mr. O'Malley so that he can begin his readout from the Kansas Leadership Center report.

Ed O'Malley, Kansas Leadership Center, said we're based here in Wichita, KS. Thank you Interim County Administrator for the opportunity to be with you all tonight, with the Mayor and the Commission. I have a colleague with me, Tina Khan, who many of you met back on March 24th and also helped conduct a number of those interviews.

I want to start off by saying that I really appreciate the setup for the evening, your starting with Tina and me reviewing this report that we have submitted to the County Administrator. Really, it's a conversation about you, about you as a body, about what you care about, and about how you work together. Next, you're diving into some community feedback and I've seen the slides from that work and it seems like a fabulous set of townhall meetings to give you information about what the community cares about and then you'll tie it all together tonight around consensus, perhaps around budget priorities.

My presentation will be brief and I'll share the report that I've submitted. I assume you all have this in front of you. I'll have this up while I share a few of the highlights as we go through the conversation and I'm happy to stand for questions here in just a little bit.



I just want to remind you about the background on what we were asked to do. In the original concept paper that we proposed to the County Administrator, there were three engagements that we were suggesting. The objectives of these three engagements are highlighted there on the screen to create a shared understanding among all the key internal stakeholders of the most important challenges facing the Unified Government. 2) Clarity around the technical and adaptive work needed for progress. 3) Ownership throughout the government about these challenges and aspirations. 4) Increased capacity of all the different key stakeholders needed to help move these things forward.

Those objectives are the objectives of the three overall suggested engagements. Tonight, we're just here to talk about the first engagement and I just want to scroll down a little further here.

This initial engagement (the subject of this memo) was designed to help the Mayor, Commission and County Administrator diagnose their collective challenges and aspirations.

This part highlighted in bold is what we were asked to do specifically in this first engagement. It was really a diagnostic exercise designed to help the Mayor, the Commission, the County Administrator diagnose your collective challenges and aspirations. Our work consisted of a truncated retreat experience back on March 24th followed up by one-on-one interviews with the Mayor and each of the commissioners.

I know how busy you all are and I want to say upfront how much I appreciate you taking the time to visit with Tina and myself to explore some of these questions and to help inform what we have to present with you this evening. Before I get into sharing what we learned, I do want to convey that this is not an exhaustive report. It was a very limited engagement and it is designed to be helpful for you now and also designed to inform these next engagements should the County Administrator and KLC and the Unified Government decide to move forward with these other two engagements which I'll be happy to mention later on here in a short presentation.

Let me just jump to what we learned. Reflecting on March 24th, let me start there. That was the time we were together that evening and I'm just going to scroll down to a few things to highlight here.

becomes our greatest burden with disparities. • Staff don't have resources to do their jobs. • Desire to provide tax relief while providing infrastructure. • How we engage staff and community in stabilizing internal and external efforts. • Fear of becoming a failed community—businesses not locating here, can't afford, no programs for kids, seniors.	• Members of community are proud of themselves and choose to live here with pride. • Built infrastructure is sufficient. • Mean-median household income is higher than any other. • Make WYCO second to no one. • Driving down every street in the county, you feel like "gosh this is a great neighborhood" every neighborhood has that feeling—address blight.

One of the things that stood out to me was that there aren't many disagreements when it comes to concerns and aspirations. I think that's really good news. The challenge doesn't seem to be what to focus on, it's how to focus on it, how to work together to focus on it. I think that's good news.

One of the things we talked about that night, as you might remember, is this question about what makes progress so hard.

> Our work and research have found the best leadership focuses not on the presenting concern or aspiration, but on the issues/dynamics that make progress hard on that concern or aspiration. Another way of describing it is that those who exercise leadership effectively tend to focus on the problem *behind the problem*. KLC's diagnosis always tries to uncover the "problems behind the problems," and even the problems behind those.

I just want to highlight this paragraph of the report for just a moment. Our work and research have found that the best leadership focuses not on the presenting concern or aspiration, but on the issues dynamics that make progress hard on that concern or aspiration. Another way of describing it is those who exercise leadership effectively tend to focus on the problem behind the problem so our diagnostic effort was really trying to discover—uncover, if you will, like what are the challenges behind the challenges and maybe even the challenges behind those.

> - *Fear of loss correlation, fear of pain—"me and I" mentality vs. "we and us."*
> - *Lack of shared vision, among staff, elected body, and in community—silos.*
> - *Competing and conflicting priorities.*

So, you all in this conversation highlighted a number of things. I do want to mention two that stood out to me, these last two bullets that are highlighted here. So, what makes progress hard on the things that are your highest priorities. What you all mentioned was a number of things, but these two stood out to me. A lack of shared vision among staff, the elected body, and in the community. There are a lot of silos, that's what you all said and competing and conflicting priorities. These two, to me, go hand in hand, so that stood out as maybe one of the challenges behind the challenge.

Let's jump to the follow-up interviews. Again, thank you for your time during these interviews. I knew you were all incredibly busy. We asked each of you the same questions. We first just asked for your reflections on the March 24th retreat. We then asked what's important to you. What issues, opportunities, etc. are important to you as the Mayor or as a commissioner. We then asked how well does the elected body work together to accomplish big things like those you've mentioned. Finally, we asked how confident are you that progress can be made on the things that are most important to you.

That was the approach and you all participated in those and, you know, we might have asked some follow-up questions as well, but in general, we had those big open-ended questions and we listened. We took lots of notes and tried to hear what you were feeling, what you were thinking. A few things stood out.

The policy issues that emerged most were:

- Tax relief
- Infrastructure
- Improve the quality of basic services (public safety, customer service, code enforcement, etc.)

There are some clear policy issues that almost everybody brought up. Tax relief, infrastructure improvement, and improvement of quality—improving the quality of basic services. Those policy issues came up virtually from everyone. So, again, it's an example of, there doesn't seem to be a massive discrepancy about what to focus on. The question is how to focus on it and how to work together to discern exactly how to improve those different policy areas that each of you spoke to in one way or another.

What stood out to us the most was that there were a lot of other comments that actually got talked about more in those conversations and I want to highlight some of those for you. Again, this is just a brief presentation and I'm happy to stand for questions here in just a moment.

However, other important themes came up more often:

1. There is concern with current approaches to communication, organization, and process. Several people said that a lack of communication is inhibiting progress. Overall, individuals are concerned about the Mayor and Commission's ability to work together to make progress on the issues most important to individual Commissioners and the broader community.
2. There is a desire for more time as a collective conversing about hopes and aspirations and working together towards collaborative solutions.
3. Commissioners are concerned about the U.G.'s ability to retain its best staff. There is apprehension that the strong job market coupled with frustration among county staff will lead to an exodus of quality employees.
4. Many feel the Mayor and Commissioners need to get into communities to listen more to residents.

These themes came up even more than those policy issues and to us these are critical for you to be thinking about as you go into trying to find consensus around the budget. The first theme that emerged often was a concern about approaches to communication, organization and process. Several people said that a lack of communication is inhibiting progress. Folks are concerned, you are concerned about the ability to work together to make progress on the things that you all seem to care a lot about so that this idea that attention to process, attention to communication feels critical.

It seems like there's a desire for more time as a collective conversing about the big picture about hopes and aspirations and working together towards collaborative solutions. That came up from virtually everyone.

There's a concern about retaining your best staff. That came up often and also many felt the need for the Mayor and the commissioners to get back into communities and listen more and perhaps that has been happening certainly with the townhalls that have happened recently that I know you will hear more about here soon to come.

Those themes emerged often in these conversations. Just a few more thoughts here. Two of you mentioned specifically the charter review process that I know is underway. It wasn't really within our purview to study the charter, review the charter, make any recommendations related to the charter, but we were left wondering if some of the challenges of organization and process work might connect to that charter itself. A couple of you wonder that and we just want to make sure we noted that with you this evening.

> What we experienced at the retreat and the themes that emerged from the discussions suggest that unless the Mayor, Commissioners and Administrator create a healthier process of discussing and formulating the budget and other policy matters, progress on substantive issues (such as tax relief, infrastructure, and improvements to public services) will be tenuous.

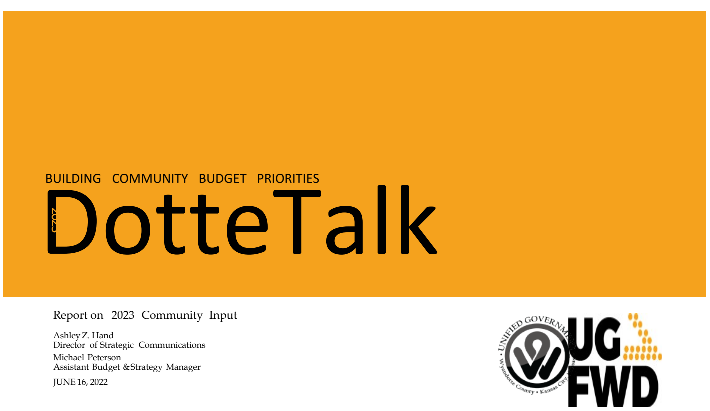
I think the final takeaway that I would offer is this final paragraph here. I think what we experienced at the retreat and the themes that emerged from the discussion suggest to us that unless there is a healthier process created among you, unless you discover ways of engaging more effectively, healthier together, it will be very challenging to make substantive progress on the things each of you care so much about. Things such as tax relief, infrastructure, and improvements to public services. The way in which you try to engage together to work those issues has a significant impact on whether or not you'll make the substance of progress that each of you desire. That was the main takeaway from the conversations on my end and on Tina's end.

