



UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OF WYANDOTTE COUNTY,
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR



Unified Government of Wyandotte County, Kansas City, Kansas **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

Unified Government of Wyandotte County, Kansas City, Kansas (pop. 169,245) This merged city/county is conducting a national search for an experienced executive with strong leadership, communication, and cultural competency skills. The ideal candidate will be a proven and visionary local government leader who will be adept at attracting and building a successful leadership team, jumpstarting economic development, lean management, and culture-building. The Unified Government/Wyandotte County is a unique, dynamic, and transforming public service entity that is ready to embrace new leadership.

The Kansas City metro area is the home to nearly two million residents over 4,423 square miles. Kansas City, Kansas/Wyandotte County is central to the entire region with easy access to interstates I-70, I-635, and I-435. The Unified Government's offices are located 24 miles from the Kansas City International Airport (MCI) and four miles from Kansas City, Missouri.

Wyandotte County is the fourth-most populous county in Kansas and hosts the University of Kansas Medical Center, the Kansas City Community College, Donnelly College, and the Sumner Academy of Arts and Sciences/Magnet school, the highest ranked high school in Kansas (6,256 total jobs). The General Motors Fairfax plant provides 2,385 jobs and manufactures the Chevrolet Malibu and Cadillac XT4 and the Amazon Fulfillment Center provides 2,000 jobs.

Wyandotte County is one of the most urbanized and diverse counties in the state; 58% of Wyandotte County residents are Hispanic, Black, Asian, or mixed races. Individuals who identify as Hispanic are the largest ethnic group at 30% of the total population. Wyandotte County fully embraces its diversity of culture, people, and economy.





GOVERNMENT

Kansas City, Kansas and Wyandotte County consolidated the city/county governments in 1997 with a County Administrator overseeing both functions. The County encompasses four cities (Kansas City, Bonner Springs, Edwardsville, and part of Lake Quivira.).

The County Administrator is the chief administrative officer and is responsible to the Board of Commissioners for administration of all Unified Government affairs within the County Administrator's charge. The County Administrator directs and supervises the day-to-day operations of all county and city departments and agencies, as well as appointing non-elected department heads. The County Administrator's Office is responsible for preparation and submission of the annual Unified Government budget to the Mayor and Commission. The County Administrator serves as the Board of Commissioners' official liaison to the elected constitutional officers, the judiciary, and state and regional agencies.

