

**DRAFT**

**FOR DISCUSSION WITH THE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES TASK FORCE,**

**PRESENTED JANUARY 26, 2011**

**Resolution Setting Forth the  
Unified Government's Commitment to Complete Streets**

WHEREAS, the term "Complete Streets" describes a comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit riders and motorists; and people of all ages and abilities, including children, families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities; and,

WHEREAS, the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City Kansas (hereinafter "the Unified Government") wishes to encourage walking, bicycling, and public transportation use as safe, convenient, environmentally friendly, and economical modes of transportation that promote health and independence for all people; and,

WHEREAS, sedentary lifestyles and limited opportunities to integrate exercise into daily activities are factors contributing to increased obesity among adults and children and numerous correlated adverse health consequences; and,

WHEREAS, pedestrians and bicyclists are injured each year on roads in the United States, many times in preventable situations, and whereas the number and severity of these injuries could be decreased by implementing Complete Street approaches; and,

WHEREAS, the Unified Government acknowledges the benefits and value for the public health and welfare of increased walking, bicycling, and use of public transit in order to address a wide variety of issues, such as traffic congestion, pollution, climate change, social isolation, obesity, physical inactivity, and limited recreational opportunities; and,

WHEREAS, the Unified Government recognizes that the careful planning and coordinated development of Complete Streets infrastructure offers long-term cost savings for local and state government, benefits public health, and provides financial benefits to property owners, businesses, and investors, while yielding a safe, convenient, and integrated transportation network for all users; and,

WHEREAS, streets are a key public space, shape the experience of residents of and visitors to Wyandotte County, directly affect public health and welfare, and provide the framework for current and future development; and,

WHEREAS, the Unified Government wishes to build upon its existing policies that recognize the importance of addressing the transportation needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and

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public transportation riders, such as the City-wide Master Plan and the work of the Healthy Communities Task Force; and,

WHEREAS, The Unified Government wishes to encourage public participation in community decisions concerning streets and transportation;

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED BY THE UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OF WYANDOTTE COUNTY/KANSAS CITY, KANSAS AS FOLLOWS:

- A. The Unified Government hereby declares its intent to enhance the safety and accessibility of its streets for all users by adopting a Complete Streets philosophy to guide new construction, reconstruction, and ongoing operations of the public streets.
- B. A Complete Streets philosophy will be interpreted to include any one or more of the following elements: sidewalks, shared use paths, bicycle lanes, paved shoulders, street trees and landscaping, planting strips, accessible curb ramps, crosswalks, refuge islands, pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, bicycle parking facilities, public transportation stops and facilities, transit priority signalization, traffic calming circles and devices, narrow vehicle lanes, raised medians, dedicated transit lanes, transit bulb outs, and other elements as determined by latest research and best practices.
- C. The Departments of Public Works and Planning shall be designated as the lead departments in implementing the Complete Streets Policy (hereinafter "the Lead Departments"), and they shall be assisted in this effort by the Wyandotte County Health Department.
- D. Within the first year after adoption of this resolution, the Lead Departments should jointly evaluate how well the streets and transportation network of Wyandotte County and the City of Kansas City, Kansas are serving each category of users and how well they conform to the Complete Streets philosophy. The Directors of each Department are authorized to prepare for recommendations for changes to standards, design criteria, planning ordinances or other guidelines that may be needed to further the goal of providing Complete Streets.
- E. The Lead Departments are directed to actively solicit and incorporate the guidance of the community and community partners in preparing the evaluation and recommendations, including the guidance of the Mayor's Healthy Communities Task Force.
- F. As a first step in this evaluation, the Lead Departments should complete a walkability assessment of the City, to determine how friendly the County is currently to walking and identify any regulatory or policy hurdles that should be eliminated.

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- G. A Sidewalk and Trails Master Plan should be prepared and adopted for the County, which would include a detailed plan for trails and sidewalks that encompasses the entire jurisdiction and connects neighborhoods, schools, parks and other key facilities; and which includes design criteria and standards to govern the provision of such features. This plan should be integrated into the County's Master Plan and the Thoroughfares and Street Plan. In preparing this plan, due consideration should be given to situations where cost or other constraints may preclude adoption of all the ideal elements.
- H. The Plan should give highest priority to creating Safe Routes to School -- to include quality sidewalks, pedestrian crossings and safe waiting areas for school buses. The Department of Public Works should recommend an initial plan for Safe Routes construction at select high-need schools for early construction.
- I. Training in how to integrate, accommodate, and balance the needs of all users should be provided for planners, engineers, project managers, plan reviewers, inspectors, and other personnel responsible for the design and construction of streets, bridges, and other portions of the transportation network.
- J. Information on how individual projects conform to the Complete Streets policy should be added to review and approval documents prepared by the project sponsors and made available to the community. In the case of publicly-funded street construction, the County Engineer will add this information to reports given to the Governing Body for project authorization and funding. In the case of privately-funded construction, the Director of Planning will cause such information to be developed by the project sponsor and added to the analyses provided to the Planning Commission. Any request for variances or exceptions to Complete Street standards on either public or privately-funded development should be documented and reviewed in the same manner as for other standards.
- K. The Unified Government recognizes that Complete Street elements may be incorporated into a single project or incrementally through a series of improvements over time. The Unified Government will consider all possible funding sources to plan and implement this policy, including grants that may be available.
- L. It is a goal of the Unified Government to foster partnerships with the State of Kansas, the Federal Highway Administration, the Mid-America Regional Council, surrounding counties and cities, school districts, citizens, businesses, interest groups and neighborhoods to implement the Complete Streets policy.
- M. The Director's of the Lead Departments should report back to the Governing Body with one year of the passage of this resolution regarding the steps taken to implement this Resolution; additional steps planned; and any desired actions that would need to be taken.