A few concluding thoughts, thank you for the opportunity to engage with you. Thank you for the opportunity to work with you. We appreciate the public service you offer to such an important community in our state. Our other proposed engagements, should they happen, are really designed to help build the capacity of people. You and others throughout the Unified Government to exercise leadership to create healthier processes to engage better with one another. If it works out that it makes sense for us to continue these engagements, we are honored to do so and wish you the best of luck as you put together the upcoming budget.

County Administrator, I'm happy to stand for questions. Mayor, I'm happy to stand for questions or comments that Tina and/or I would be happy to respond to.

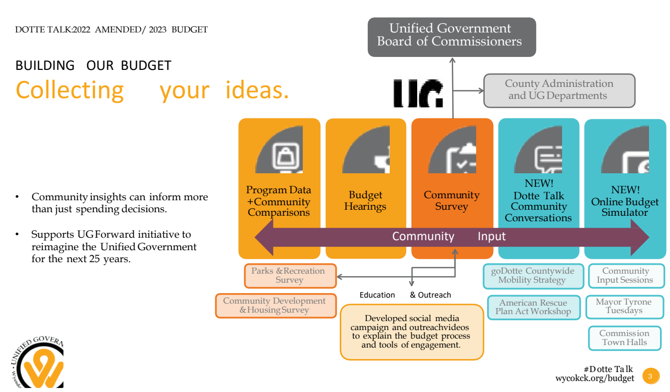
Ms. Harrison-Lee said okay, thank you Mr. O'Malley. Before we move to the next part, questions that we need to direct to Mr. O'Malley? Okay. Thank you very much for your assistance, you and Tina both, for facilitating the work session as well as the interviews and the readout on today.

The next phase of this evening, we will have an overview of the Dotte Talks as well as the budget simulator. I will turn it over to Ashley to begin that conversation.



Michael Peterson, Assistant Budget Manager, said we're excited to bring you tonight a consolidated report on the 2023 community input that we've received through a variety of channels that we'll go through. The last several years the Budget Office has tried to enhance our community engagement and community education processes through social media and several new pilot initiatives and that's what we're going to give you a summary of tonight. Ashley is going to go ahead and get us started.

Ashley Hand, Director of Strategic Communications, said today we're going to walk you through a little bit of the work that we've been doing over many months to consolidate many different streams of data that we have as inputs in terms of what the community would like to see us do and prioritize and where their greatest needs are. Really, what we wanted to do is experiment a little bit, not everything was going to be perfect right out of the gate. We wanted to test new methods, we wanted to try new channels, and we wanted to offer more options to our community to weigh in so they didn't have to necessarily come down to the Municipal Building to attend a budget hearing or fill out a survey, but they could engage with us in varying capacity. Today we're going to share some of those learnings and what we anticipate we'll see for the next round of outreach.

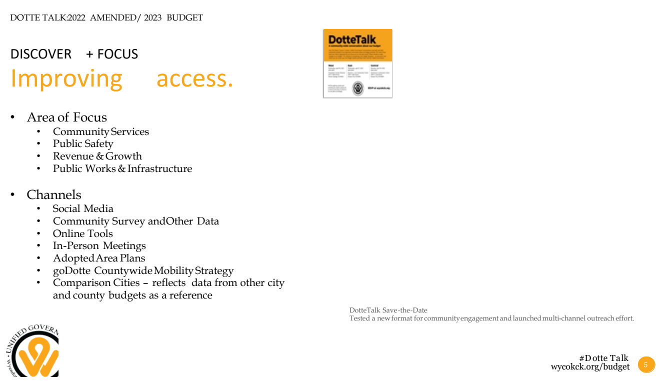


As Michael mentioned, we have really tried to expand upon the channels that we can look to as an organization when it comes to understanding community input and that's really important to the

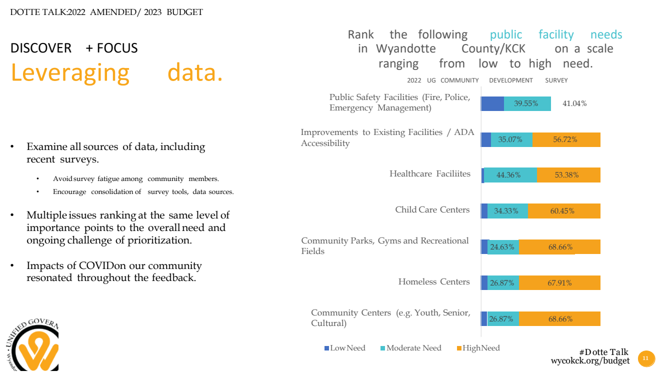
County Administrators UG Forward Initiative where we're really trying to collaborate and identifying new parties and partners in the work that we do. So, that's really something that's important for that collaboration and the effective transformation that we hope to see as a result of that.

We expanded on the work that has been done and I think it's really important to note that in addition to asking for community input, we really worked with the budget team who did an excellent job to develop video explainers on how to access our budget information online, how to participate in the budget simulator tool as well as to provide general information about how our budget works because we often run into confusion among our community about what is a city function, what is a county function, and how does that affect me.

I'm going to turn this back over to you.



Mr. Peterson said in our report that we created we did identify several key areas of focus that we tried to narrow down on just because we can't look at everything. The themes that we found going through the different methods of engagement were on Community Services. Some examples of that would be like Parks and Recreation, Transit services, Aging services, Public Safety, which is one of the largest components of our budget, Revenue and Growth which includes our tax base, as well as Economic Development and Community Development type initiatives, and then Public Works and Infrastructure which the two larger categories of infrastructure that are in our budget are in Public Works as well as Parks & Recreation. So, Parks & Recreation is also part of that category as well.



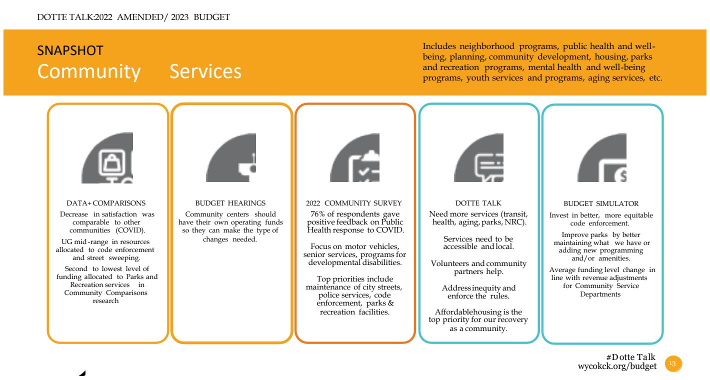
Ms. Hand said I think one thing to know and I thank you too, Mr. O'Malley, for setting us up so well is that we recognize that with all the inputs that we have, it's very difficult to really get to the root of the issue. What we did see is that there are quite a few conflicting priorities, so this example is from the Community Development survey that basically highlighted multiple things as top priorities which makes it very difficult to understand where do we start.

The other thing that we were being very sensitive to and trying to redefine this process of engagement is to avoid things like survey fatigue by not going back and asking the same question of our community over and over again, but leveraging the data and insights that we have available to us.

The final note is that, as we heard with the community survey feedback at the end of April, the pandemic has had a sizable impact on our community. People are still feeling it and there is a lot of work to be done to help people kind of get back on their feet in a post-pandemic world.

Finally, I just want to share, you know, it's a smattering of success. I think we know that the community survey has integrity behind it by the way that it is designed with its sample to be reflective of our entire community, but we tried new things like the Dotte Talks going out to the west side of the county, the middle of the county, and the east side of the county to engage people to have a conversation about what they would like to see. We did a lot of work on social media, both in engagement as well as education to talk to people about what is happening and why their participation in this process is important. I think really interesting was the new use of the budget simulator tool where we received about 127 responses, but because of the nature of the tool where you were kind of forced to balance the budget within the application, we got some really great feedback. People spent a lot of time providing their input.

I think one thing just to note, we were very fortunate to have a VISTA in the budget team this year which gave us the capacity that we needed so desperately to make this outreach possible and I think as you see in the feedback that we will cover for you. There are definitely more opportunities to increase and improve that type of engagement and outreach.



Starting with our first focus area is Community Services. Number one continues to be a top priority is street conditions and our infrastructure quality. That is something we continue to hear in our community survey and it comes up among all stakeholders across the board. We even heard it on Wednesday when we hosted a similar discussion with our department directors and division leadership across the UG. That is one of the biggest tools we think in terms of a key to our economic development growth and sustainability is having good infrastructure in our community that we can be proud of and will attract the type of business and economic activity that we're excited to see.

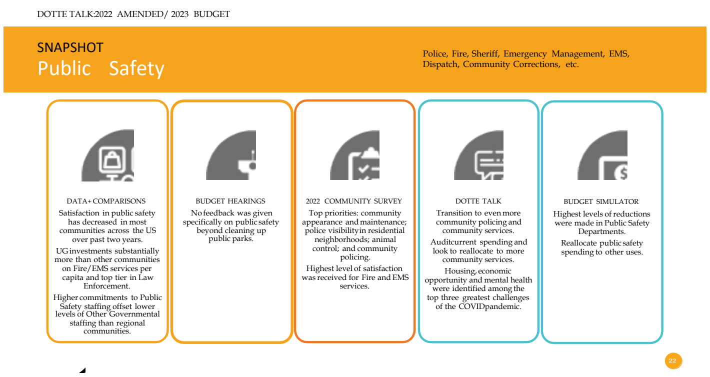
There was definitely a lot of requests and pushes for more services. Even with us trying to figure out how to be more efficient and tighten our belts, a lot of people felt very strongly that they want to maintain or even expand the level of service that we're able to provide them particularly when it comes to community services. With the impacts of the pandemic, things like mental health and public health remain very important, but affordable housing and affordable utilities were also top priorities.