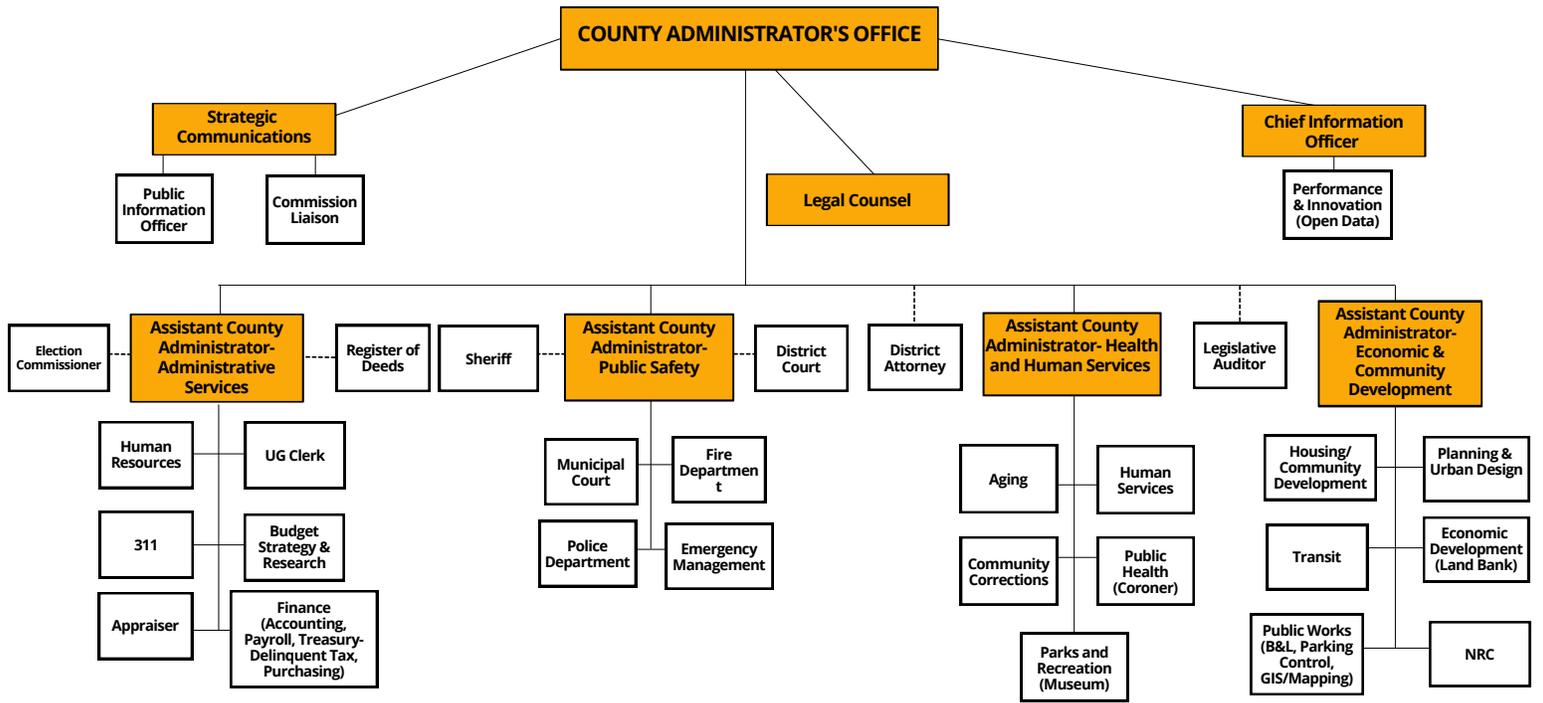
The Unified Government is classified as a Mayor/Chief Executive; Commission; County Administrator form of government. The Unified Government Board of Commissioners is composed of a Mayor/CEO elected at-large and (10) Commission members. All elected positions are non-partisan. Eight (8) of the Commission members are elected from districts. Two (2) Commissioners are elected at-large. The Board of Commission is the policy-making authority, sets goals, conducts the County Administrator's evaluation, and operates with the assistance of eight standing committees.

The Mayor's office is responsible for the Board of Commissioners' agenda in consultation with the County Administrator, appointing committees, breaking ties, providing leadership to the Unified Government in the development of long-range plans and policies and the development of priorities for actions and in planning for economic growth and stability of the Unified Government and addressing the recommendations of the County Administrator in conjunction with the Board of Commissioners. With the Mayor/CEO's election in 2021, a new opportunity to focus on changing County services and relationships exists.

The County itself provides a full range of public services including legislative, judicial, public works, public safety, corrections, health, welfare, cultural, recreation, transportation, public improvements, and general administration.

The County Administrator is assisted by four (4) Assistant County Managers, a Strategic Communications Officer and a Public Information Officer who report directly to the Administrator. The Economic and Community Development Assistant County Administrator's position is currently vacant, as is the Chief Financial Officer position.







COMMUNITY: RECREATION, SCHOOLS & QUALITY OF LIFE

Wyandotte County is a community of choice and a major tourist destination with multiple attractions, recreation opportunities, and event venues. The County is home to the popular Wyandotte County Lake and 91 parks and dozens of miles of trails. When these recreation opportunities are combined with an uncongested transportation system, quality schools, and friendly people, it is easy to conclude why Wyandotte County is growing. Community members are authentic and are fiercely proud of their community and its heritage, neighborhoods, and schools. New residents can choose from urban, suburban, or rural living. [More information on Housing.](#)

Multiple school choices exist, some of which are recognized as top of their class within the State -- such as Sumner Academy and its international baccalaureate program. Starting in June 2024, Kansas students may go to any public school district in the state, space permitting. Many schools are within safe walking distance. There is tremendous pride in each school.

Lifelong education is easily available in UG Wyandotte County. From Kansas City Kansas Community College in Wyandotte County to the University of Kansas branch four miles away or the University of Missouri nine miles away, educational excellence is at your doorstep.