To try to help kind of distill all of the information that we gleaned, we wanted to kind of provide you with a couple of top insights as well as some of the specific recommendations that came from the community on how to respond. So, reducing blight and improving access to our public amenities whether it is the type of amenity, whether you're looking for senior services or youth activities, the cost of those services and the location of them making sure that people have relatively equitable access across the county to services was something that was very important.

I think one thing that came up in multiple channels was the need to build on our capacity to bring in volunteers to support us in that work. The couple community ideas that came out of this conversation was to really focus on mapping our community assets so that we can understand where there may be disproportionate access or lack of access across the county to different types of services. That would also be an opportunity to do a better job of coordinating with Bonner Springs and Edwardsville on the services that we offer as a county to these communities, but also, coordinate with the efforts and the services that are available within those respective cities as well.

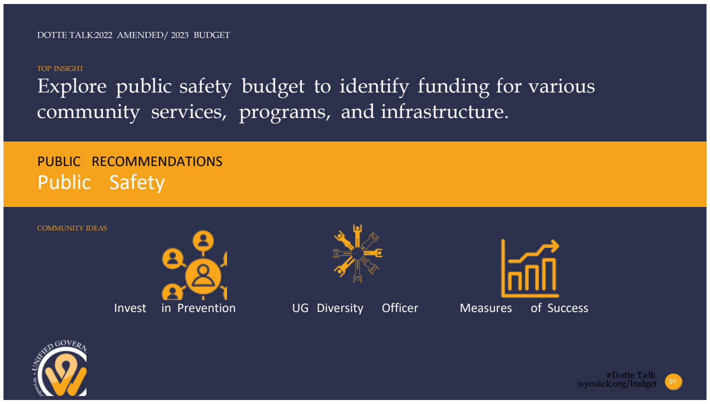
Again, we did hear a big call for increased improved services. There wasn't a lot of very concrete recommendations in terms of how we get there beyond some general cuts and recommendations that we will cover for you shortly, but also finding those efficiencies and I think a lot of people were asking us to kind of continue to look at how can we be more streamlined to continue to provide better services. I think there's a big challenge when it comes to what that actually means and how do we operationalize that type of input when you consider kind of the current state.

Finally, the progress that was made by the Unified Government over the course of the pandemic to move more services online was greatly appreciated by the community and certainly there was a call for even more online access to City Hall.



Moving to the next focus area, which is Public Safety, generally across the board; communities have seen a decrease in community satisfaction and public safety. However, we had very high levels of satisfaction for Fire and EMS within this category and so the priorities that kind of came out of the community survey were really focused on our appearance as a community, as well as community policing and presence as well, issues, things like animal control and things like that.

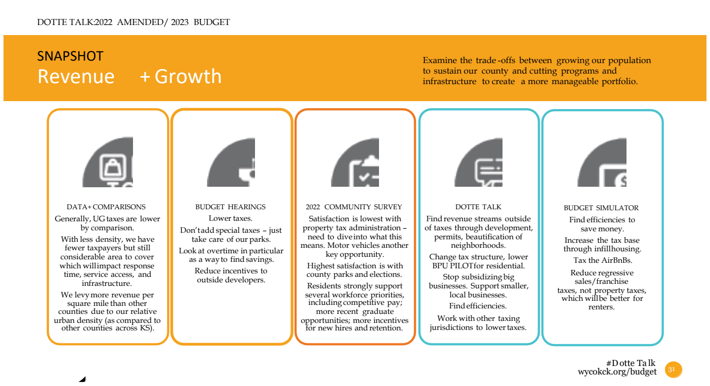
I think what we also heard from the Dotte Talks was really about making sure that we look at how we spend Public Safety dollars and maybe looking to those community services that are preventative that get out ahead of those issues, whether it's mental health or different programs that we can work towards as a community, and providing better access to reallocate those funds. There was a lot of encouragement to look more closely at that bucket of money and where it's going and how it's being spent and finding better ways to measure the return on investment for those dollars so that if we could kind of redistribute them to community services and kind of more preventative actions, they would like to see that.



That is ultimately the key insight I think we got out of Public Safety. We definitely heard loud and clear the desire to invest in prevention and we certainly have seen some really interesting collaboration out of the Unified Government whether it's public health and KCKPD partnering together on the violence prevention dashboard or other examples, so we know that there's certainly a movement in the way that we work already that aligns to those calls for action and prevention.

There was also a request for a Diversity Officer and you may recall we did have a proposed and unfunded position for something like that in our HR last year and this was really about addressing some of the implicit bias and some of the feelings of lack of quality customer service because of systemic racism and just feeling not welcome. So, there was a real desire to see that dynamic and that culture change.

Finally, those measures of success, wanting to be holding ourselves accountable to how the money is being spent and really setting up a mechanism to allow us to track that.



Mr. Peterson said I'm going to go through the insights we received on revenue and growth. So, overall the main insight that we got here is that there is a desire to look at taxes. There is a desire to lower taxes and at the least there's a desire to not add additional taxes at this time and to find efficiencies to support the initiatives that we currently have or that we want to fund throughout the UG. Something to note, while the 2022 Community Survey did not directly address the tax rates, satisfaction with property tax administration was one of the higher priority areas that was sought to be addressed and so we need to explore a little bit more on what that exactly means.

Then, for the Dotte Talks there is a desire to find revenue streams through development and economic development opportunities and overall through the budget simulator and the Dotte Talks there is much more conversation and emphasis put on PILOT reduction and sales tax reduction as opposed to property tax reduction.

Some of the comments that we received were that property tax reduction only impacts homeowners and a reduction in PILOT or sales taxes would be beneficial to everybody in the community.

As far as our community comparisons go, we did do some significant work on comparing our mill rates for both the city and the county. In our larger presentation, just to kind of go through the packet that was received, just some insights that we found that were notable, KCK is either mid or low on both the amount of money that we're levying per capita as well as by our land area. Interestingly, we found that we are one of the lowest—the least dense cities of the first-class cities in the state of Kansas. We're comparable to Coffeeville, KS and like Newton. I mean there's a significant number of towns that are above us so that presents significant challenges for us on maintaining urban level services, providing the services level that are desired by the community for infrastructure for public service—or public safety response times for access to community services. That's one of the challenges we see on the city side.

On the county side, it's actually the opposite which is interesting. We're actually the second most dense county among the first-class cities in the state of Kansas, so we have a much lower tax burden per capita than other cities in the state as well as a much higher level of income that we're generating—revenue that we're generating by our land area which allows us to better support county services and better provide those services to the community.

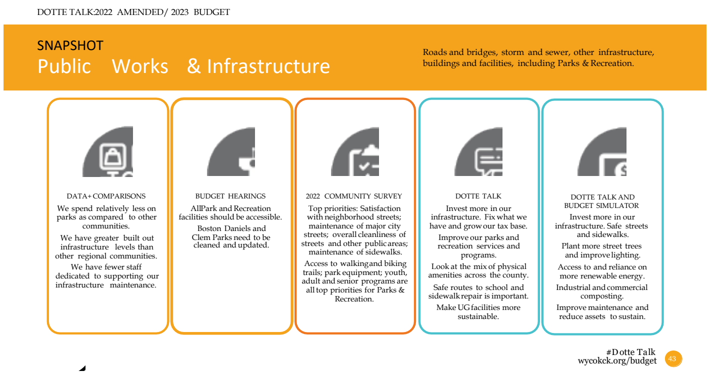
We definitely encourage you to look at the fuller handout that we provided.

Ms. Hand said yeah, as Michael mentioned, this is the full report. It is available on our website at wycokck.org/ugforward as well and it does include all of the backup data and additional analysis that we pulled into this presentation this evening.

Mr. Peterson said overall there was about a 3% reduction on the budget simulator for tax revenue from the public. As far as revenues and growth, there is a strong desire to build local opportunity by supporting small businesses and securing clear community benefits from all development. There's a strong desire for small local developers to have the same benefits as larger out-of-town developers and to address perceived inequities between different levels of business, large business, small business, the northeast, the west, so just making sure that we're being equitable in our development and in our economic incentives.

Some of the key insights are that we need to streamline our services and identify efficiencies to provide for future growth in areas that we want to grow in and, again, adding capacity to our services through volunteer programs. Then, looking at the ability to provide satellite services to other parts of the community.

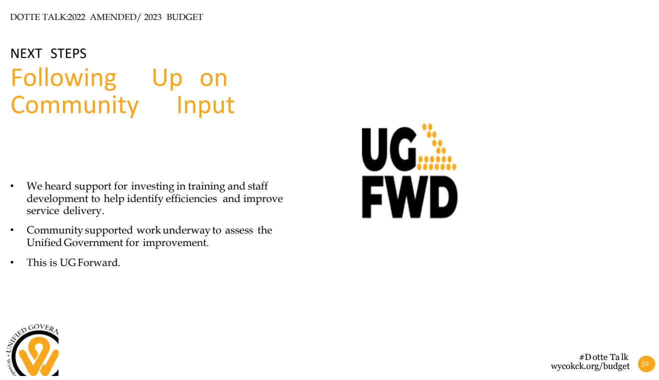
Commissioner Stites said you said, and if you would repeat it, you said the mill levy reduction, people said a mill levy reduction only affected residents—they were more interested in—do you remember what you said there? **Mr. Peterson** said the engagement, the feedback that we got from certain parts of the community were that they were—**Commissioner Stites** said certain parts—**Mr. Peterson** said I guess components of our—so all the different avenues of engagement that we did—**Commissioner Stites** said so overall—**Mr. Peterson** said overall, okay, some of the feedback was that participants were more interested in PILOT or sales tax reduction as opposed to property tax reduction because there's the perception that property tax reduction would not get passed on to rental properties or to everybody in the community. **Commissioner Stites** said gotcah.



Mr. Peterson said now to go on to Public Works & Infrastructure. As Ashley already mentioned, this is the number one priority on the community survey. We already know that street infrastructure is something that we need to add significant funding for. The emphasis in this category is just to be able to sustain and maintain what we already have as well as to add additional investment in the quality and availability of park services.

One of the things that's notable in the community comparisons that were done, we pulled some information from the Regional Benchmarking initiative that is occurring through the Mid-America Regional Council. Even though we have one of the highest amounts of paved infrastructure per miles per thousand population, we have one of the lowest amounts of FTEs that are actually supporting that same infrastructure, so just another example of the funding that's needed to go towards additional infrastructure.

To address beyond what we've already talked about with our actual street infrastructure, so one of the primary ways that was recommended that we could actually impact this in the short term was to address the quality and the appearance and maintenance of our community. The insight is, in addition to addressing decades of a deferred maintenance, we need to work on enforcing our codes and increasing community-wide access to our amenities. Some of the ways that we can immediately impact this area would be to address code enforcement making sure that we have adequate maintenance and equitable maintenance and appearance across the community, expediting the Land Bank process to get development occurring across the community, and then rethinking development incentives to try to work on further improving the community.



Ms. Hand said so we heard loud and clear through the feedback that there is a desire to see more quality services, but there was also an appreciation and an understanding, and the community survey told us as well as many of the in-person engagements, that investing in our staff to help with their ability to identify efficiencies and improve service delivery is something that was important and well acknowledged across the board.

I think one thing that is really important to us as part of the UG Forward is to ensure that this input is not kind of a moment in time, but that we continue to track the type of feedback that we get. We propose looking at changing the budget schedule when it comes to when we start outreach and starting it sooner because it is part of a much larger conversation and engaging our departments and our community together is also another great opportunity. We're very excited by the things that we were able to kind of pull out and learn from throughout the course of these last several months and I think you'll see that we'll continue to push on this and hope to create tools to allow us to report back to the community on how we took their input and their priorities and applied them to the 2023 Budget and beyond.

Ms. Harrison-Lee said thank you for the very thorough presentation. Before we continue, any questions?

Commissioner Kane said I have a comment and I hope I'm not the only one, but I've got a bunch of people that don't have computers, so how do they know about the budget? How do they know they could reach out to somebody to say, hey, I'd like to take that survey? **Ms. Hand** said we did a bunch of types of outreach. We had very little budget for marketing, but we did try to do our best to kind of print things and get things out into community centers. We had three Dotte Talks that were in-person meetings. We also mentioned it at several of our Commission meetings to try to encourage and promote participation. The reality is that the team of outreach is pretty much at this table right now and we are also doing everything else so we are very eager to explore ways to put more out there. We just didn't have the time or the bandwidth at this point.

Commissioner Kane said I don't think a small card that goes out to the entire community costs that much to say, hey, we're having a meeting here, we're having a meeting there. **Ms. Hand** said it costs about $16-$20K and we did do things like have our bill inserts—excuse me, BPU bills where we have variable tests. We promoted all of the Dotte Talk engagements for several months in your BPU bills which are the paper bills that come to your house. We tried channels that we didn't have available to us in the past. We tested new tools and will continue to expand on that engagement offering tools that we use across the board.

Commissioner Kane asked, do we not know the age of the people that lives in those homes? The answer is you bet, so I would think that somebody over 65 and you narrow it down to people over 65. The reason I say that is—I know you've got an answer, you don't have enough people, it costs too much money, but I'm telling you when I see these seniors and they say well I didn't know about that and I try to say call down here and the girls will gave you some guidance. But sometimes money—maybe it cost $6K, maybe it costs $10K, do you want input from everybody or just input from the people you send the stuff too? **Ms. Hand** said I think we do want input from everybody and I think the community survey is intended to be a good sample of our community which is the most, but I would say in order for us to do that level of engagement it just takes—we need more partnership from the community to help us get out there because we have our channels, but they are limited to the people that are accessing those channels. **Commissioner Kane** said you and I are never going to agree on this. There's a way to get it done.

Commissioner Bynum said I am curious if we know right now the percentages of homeownership versus rental in our community. I have the feeling that one or more of us knows that. My guess is that it's about getting—**Ms. Harrison-Lee** said we could get it. I don't have it here, but it's available. **Commissioner Bynum** said yeah, I certainly can understand the PILOT reduction desire for renters. I completely understand that, but I really think homeownership is a much higher percentage and, therefore, I wouldn't want to turn away from some level of mill levy reduction.

Commissioner Davis asked, are we done as far as the presenting goes or is there more that we need to do? **Ms. Harrison-Lee** said yes. **Commissioner Davis** said okay, I'll wait then.

Ms. Harrison-Lee said the question before you today is, now that you've had an opportunity to hear from the feedback we've been able to gather, what would you like to see prioritized in our budget? As we continue to move through this process, one of the things that we will have the ability to do, Commissioner Kane, is continue to reach out. We will be having the budget hearing as well, so we'll have an opportunity to reach out to those residents that might be challenged because they don't have access to the appropriate technology, so we can continue to do that as well.

At this time, just as a brief recap, we've heard from Mr. O'Malley as he interviewed Commission members, that the themes that resonated were tax relief, infrastructure, improving the quality of life with basic services, looking at talent retention, having more community listening sessions, and then collaboration with the governing body.

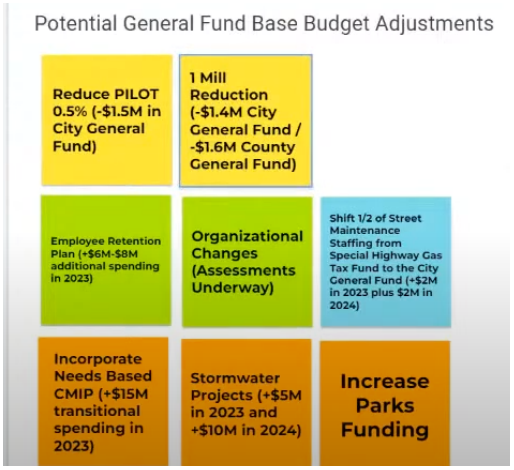
We heard from the presentation from staff, from the community input, a desire to look at community services in terms of blight removal, access to public amenities, looking at public safety in terms of a return on our investment and measures of success as well as prevention. In terms of revenue growth, looking at efficiencies, small business development, streamlining our services, lowering taxes, the PILOT, reducing incentives. Then, from Public Works & Infrastructure, looking at deferred maintenance, codes, and capital improvements.

What I would like to gather from you this evening, again I'll repeat, what we talked about at the retreat, budget development is a three-legged stool. It is staff, it is the governing body, it's the community. When we pull those together, what we are looking for this evening, as you've heard from the community, and we've heard from the interviews that Mr. O'Malley had is, what are those areas that you would like us to build this budget and focus on. We've talked about guiding principles at the last workshop. We would like to have some of the things that you would like to see as guiding principles at the last workshop. Does it include mill reduction? Would you like to see options for one, two, does it consider keeping the mill as it is? Would you like for us to look at a PILOT reduction or leave it the way it is? We would like to start to build it with your feedback. Your feedback is really an important part of this process.

I'm going to ask Ashley to do some virtual notetaking here as we gather your ideas and thoughts. It's a very different way. Instead of the flip chart method we're going to gather your input here so that it's visible to you.

Commissioner Kane said I would like, like the county and the city mill, if we lowered it this much or if we lowered it that much. There were not very good options. I didn't like that whatever—what do you call that, that was a joke to me because you can only adjust it so much. You know we need to see, alright, can we do it this much or this much and how would it affect us and then the same thing with the PILOT. I think everybody wants to lower on all three spots, but I would like to know incrementally what it would be and how much it would cost. I would like to know how much more money we collected since the real estate taxes went up and to see how much money there is to move the money from one spot to the other because I absolutely oppose revenue neutral.

I believe we have an opportunity to lower in all three levels. I just don't want to lower it a whole bunch because I'm one of the few that was here that lowered it a couple and then the next year we had to raise it back up. If you think lowering is hard, raising it back up is a lot worse. This needs to be a start here and then next year we go at it again, but I don't think we can just drop it all down to one level and say here we are and then put ourself in a hole that we can't dig ourselves out.



Ms. Harrison-Lee said one thing that I want to call your attention to, and that's some good feedback, if we reduce every half a percent that we reduce the PILOT, we're looking at $1.5M to the City General Fund. So, what should we consider, a half a percent for your first alternative or would you like for us to consider a percent because that translate to what we would consider— **Commissioner Kane** said that's exactly what Alley and I talked about.

Ms. Harrison-Lee said okay, and then when you look at the mill reduction, one mill is $1.4M for the city and $1.6M for the county. I would like to kind of stop there and get some feedback on what do we model. There are a lot of ways to model this and there's really not a science to it. It's a policy decision for you all.

Commissioner Ramirez said I agree with Commissioner Kane and dropping it by that half percentage point because I will say in the budget simulator—and this was among—it was not just the PILOT or the mill levy changes, but the whole thing. From zero to 5% in actuality, in reality, we would never do that. **Ms. Harrison-Lee** said right. **Commissioner Ramirez** said it would be—we would look at it incrementally and so I think—it was hard for me to figure out how to do that, but that simulator, just because of that major shift from zero to 5% or whatever we're at and reduce it by 5% or increase it by 5%. But I do agree going that incremental, looking at it and let's see what the half percentage looks like. If that looks good, let's have the discussion and see if there's temperature for another one, but I want that continuous conversation.