Niche ranked Wyandotte County the fifth best county for young professionals in Kansas and one of the best counties for outdoor activities in Kansas. Wyandotte County residents are regularly treated to outdoor Azura Amphitheater concerts and Kansas Speedway, Sporting KC, Children's Mercy Soccer, and Kansas City Monarchs baseball competitions, as well as shopping at the Legends, a premier retail and entertainment destination with 100 shops, dining, and entertainment options.

Wyandotte County embraces diversity of people, institutions, and food. Kansas City, Kansas is a melting pot of culture demonstrated through art, its emphasis on historical and social justice organizations, and an international food scene. Barbecue may be known as the cuisine of nearby Kansas City, but in "KCK," you will find many specialties from south of the border. Multiple restaurants feature Central and South American cuisine. The Visitors Bureau hosts a regular Taco Trail competition with 50 participating taquerias.

Wyandotte County has a strong and diverse economy. The region's pro-business environment, motivated labor pool, and affordable wage rates are key attractors. With an unemployment rate of 3.3%, \$6 billion in new development in the last ten years, and 6,000 current job openings across multiple sectors, Wyandotte County's economic recovery exceeds the nation's.

[View Livable Neighborhoods Video](#)

UNIFIED GOVERNMENT BY THE NUMBERS

Population: **169,245**

Top Industries and Number of Jobs:

Healthcare (18,558)

Transportation (13,532)

Manufacturing (9,916)

Unemployment Rate: **3.3%**

Number of Unified Government Employees: **2,300**

Unified Government Budget Outcomes & Mill Levy:

77.820 (2022) & **75.820** (2023) [See PowerPoint Presentation \(wycokck.org\)](#)

% of Consolidated General Funds for Public Safety: **57%**

Estimated Unrestricted unallocated reserve:

19.3% in 2023 & **11.9%** in 2024

Housing Units: **68,239**

Income, Median Household: **\$48,093** (2020)

Home Values, Median: **\$200,000**

up **11.1%** over 2021 (Redfin)

Median Age: **34**

DEMOGRAPHICS:

40% White

22% Black or African American,

31% Hispanic or Latino

6% Asian

1% Other

Bachelor's Degree: **18%**

Poverty level: **16.9%** (2020)

Award Winning Water & Electric Utilities: Water Gold Award for from AWWA (Only 7 in USA)

It's an exciting time for Wyandotte County. [Check out these videos](#) from Wyandotte County Economic Development Council to see how fresh, progressive and dynamic our community is.



UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The Board of Commissioners and Mayor/CEO are working to develop new cooperative relationships. Multiple elected official prescriptions for policy outcomes needs effective coordination.

While currently fiscally strong and rich with assets, the Unified Government faces increasing financial pressures. In future budgets, the Unified Government will need to identify additional revenues sources or changes in service delivery/ expenditures to ensure fiscal sustainability. New resources are needed to invest in aging public streets, facilities, and equipment. Recent analyses from the Public Works Department concluded that \$20 million in new funding for street preservation and \$14 million for bridge repair and maintenance is needed annually, for example.

A new Unified Government master land use plan has been started with the intent to reduce gentrification, provide more in-fill and mixed-use housing, and increase private and public investments in the County's eastern sectors. More neighborhood infrastructure is also needed in the central areas to enhance safe walkability, limit stormwater flooding, and renovate community centers.

The ETC Institute completed a community survey in 2022. Although multiple key indicators were found to be on an upward trend, needed improvements in the following Wyandotte County functional areas were:

- Property Tax Administration
- Motor Vehicle Registration
- Services for Seniors

Needed improvements for Kansas City, Kansas were:

- Maintenance of city streets
- Code enforcement and getting rid of blight
- Police services for more visibility in neighborhoods and animal control



NEXT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Unified Government strives for best-in-class outcomes. The next County Administrator will need to be an enthusiastic and hardworking public official who can engage the community and organization in creating future opportunities.

Being an effective communicator and collaborator with Mayor and Commission, and providing a countywide, long-term perspective of service needs, is essential. One of the early challenges will be establishing a cohesive elected/appointed team. The County Administrator needs to be an advocate of good governance.

The County Administrator needs to develop an integrated plan for economic development that incorporates the master land use plan with the new County Administrator's vision and energy so as to enable future development deals via the [Wyandotte Economic Development Council](#).