Commissioner Markley said the stickies that are already up here look suspiciously like the notes that I sent to Alley. Is that a coincidence? **Ms. Harrison-Lee** said we did get some feedback from commissioners to start with. We heard some things also this week after meeting with the commissioners of some other ideas that we would like to put out, so thank you for your previous feedback.

Commissioner Markley said I would say I agree with these shockingly enough. I agree with the .5% on the PILOT. I am fine with leaving the mill constant, but I think if we're going to consider a mill decrease, we should be looking at the county side of the budget based on what I'm seeing, so I would just note that that seems like the more likely place where that money could come from and where we could do a mill reduction. Then stormwater, yes. Needs Based CMIP, yes. Employee retention plan, yes. The shifting of the funds is something that Kathleen and I discussed sort of on the side that I thought was a good idea and then I think we as a Commission have all discussed increasing park funding. So, yeah, I agree with them.

Commissioner Stites said I thought we had that number that Commissioner Kane was asking at our evaluation. It was around $13M is what we were bringing in additional, our appraised values, the amount we were bringing in for property tax. I thought it was around $13M, which if I'm not mistaken, when the Mayor first initially started the budget, it equated to about like an 8 mill reduction. Was that—sound about right? **Ms. Harrison-Lee** said Kathleen is here to recap that. Kathleen, do you want to recap the slide that you showed that if we were at revenue neutral, the amount of mills and the dollar amount for that please.

Kathleen VonAchen, Chief Financial Officer, said the Clerk certified the final assessed value and so based on that the City General Fund is going to receive $3.8M in additional property tax revenue and the County will be receiving $6.2M in additional property tax revenue. Parks & Recreation Consolidated Fund is getting about $300K.

Commissioner McKiernan said I absolutely want to reduce as much as possible or limit the increase as much as possible. Everybody points out that the amount they're paying in property tax has gone up. It absolutely has, but so has the cost of goods and services and the personnel that we require to provide all of these services that people want and ultimately it's going to come down to a balance between what level of service do we want to provide and how much are we willing to pay to get that or close to that level of service. That's what it's going to come down to in the end, what do we want to do positively in this community.

Commissioner Markley said I just wanted to say one thing that wasn't on the note just because I want to make it clear, blight is still a huge priority of mine and it's obviously a huge priority for the community as well. So, you know, we sort of talk about community services in sort of a squishy way, but I think that's still a huge priority for quality of life across the entire county in every single district and it's something we need to continue to fund and work on.

Commissioner Davis said I think this exercise would be a little bit more effective if we were given less options. The only reason I say that is because I think just kind of looking through the Dotte Talk and all the work that has been done, I think our community has given us some clear parameters of where we need to start. I don't think we have to necessarily start from zero every time. I think if we had some sort of poll or something where as commissioners, and this is just me talking, we need to look at maybe top three priorities of where we want to spend and then top three priorities of where we want to reduce because that's the other part about this. If we are saying less revenue and more spending, think about a home budget, you're going to be in trouble. So, we have to at some point have a conversation about spending and maybe the best way to do that is to let the community survey and community feedback guide that conversation with the options that folks gave us on where we would have a community will and the political will to reduce spending so that we can fund these particular priorities.

While I have the mic, I will also just give my priorities in no particular order. Absolutely, we need to pay our UG employees, we need to be competitive. COVID was very, very tough on our employees and so I'm absolutely for that because any program, any service, is going to require people, so we absolutely need to do that. Infrastructure maintenance, absolutely for our roads, for our bridges, for potholes; absolutely. Then, for tax reduction, my perspective wouldn't even be a half, it would be a quarter cut and it would be a quarter cut every year. That way, after four years, after five years, after six years, we can make significant progress, but we're not having to deal with, as what Commissioner Mike said, put ourselves in a very difficult situation where we've cut too much and now we have to add more points back on the board.

While I do have the mic, I'll also add some other UG departments that I think need some more love and that they correspond with community priorities. Our Parks, absolutely. Code Enforcement, absolutely. Animal Services, they do not get enough love at all, don't even have enough for dog food and so absolutely. Health Department and then I'm also going to throw Livable Neighborhoods in here because I believe that if we give more funding to Livable Neighborhoods and empower our neighborhood leaders, they actually can be the solutions to their own problem, but they need to be well resourced to do so.

Commissioner Johnson said I think the half percent reduction on the PILOT is a good faith effort from the UG to our community that has been demanding, quite frankly, that we give some attention to the PILOT. The $1.5M adjustment that it represents doesn't necessarily scare me too much. I like all of the different thoughts that are here. What I don't see is how—and I guess we'll see later, how these particular decisions impact our fund balance and where are we at the end of the day with our fund balance because I'm continuing to keep an eye on that number. That number has to play a big role in the bond rating that we receive which impacts our tax holders as well.

I don't want to get too close to the bone for trying to get all of these things here. I do want Parks, I'm at that point now, I totally agree it is an economic development need and I like a lot of the things that they are saying and I don't have a problem signing off on them just as long as we don't cut too deep into the fund balance and keep that balance healthy. I'm so pleased to see how we navigated COVID because we thought it was going to be a whole lot worse than it was. We were able to make it through our fund balance which was there for us in times when needed. You just never know when the next time will come and you need those funds in addition to the point that I've made previously that impacts our bond rating which, you know, could be improved—to stand some improvement, quite frankly, and that affects our borrowing rates that are paid by our community.

Commissioner Townsend said a couple of things. I think the community survey that was done has already given us our marching orders, in my opinion. In District 1, and a lot of the same thing; infrastructure, blight reduction, code enforcement. So, with respect to cutting any of the resources financially that come in, either PILOT or the mill rate, yeah, I would want to do that, but what I think we need to do first because many of us around this table as commissioners have already been through a decrease in the last eight years and that decrease in the mill rate did not yield the reduction in the amount of money paid by our taxpayers because this body is not the only body that weighs into what the taxes paid are like. It would be devastating to this body, to this organization, who are responsible for infrastructure getting done, blight reduction getting done, code enforcement being met, that we have less money to do that with.

I would be in favor of, or would like to see, a prioritization of what we spend the current funds we have on to get the desired goals stated in the community surveys. Let's do that. As Commissioner Johnson has already brought forward, the issue of the fact that we were in pretty good situation when a pandemic that no one foresaw showed up on our door, started in China and within six months it was in Wyandotte County and also keeping in mind our bond rating.

Should we instead of reducing the mill rate right now, look at delving into some of those funds? I don't know, but I think what our constituents are calling us to do is move forward on what they've already told us, our priorities, and a lot of us have already said that tonight, specifically with the money we have, let's look at what we can do to achieve those ends. Have conversations, if that's what it takes, with the other taxing entities who have increased the mill rate by their input, it wasn't this body within the last eight years, and go from there.

Commissioner Kane said I'm going to say it, but Christian should take the credit, for the people out there, 46% of your taxes come from the Unified Government. The rest are from the taxing entities that Gayle is talking about. When people blame us, we're not the only ones to blame and I wish you would call those other folks to say, hey, get on them as much as you're getting on us because they're more responsible for it than we are.

There are a couple of things I think—and during the pandemic, you have to remember that the governor came to Kansas City, Kansas because we had the best setup at Kmart than any other place around the state and our Health Department did a fantastic job on that and they never get enough credit. You know, I was at the lake for work this week and the going rate at McDonald's is $16 and 80 some odd cents an hour, and we have some of our employees we're not paying that much. That's why it's important that we came up with something where we can have some folks work from home, some can't, but we need to make some adjustments and we need to make it where the—we need to retain our people because we're not paying anything compared to some of the surrounding municipalities.

As far as the PILOT goes, I think we should see something at like .25, .3, .4 and the same thing with the PILOT. Let's see what these increments, how much it would cost us and then we need to hear, I think, from some of staff heads to say if we got this much money, we could do that because I don't think we can make a decision until they tell us what they need and we've done that in the past. I would encourage us to get them involved with this process.

Commissioner Ramirez said my top priorities overall—I think we should—number one I think all of us are going to say it, and agree, increase our infrastructure spending. It's a resounding yes, not only from this body, but from our community and our community survey. We know Jeff and his team have constantly come up to us and told us the infrastructure crisis that is coming before us and so I think we need to increase our infrastructure spending to what we can.

The second, going to what Commissioner Kane said, investment in our personnel. He has said on multiple occasions we need to be a better employer to our employees. A lot of our employees work hard every day to provide services to our community. As the employer we need to reflect their sacrifice to their community and that's investing in them.

Another one is investment in growth in all of our disinvested communities, not just bits and pieces here and there, we need to do all of it together strategic, widespread investment because there's continued growth around our communities, but there's a northeast, Armourdale, Argentine where no community should be when's my turn, but to be, we work together to make that investment in that growth. So, I would like that to be a priority as well, more investment in our disinvested communities. Then, of course, what we've been talking about, strategic and common sense tax relief.

I agree with the—on the property—the mill levy side, the .25% reduction every year and then it's, again, strategic. We need to be careful with what we do. The community has said they want more from us, they want more services, they want more parks funding, they want better streets, roads, sidewalks. Let's do that while also being able to provide that tax relief to them.

Another one, going to Commissioner Townsend, to reach out to our other taxing jurisdictions. We're not the only one and I know when we started this budget process a lot of us had the same sentiment and we asked that we reach out to other jurisdictions. They had said that those conversations had started, but we have not received any update or anything about those conversations, so I would like to know if those conversations are continuing to be had because we as the Unified Government, as the governing body, keep getting the heat for property tax relief or just tax relief in general when, again, only 46% of your tax dollar comes to us. The other 54, KCKCC, USD 500, the library system; those are all the other taxing jurisdictions. The state also takes your tax dollar.

Commissioner Bynum said I want to reiterate the need for increased funding for Public Works. They've very explicitly told us what they need. We need to take steps to move them in that direction. I want to support funding for Animal Services and I want to see the increment on the various levels of reduction for both the PILOT and the mill levy.

Commissioner McKiernan said this is going to be a little bit redundant, but I'm just going to put it on the record. If I go back to the community survey, maintenance of city streets, of course, is the number one priority for people in my district. Maybe what Public Works could give us, and if you've already given this to me and I just haven't understood it, maybe you can give it to me again, but do we have like a good, better, best option. Do we have an incremental approach that we could take, maybe not funding at 100% level in the first year, but at a meaningful level next year with other levels to come. I don't know, but that's something we can talk about, but I absolutely support increased spending for the maintenance of our infrastructure that is the foundation, the bedrock that we have built our city on top of.

Number two in my district is code enforcement and maybe from NRC the same question. Is there a good, better, best option for increasing our ability to encourage our citizens to play by the rules that we as a community have established for how you maintain your properties. Frankly, I'm just fed up that we have to chase people and spend taxpayers money cleaning up after people who willfully walk away from their responsibility as property owners in this community. We've just, in my district in the last couple of days, traded a lot of emails about cleaning up after people who just don't respond. They don't care. So, do we have ways that we can through resolution or ordinance or law do that, but also, what's it going to take in terms of putting resources toward keeping that up because certainly the people who live around that deadbeat property didn't do anything to cause it, but they suffer the negative effects of it at their property. We all suffer the negative effects on it on our collective desirability of a community to live in.

Another thing that we need to look at and it's kind of a code enforcement and maybe it's a parks thing, but we own 4,000 Land Bank lots and right now we don't have the resources to keep up with our own properties. In some cases our own properties violate codes as bad or worse than privately-owned properties. We cannot allow that to happen, so how do we find the ability to take care of our properties so that we set the standard. We are the model that everybody should aspire to be. I get it, there's a lot of properties out there, but maybe we look at some policy revisions over some of those vacant parcels who nearby neighbors would be more than happy to care for them and in many cases have been caring for them for years and years and years. Let's make it official and just do that.

I look at Police Services; I want to hear a good, better, best from our Police Department as well. I'm hearing from a lot of people in my district that they're very concerned about increasing the presence of our police force because they are very concerned that there is an increased presence of people who are up to no good, people who are lowering quality of life in the neighborhood. To counter that, they're asking me, can we put more police on the streets. I guess my questions would be for the Police Department, can we knowing that we're already—I'm pretty sure we're not at our sworn strength in terms of police. So, it's not only a question of money, it's a question of strategy and policy and recruitment and how we can get those people even if we fund those positions.

Then, I'll stop with fourth and that is with Parks & Recreation facilities. Commissioner Burroughs and I met with a bunch of high school students today who are here on a summer long project, and I forget the specifics of it, but we were asking, what would make life better in your neighborhood. One young lady said, well frankly, if you fix the streets and if you had a pool in my neighborhood—oh, infrastructure maintenance and Parks & Recreation facilities, it was the first thing she went to, let's see what we can do in that regard.

Ms. Harrison-Lee said okay, thank you, fantastic feedback. We have one other thing we want to do which is kind of drill down to priorities with Dotte dollars.

Commissioner Stites said I don't think, Commissioner McKiernan, we've been at staff at the Police Department at full staff in 40 years. I think you would be astounded to know the actual number that we're down of police officers. The Mayor probably could give a pretty good number knowing where we're at, but it's dozens and dozens.

I go back to this mill reduction and this embarrassment of thinking that we're going to reduce our PILOT by—or our mill or a county mill by a quarter. They just told us we're going to bring in $8M more dollars and we're going to reduce it by $750K. In 2015, 2016, and 2017, I think it was when I went back to look at my notes, when the city reduced the mill levy two, two and two, the county didn't get a dime reduction, didn't see it. Bonner Springs and Edwardsville didn't see any reduction, none. They're also in this county. We have to do more for the county side of this budget in reducing the tax burden on the county side.

If I had looked at that 2015, '16, and '17 and it said, two, two, two on the city side and two, two, two on the county side, I would have felt a lot better about it, but it didn't. It just said the city and those folks out in Bonner Springs, that PILOT reduction doesn't do a thing for them, not at all. There's more folks in this city—in this county than just Kansas City, Kansas in this mill levy, so I'm for doing something more on the county side.

Commissioner Kane said real quick, a park in Piper.

Commissioner Davis said real quick, Kathleen, because I think we had some conversations on this at some point during this conversation, you can actually give us an update on what some of the other taxing jurisdictions are doing. That's going to be very helpful. We need to be very, very loud about that, so our community knows. Absolutely, underscore what Commissioner Townsend said because we're only talking about 46% if you live in KCK, 23% of your property tax bill if you do not live in KCK, and so that's also important. I'll also say I think an incremental approach for not only a city and county tax reduction, but also BPU would be good and so maybe instead of doing .5, maybe do .1.

The last thing I will say is, we still have to make key decisions on where we're going to find new revenue, where we are going to spend, if we can get some sort of a budget or at least a baseline of our commitments that we've already made. Thinking about union contracts, cost to do business as well, that way we have an understanding of where we're at. That would be also beneficial to this process.

Commissioner Johnson said I'll make it very quick. I want to double down, we need to share in the reduction with our other taxing jurisdictions. I also want to say to this body, there is no quick fix. When we make a decision, there is a lag in terms of the effects of that, so Commissioner Stites can speak to the effects of those two, two, and two on the counties—or the city side because he has that data. When we make decisions this year, we have to understand that it will be another year or two before we see the results of those things. We need to be mindful of that and I would say conservative.

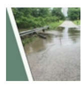
Ms. Harrison-Lee said at this time I'm going to give it back to our Strategic Communications Director so we can talk about what you just received.

Ms. Hand said in front of you is a worksheet and, Commissioner Bynum, I apologize. You are not here in person to be able to play with the printed money that we created here, the Dotte dollars, but what this represents is $100 is 100% of our General Fund and this is the Consolidated General Fund. What we have outlined here for you is our current apportionment of that General Fund across different functions of our organization, so Public Safety, Public Works, Community Services, Administration, Judicial Services, and Other Programs which includes things like the Convention & Visitors Bureau, County Fair; things like that.

What we're asking you to do this evening is take those $100 dollars and look at these different categories across our budget and basically try to align what you would like to see that General Fund breakdown to look like. You'll have about ten minutes to let you do that. **Commissioner Kane** said I'm ready to go. **Ms. Hand** said you're ready to go. You've already done yours, all right, and then we'll have everybody kind of share what they've done.

Ms. Harrison-Lee said we just kind of want to get—we've got everyone's numbers recorded here, correct Ashley, before we move forward? We've got everything, okay. If we can just get a readout with all of the priorities. We'll start here with you, Commissioner Ramirez, and just kind of go around and get your readout.

Commissioner McKiernan asked, could she just total them and give us the totals rather than—
Ms. Harrison-Lee said absolutely, we can do that. In fact, what we'll do in the essence of time, we'll let her total and we will move to a brief update on the Stormwater and CMIP and then that will give them an opportunity to do that. Okay, so we'll start with stormwater from our Public Works staff.



Ms. Harrison-Lee said we want to give just a brief update. We've had several conversations on stormwater. We would like to have just kind of a five-minute recap. One of the things that we were asked to do is look at kind of a faith-based component and so we would like to just give you a quick update on that faith-based discount.

Troy Shaw, County Engineer, said we will make this quick as promised. We are here to talk about the Faith-Based Discount for stormwater. I'm going to turn it over to Sarah Shafer to talk about that and then we'll ask one question at the end and that'll be it.

Faith based

Sarah Shafer, Public Works CMIP Program Manager, said the Faith-Based Discount, we ran an example which is on the screen. There's 300—approximately 360 eligible example properties in Kansas City, Kansas that would meet this Faith-Based Discount of a church/place of worship, charitable institution, religious living quarters, and administration headquarters. Potentially over 6,000 parcels may be eligible for a not-for-profit discount, so that's where the narrowing down of the faith-based was made for the example. The discount will be 20% reduction of the actual impervious area and that potential revenue loss from a discount would be, from these particular 360 properties, would be approximately $32,000 that would need to be reallocated via the rate.

co mparison

	2024 (C+A)	2024 (C+D+A)	DELTA
Monthly Base Charge	$4.73	$4.73	$0.00
Rate per 500 ft²	$0.80	$0.82	$0.02

Monthly Bill Examples – Rate per 500 ft² + Monthly Base Charge			
Hard Surface	2024 (C+A)	2024 (C+D+A)	DELTA
1,200 ft²	$6.65	$6.70	$0.05
2,500 ft²	$8.73	$8.83	$0.10
4,000 ft²	$11.13	$11.29	$0.16
10,000 ft²	$20.73	$21.13	$0.40
20,000 ft²	$36.73	$37.53	$0.80
75,000 ft²	$124.73	$127.73	$3.00
150,000 ft²	$244.73	$250.73	$6.00
500,000 ft²	$804.73	$824.73	$20.00

The next slide is our comparison. This is just in 2024 which is our proposed installation of this particular impervious rates so you can see the differences there, which we listed in the delta per the 500 square feet and then how it would impact those various sizes of hard surfaces throughout our community ranging in five cents to $20 per bill.

Mr. Shaw said I told you it would be quick, so really all we're looking for now is just discussion and your thoughts on whether we should pursue this moving forward when we start talking about the rate in the future. So, any input you have or questions, would be great to hear.