Further opportunities and challenges were presented from an objective organization-wide assessments covering finances and human resources completed in 2022:

- Address structural budget projections to ensure the budget is balanced.
- Complete a detailed annual review of the currently adopted financial accountability policies to ensure alignment with all GFOA's recommended procedures.
- Develop a Financial Policy to address Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) operating initiatives.
- Develop financial and operational metrics to monitor the compliance of the approved policies.
- Adopt a multi-year Strategic Plan that is annually updated to define the operating and capital improvement priorities for the UG.
- Develop a Communications Plan for more effective communications and a higher level of cooperation, coordination, and collaboration.
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement.
- Update and implement an effective performance management system.
- Update and implement an objective market analysis of pay for all positions.

See the Unified Government Assessments for more information:

- [Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City Kansas Organization Assessment](#)
- [Finance Department Operational and Organizational Assessment](#)
- [Human Resource Audit Report](#)



IDEAL CANDIDATE ATTRIBUTES

The ideal County Administrator will demonstrate prior, proven successes and be committed to improve the lives of Kansas City, Kansas/Wyandotte County residents for generations to come.

The next Administrator needs to be engaged and engaging while being politically astute. Although all elected and appointed positions are non-partisan, the ideal candidate will need to be politically savvy, yet be politically neutral and avoid taking sides.

The new County Administrator needs to be action-oriented and a doer/delegator. The new County Administrator can be assured that the professional staff is energetic and ready to get behind a strong leader who will support community-wide priorities.

The new County Administrator needs to be a dynamic leader who will listen, care, and appropriately act within a system that is learning to better understand diverse values, voices, and beliefs.

The next Administrator needs to be comfortable with short-term ambiguities and avoid polarization while providing steady and transparent communication.



In summary, the County is looking for an Administrator who will be:

- A professional, strong leader who is direct and realistic and can ascertain what is needed and expected, can handle the difficult situations, and who can develop a good foundation for communicating with all Unified Government officials and City/County teams
- Able to capitalize on Kansas City, Kansas/Wyandotte County's resurgence and elevate the community's brand
- Be administratively courageous and always act in the best interests of the community
- A visionary leader who regularly demonstrates successful coordination, communication, and team building capabilities
- Able to negotiate and resolve sensitive and controversial issues with facts, patience, and tenacity
- Be fluid and negotiate and moderate competing issues as a consensus builder who enables calm, levelheaded, and rational outcomes
- Confident and approachable while also being a visionary, entrepreneurial, and community-minded
- Sympathetic and respectful to staff, leads by example, and is approachable with face-to-face availability/support to the administrative team leaders
- Transparent and trustworthy and can quickly earn and maintain trust
- Effective at reducing turnover and retaining and attracting new talent
- Open to and adept at cultural competency, using best practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)
- A successful labor relations negotiator and able to say no diplomatically while maintaining good working relationships



REQUIREMENTS

The successful candidate is required to have:

- Bachelor's Degree in public or business administration, or a related field, a master's degree is preferred
- Five (5) to ten (10) years executive, managerial and administrative experience as demonstrated by a verified record of training and experience
- A track record of economic development success
- Mastery of financial tools and budgeting
- Demonstrated sound and ethical judgment
- Strong skills in collaboration and intergovernmental cooperation
- Residency within one year; relocation assistance available

PREFERENCES

- City or County management experience in an organization of similar size and complexity
- Knowledge of systems and practices to enhance diversity and inclusion
- Skilled in labor relations
- Demonstrated ability to implement strategic visioning and organizational/financial assessment recommendations
- An effective organizational change manager
- Skilled in recruiting and developing talent



COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The annual salary range for this position is \$230,000 - \$290,000, DOQ/E. The Unified Government/Wyandotte County offers a generous additional compensation and benefits package, including medical, dental, vision, life insurance, a deferred compensation 457 plan, vehicle allowance, relocation assistance, and all other provisions of the [Unified Government Human Resources Guide](#).

TO APPLY

Submit cover letter, resume, and five professional references by December 21, 2022. [Apply here](#) or see the Recruitment Brochure at www.GovHRjobs.com. For questions, email: rcotton@govhrusa.com or cstevens@govhrusa.com. Candidates' applications remain confidential until the finalist stage.

RECRUITMENT DATES

Interviews with the Unified Government will be January 30 and February 7, 8 & 9. Equal Opportunity/ADA Employer. Position open until filled.



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