Commissioner Davis said I'll be fast. Just to get some clarity, non-profits also qualify for this discount. They do not. **Mr. Shaw** said the way we propose it is just faith-based organizations. That's what we've—the calculations we show, that's what that covers. **Commissioner Davis** said oh boy, I thought the genesis of this was to see if non-profits, and I know schools were also included as well as churches, yeah, I'm not sure about this.

Ms. Harrison-Lee said Commissioner Johnson and then the question would be, is the direction that you would like consideration to expand what we have.

Commissioner Johnson said yes, I support it.

Commissioner Markley said I support it as well and my concern about expanding it to other entities is for every dollar we are discounting something, the rest of the taxpayers have to bear that burden. So, I support the faith-based exemption, but I don't know, we would have to look a lot closer I think if we wanted to expand it.

Commissioner Burroughs said I oppose it. If you use it, you pay for it. That's what we are in this community to do. We provide services and if we're going to ask people to invest, we should all invest. I'm opposed to the not-for-profits getting a discount. I'm opposed to faith-based communities getting a discount. It's invested dollars, they're your dollars. They're the public dollars, they are not our dollars to give away and so I am opposed.

Commissioner Ramirez said I would support it, but I would like us maybe in the future look at maybe—you know, we're going through the budget, look at scenarios of what an expansion would look like, not to say we go down that road, but what those scenarios look like. That's all I would like to see, but yes, I would overall support the faith-based discount.

Commissioner Davis said I am concerned about the legality of this to be quite honest with you all. I don't know if under state statute, or Misty, if you can provide—and not to put you on the spot or anything, but I am pretty concerned abut that. Can you comment on that? **Misty Brown, Chief Legal Counsel,** said I think I'm here to be put on the spot, so thank you for the question. I think what makes everyone kind of pause a little bit, it's just this general premise of separation of church and state, so it does feel a little bit odd on this. I think the language was intentionally chosen as faith-based and when I first was approached with it I was a little worried. I did look into it and I see there is pretty firm precedent across the country of faith-based discounts. We just have to remember it is all faiths that would be included in this. We have to define it properly. It would have to be handled appropriately so if it's a policy decision this Commission wishes to do to provide a discount to faith-based entities, and if we handle it property, we can defend it. Does that mean somebody may not ever challenge it, no, but I think we would be in good stead with it. We are in good company across the country.

Ms. Harrison-Lee asked, would you like us to proceed as we build this budget with a faith-based consideration?

Commissioner Burroughs said I guess we're doing a budget cut before we even realize how much money we have and by providing—we have an opportunity to give discounts to those that have already invested in the infrastructure and stop stormwater on their properties. The economic development aspect, we're going to be giving credit to those. We're going to be now considering not-for-profits and—or faith-based communities and then not-for-profits, so if we're really that interested in investing in infrastructure, we should invest in infrastructure and then determine the burden and determine how much we want to cut. But, to come up with a percentage now and seeing a financial impact before we get started, I just think that's really—I think we're going the wrong direction. That's just me personally. I'm not saying they're not in need at this time, but all we've heard for the last six, seven months is how important infrastructure is and now what I'm hearing is let's give away an opportunity so they don't have to pay. They, whoever those organizations or entities may be.

Commissioner Stites said I concur with Commissioner Burroughs. I think it should—we could look at it. Just like the incremental mill reduction has been presented to us, I think this could be something that's looked at in two years after we find out what the impact is. I agree, we're looking at giving a discount or a reduction before we know what we've already got in the bank.

Commissioner Ramirez said I would support that instead. Commissioner Burroughs brought up a good point and his very good argument for it, so I—and I agree with Commissioner Stites, let's do what we need to do now and then maybe a year from—a year and a half from now, come back and revisit this issue about the stormwater because we all know we just need to get stormwater out there now. We need stormwater dollars out there to fix what we need to get fixed so I think a year, year and a half, two years, whatever the timeline, we as a governing body choose, bring the topic back. Look at what stormwater has already—what infrastructure has been fixed and then go from there. I think I would support that avenue.

Commissioner Johnson said I'll try to be brief. The thing that I was concerned about when we first talked about stormwater is the fact that besides my local church, I'm thinking that a lot of churches are going to be thrown off when they see this. There's a lot of churches in our community that have a lot of impervious surfaces and I think there's going to be some—it's going to cause a real reaction through the faith-based community.

The reason why I'm not—I mean I don't have a problem with this because you're talking about a rate reduction of 20%, which equates to $32,000 to the overall budget. In light of the things we have been talking about up to this point, that's a very small dent in our budget. As I've said before, a lot of our churches are not prepared—I know I'm thinking about my own colleagues and colleagues from other denominations that would be thrown off when they see such an increase to their BPU bill.

Ms. Harrison-Lee said I just want to make sure we have this correct when we start to build the budget, so just commissioners that would support a faith-based discount, can you just kind of let me—okay. (Commissioner Bynum was inaudible).

Ms. Harrison-Lee asked, those that wouldn't.

Commissioner Kane said I don't have an opinion one way or the other.

Ms. Harrison-Lee said it looks like we have a majority around not because when I asked for those who would support it if we brought it back, I didn't see a majority. Okay, that's good feedback and now we'll go to the CMIP project, request process, just a brief update on that.

Robert Anderson, Public Works Asset Manager, said I'm just going to briefly review stuff we've already kind of covered which is a way that anyone can submit a project to the Capital Project selection process. I also want to use this as an opportunity to talk about projects versus programs. When you do a program you touch more people's lives with less money. You have all been talking for the past 1.5 hours about how you want to reduce taxes, reduce the burden. It also means you're going to reduce the revenues which means you're going to have to decide what programs get cut, so that means we're going to be able to do less large capital projects and we need to maintain that focus on programs.

I'm going to maps.wycokck.org/cmip.html and that will bring you to our CMIP web map. This CMIP web map also has a public submission portal for anyone; commissioners, staff, residents, businessowners, anyone and everyone is welcome to submit a project intended for projects over $200K that exist inside the right of way.

For some reference, for us to do a large capital project, that cost us around $7M a mile. To do just a mill and overlay, it's around $100K for a two-lane road, so just think about that ratio when you talk about the $18.3M that you allocate to the CMIP, which includes things like elevators. So, if you want to do really large capital projects, you know, you're going to encumber portions of that debt and take away our ability to do these programs. It's always a give and take when you decide between programs and projects. Anyone and everyone can go to this website to submit a project and I invite everyone to do that and I'm hear for questions around the process which you can also follow on a separate tab on this webpage.

Commissioner Davis said thank you so much for that presentation. I think the question was answered earlier, but I just want to make sure folks are not able to use this process for like Parks & Rec or anything like that, correct? **Mr. Anderson** said I wouldn't mind entertaining one, but it's not really intended for that. This is mostly more for large capital projects like, you know, redoing a road, things like that or reconfiguring the alignment of a road. **Commissioner Davis** said gotcha, yeah, well I would suggest that addition because I know that our community members have come before and said Parks & Rec is a high, high priority. I think within that conversation it's not just getting new things, but as many folks have said, this taking care of what we have and when we think about infrastructure, I think Parks & Rec can be included in that as well as other particular CMIP related things as well. I wonder what it would look like to expand this program to other departments where they also participated in that process.

Mr. Anderson said I will say that one of our submissions from the public did include a sidewalk in a park space so it's not solely isolated in that sense, but we're not talking about putting in—**Commissioner Davis** said slides or something. **Mr. Anderson** said no because this is really geared towards—this level is now comparing different projects. This spatial analysis is really about how many people are going to be affected, how many vehicles every day would be affected by this improvement, (inaudible) so this road or that road. We can use the system that is weighted by the Commission and drives you, so that way we can get to each of those projects and I just want to say that it's public versus view that every street is a project, a potential project, and that's why we should invest in programs.

Commissioner Burroughs asked, could you repeat those numbers again please? You said $700K a mile—**Mr. Anderson** said $7M for a reconstruction like a Leavenworth Road type project. Mill and overlay is around 100 and that would include some other additional improvements, not just the resurfacing. **Commissioner Burroughs** said great. I just wanted to make sure I heard those numbers correctly. **Mr. Anderson** said that's rough estimates right now.

Ms. Harrison-Lee said we have the results of your prioritization process with the Dotte dollars. I'll turn it over to the staff.

	CURRENT	Johnson	Davis	Ramirez	Kane	Markley	Garner	Burroughs	Townsend	McKiernan	Stites	Bynum
Public Safety	$56	$ 16	$ 28	$ 36	$ 56	$ 43	$ 8	$ 52	$ 40	$ 20	$ 40	
Public Works	$15	$ 36	$ 25	$ 25	$ 10	$ 18	$ 40	$ 16	$ 25	$ 32	$ 20	
Community Services	$13	$ 21	$ 20	$ 23	$ 13	$ 15	$ 50	$ 11	$ 20	$ 30	$ 20	
Administration	$11	$ 11	$ 10	$ 11	$ 11	$ 11	$ -	$ 7	$ 5	$ 6	$ 10	
Judicial Services	$4	$ 11	$ 5	$ 4	$ 4	$ 4	$ 1	$ 5	$ 5	$ 6	$ 5	
Other Programs	$13	$ 5	$ 12	$ 13	$ 13	$ 9	$ 1	$ 9	$ 5	$ 6	$ 5	
Reduce funding												
Increase funding												

Ms. Hand said the boxes filled with yellow are proposed reductions versus red, I wasn't able to go fast enough to change the conditional formatting, but the red indicates increases in funding. You can see there's a pretty consistent level of increasing across Public Works and Community Services. There's general proposed reductions across Public Safety. There is some reduction across Administration although there were several that maintained at the current level and Judicial Services also saw some increases in funding. Then, finally, the Other Programs which was kind of a catchall did see a reduction in funding recommendations based on the kind of General Consolidated Fund apportionment.

Ms. Harrison-Lee said we clearly hear you. As we build this, you want us to look at services to the Community and Public Works, so we'll be going back and looking at the community survey to see in those areas what they looked at. As we look at the audits to streamline, we'll look at Administration, but we will utilize this information to start to build the budget for you. Questions, comments.

Commissioner Ramirez said for mine, the only change I made was a reduction in Public Safety. I wanted to explain my reasoning for that. It's not in personnel in any way, shape or form. That was one of the issues I had with the budget simulator. If you try to reduce any type of Public Safety budget, it was only personnel. It wasn't looking at overspending, unnecessary spending, spending within equipment, what have you, that's besides personnel. That was my reasoning for reducing the Public Safety, it was not personnel-wise. It's looking at capital investment and equipment investment, unnecessary spending within those departments, and reallocating that to Public Works and Community Services.

Commissioner Townsend said I think the interesting thing about this and seeing the results is that you can clearly discern a trend and the real question is, are we going to have the political will and guts to make the decisions that reflect the numbers when those times come. So, that's really going to be the bottom line.

Commissioner Davis said I think we can do a lot with this, with these numbers. I love data. I think we can get percentages and reduction. We can get percentages increase. We can get some averages in there, some meetings in there. We can do a lot. I'm talking about statistics for you all and I did not do that well in statistics, but you know, if I learned something, but all of this to say, and you know I have been saying we have to be decisive and we have political will behind us. We have political will. This is what the community has asked. I do think it's unfortunate, maybe we can get Commissioner Bynum's analysis at some point, awesome, awesome, but we have political will behind us. I think we've just got to get it done, but yeah, percentages would be super, super helpful. I think we can correspond that with investment as well.

Commissioner Burroughs said I think this is reflective of—I hope we don't feel that we need to defend our positions on what we do because we shouldn't be feeling like we need to defend our positions and our reasoning for this. These are decisions that we're going to make and we're collectively going to change as a body and the fact that we want to make sure that it's not personnel, I think that's fine. I didn't look at it as such, but the fact that subject's been brought up, I would hope that we don't use these as spears on one another while we're going through the budget process because if you start using them as spears, that means your ox is getting gored and you don't like that. So, if we're going to collectively work through this, I'm looking at some of these numbers and we're not far off collectively as a body on some of these, but there are some wide differences and we may have a reason for reduced budget versus an enhanced budget that are wide apart with one another. It may be we have not communicated why those differences are there, so don't assume that it's a negative issue.

I will just say mine are just standard 5% budget cuts across the board and that's how I looked at it and we will have a chance to look at that. It didn't deal with personnel, it didn't deal with who's favored, who favors this, who favors that. I think it's just part of the process that we learn to respect and learn to know one another a little bit better than what we do now as we start through the budget process.

Ms. Harrison-Lee said thank you very much Mayor and commissioners for your feedback. I want to thank you for the opportunity to lead a very strategic and intentional budget session with you all. We, as staff, are experts in Public Administration, but you all are the keepers of the vision of the community, so thank you. We will be utilizing this to develop the budget. We'll be bringing you back some more detailed numbers and we're going to also look at these areas and drill down on what it looks like by area.

Mayor, that concludes the budget presentation. I'll turn it back over to you.

Mayor Garner said thank you Administrator and thank you commissioners. As promised, today is that day that is coming along this process of budget cost. I didn't want to weigh-in too much for obvious reasons, but I wanted the public to hear from you. We wanted to really have this robust debate about what's important to you.

Again, the people I've talked to the number one and two issues are always mill levy or tax reductions as well as the PILOT. As we go down this road, I think it was mentioned to me by a constituent that when you talk about the valuations that came out and a lot of people got—are expected to get tax increases as a result. If you're really talking about what was being proposed, at least for me, was not so much a tax reduction, but to hold the line by basically preventing a tax increase as a result of those valuations and those tax increases. There's a big profound difference because if you were talking about a tax decrease, not only would you have to cut the taxes where we're at today, but then you would also have to hold the line on tax increase from the projected revenue stream increases that we know will be coming in and a few million dollars there.

These type of debates area great. I know they are going to continue. The community has a real interest in this Commission's views. The people I've talked to, they really are excited to want to know where you stand on these issues, so these types of debate are really valuable, not just for this body and for staff, but really for the community and those that are watching.

As we outline priorities, I think that's really important based on the feedback you're getting from your constituents in your individual districts. I just ask, as we move forward, just for me, that whatever we do is community-driven, we listen to our constituents and our residents and what I've seen today is that this body is listening, and that you be bold, that you be courageous, and that you do what is right for Wyandotte County moving forward because we're truly at a crossroads when you talk about all the challenges that we have moving forward.

With that being said, thank you. Thank you Administrator and thank you staff for those presentations, really well done. Right now, we're going to conclude this portion.

Commissioner Johnson asked, Mayor, can I just add one thing? **Mayor Garner** said yes, go ahead. **Commissioner Johnson** said I just want to say a quick appreciation to all the staff that worked on this from the Interim Administrator all the way down. We appreciate you. Oftentimes you all don't get the credit that you deserve, but you sure get all the (inaudible). Good job and we appreciate this robust information that you provided us with.

Mayor Garner asked, any further comments or questions. At this time the Commission will go into Executive Session for consultation with Legal Counsel regarding personnel matters.

6:50 p.m.

Commissioner Ramirez made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Stites, for the Commission to go into Executive Session until no later than 7:10 p.m. to allow the Commission to discuss a confidential matter regarding employees, which are private personnel matters related to specific non-elected employees, as permitted by the Kansas Open Meetings Act; and that staff designated by the County Administrator be present to participate in the discussion, and that we return in open session at 7:10 p.m. here in the 5th floor conference room. Roll call was taken on the motion and there were nine "Ayes," McKiernan, Ramirez, Johnson, Kane, Markley, Stites, Davis, Burroughs, Townsend.

Present for the Executive Session regarding private personnel matters: Burroughs, Commissioner At-Large Second District; Townsend, Commissioner First District; McKiernan, Commissioner Second District; Ramirez, Commissioner Third District; Johnson, Commissioner Fourth District; Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; Markley, Commissioner Sixth District; Stites, Commissioner Seventh District; Davis, Commissioner Eighth District; and Garner, Mayor/CEO presiding. **Staff present:** Cheryl Harrison-Lee, Interim County Administrator; Misty Brown, Chief Legal Counsel; and Bridgette Cobbins, Assistant County Administrator.

Commissioner Burroughs made a motion, seconded by Commissioner McKiernan, to reconvene into Special Session. Roll call was taken and there were nine "Ayes," McKiernan, Ramirez, Johnson, Kane, Markley, Stites, Davis, Burroughs, Townsend.

7:13 p.m.
Commissioner Markley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Stites, for the Commission to go into Executive Session until 7:33 p.m. to discuss matters relating to employer-employee negotiations regarding the status and future direction of labor negotiations, as permitted under the Kansas Open Meetings Act; and that staff designated by the County Administrator be present to participate in the discussion, and that we return in open session at 7:40 p.m. here in the 5th floor conference room. Roll call was taken on the motion and there were eight "Ayes," McKiernan, Ramirez, Johnson, Markley, Stites, Davis, Burroughs, Townsend.

Present for the Executive Session relating to employer-employee negotiations: 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; Stites, Commissioner Seventh District; Davis, Commissioner Eighth District; and Garner, Mayor/CEO presiding. **Staff present:** Cheryl Harrison-Lee, Interim County Administrator; Misty Brown, Chief Legal Counsel; Shakeva Christian, Manager in Human Resources; Vincent Billaci, Street Division Manager; Brett Deichler, Interim Assistant County Administrator; Jon Khalil, Assistant Counsel; and Ryan Denk, Outside Counsel.

Commissioner Markley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner McKiernan, to reconvene into Special Session. Roll call was taken and there were eight "Ayes," McKiernan, Ramirez, Johnson, Markley, Stites, Davis, Burroughs, Townsend.

7:36 p.m.

Commissioner McKiernan made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Markley, for the Commission to go into Executive Session to consult with our attorneys to discuss confidential matters related to pending claims and litigation, as permitted under the Kansas Open Meetings Act; and that staff designated by the County Administrator be present to participate in the discussion, and that we reconvene in open session at 8:05 p.m. here in the 5th floor conference room. Roll call was taken on the motion and there were nine "Ayes," McKiernan, Ramirez, Johnson, Kane, Markley, Stites, Davis, Burroughs, Townsend.

Present for the Executive Session regarding pending claims and litigation: Burroughs, Commissioner At-Large Second District; Townend, Commissioner First District; McKiernan, Commissioner Second District; Ramirez, Commissioner Third District; Johnson, Commissioner Fourth District; Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; Markley, Commissioner Sixth District; Stites, Commissioner Seventh District; Davis, Commissioner Eighth District; and Garner, Mayor/CEO presiding. **Staff present:** Cheryl Harrison-Lee, Interim County Administrator; and Misty Brown, Chief Legal Counsel.

Commissioner Markley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Burroughs, to reconvene into Special Session. Roll call was taken and there were nine "Ayes," McKiernan, Ramirez, Johnson, Kane, Markley, Stites, Davis, Burroughs, Townsend.

Commissioner Markley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Burroughs, to adjourn. Roll call was taken and there were nine "Ayes," McKiernan, Ramirez, Johnson, Kane, Markley, Stites, Davis, Burroughs, Townsend.

MAYOR GARNER ADJOURNED
THE MEETING AT 8:02 p.m.

Monica L. Sparks
Acting Unified Government Clerk

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