

# 2016 Common Citizen Survey Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. How can I be better informed of emergency situations in my area?

Thank you for your interest in receiving information from Johnson County. Signing up for NotifyJoCo is a good way to stay informed about emergency situations in our community. NotifyJoCo is a mass notification system designed to keep Johnson County residents and businesses informed of emergencies and certain non-emergency events. By registering at [NotifyJoCo.com](http://NotifyJoCo.com) and customizing your alert preferences, you'll receive time-sensitive messages directly from the county, as well as participating cities and public utilities. You can customize your preferences to get messages pertaining to as many as five locations and you can specify if you'd like to receive messages by landline, cell phone, text and/or email. Learn more about the notification system at [NotifyJoCo.com](http://NotifyJoCo.com) or call 913-826-5555 with questions.

---

## 2. Where can I go to find county meetings that are open to the public?

To find county meetings open to the public, visit the calendar of events on [jocogov.org](http://jocogov.org). The Johnson County Board of County Commissioners meetings, which are always open to the public, occur weekly on Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. in the Hearing Room located on the third floor of the County Administration Building at 111 S. Cherry St. in downtown Olathe. Members of the public are welcomed to attend the meetings in person or watch them live online through the county's [Legislative Information Management System](#).

---

## 3. Where can I find resources to help those in need?

The county's website, [jocogov.org](http://jocogov.org), includes information about county-provided services and other resources for citizens in need of social services. The county also hosts My Resource Connection, an online database to connect individuals needing assistance with resources that can help meet their needs. My Resource connection can provide resources for a wide range of needs — groceries, clothing, housing, health care, counseling, transportation, employment, emotional support and more. Check out [My Resource Connection](#) online to learn more.

---

## 4. Why does the county use chip and seal for road improvements?

Chip seal is a cost-effective preventive maintenance treatment that seals cracks, creates a new riding surface, and extends the life of the pavement. The county estimates that it costs about \$15,000 to chip seal one mile of road versus \$100,000 to overlay one mile of road with asphalt. In addition to providing a cost-effective surface for our older asphalt roads, chip sealing recently paved asphalt will protect the investment of the new asphalt surface and extend the life of the road. Our goal is to chip seal new asphalt pavements within the first few years and then again in seven to ten years.

In either case, drivers will notice loose "chips/rocks" after the road is chip sealed — the road will not remain in this state for long. Over time, traffic will imbed the chips/rocks into the pavement; typically this takes three to four weeks depending on the amount of traffic. After that, we will sweep the road to help remove the remaining loose chips and the road will have an asphalt-road appearance. Chip seal is one of the most economical treatments for our paved roads and saves the county taxpayer money.

5. Where can I find more information on the ¾ cent property tax for library expanded services?

The library is actively beginning implementation of its ambitious 20-year comprehensive master plan, funded through a .75 mill levy increase approved as part of the fiscal year 2016 budget. The plan's first implementation phase will include planning and design of four priority capital projects:

- Monticello branch: Additional library services are much needed in the fast-growing area of Western Shawnee. Planning and design of the new branch have been underway since February 2016. Johnson County Library has sought input from citizens, library and county staff, vendors and contractors to ensure the new facility will meet the community's needs. Regular updates are posted to [jocolibrary.org](http://jocolibrary.org) and have been published in local media. Interested citizens are encouraged to give their feedback about the new facility on the Johnson County Library website. Input is shared directly with the project architects. The current schedule calls for a Monticello Library groundbreaking in spring 2017 and opening late in 2018.
- Lenexa branch: The library is coordinating with Lenexa city government about a site at the new Lenexa Civic Center project, at 87th Street Parkway and Renner Boulevard, as a new home for the branch currently located at 87th and Lackman. Anticipated opening for the relocated Lenexa branch is 2020.
- Blue Valley branch: The fast-growing population in southeastern Johnson County can expect planning to begin soon for expanded library services. Specifics will be determined in the coming months.
- Corinth branch: Planning will begin soon for expanded library services at the aging Corinth branch, possibly on the existing site. No timeline is in place yet, but more details will come soon.

---

6. What training does the county do to prepare our community for emergency situations?

Pursuant to K.S.A. 48-929 and K.A.R. 56-2-2, Johnson County Resolutions No. 64-95 and 23-03 provide that the Johnson County Emergency Management and Communications department (the county's designated disaster agency) is responsible for the maintenance of the county's all-hazard emergency operations plan.

The county's emergency operations plan defines the policies, coordination, and roles and responsibilities required to meet the needs generated by a disaster in Johnson County. It also describes the concepts of operations and emergency processes needed to successfully manage such an event. As part of the plan's regular maintenance, the department has been coordinating the revision of the plan over the course of the last year. This revision ensures that the plan is congruent with state and federal planning guidance. Find the emergency operations plan on the [department's website](#). Johnson County Emergency Management and Communications department staff and volunteers are available for presentations to: businesses, homes associations, boy and girl scout meetings and other community groups. Interested groups can also arrange a tour of the county's Emergency Operations Center in downtown Olathe. Visit the [department's website to request a presentation](#).

The Sheriff's Office also prepares for other kinds of emergency situations. The agency has had two county wide hostile event training exercises, which included local partner agencies, to prepare us for any type of hostile event that might occur. The Sheriff's Office conducts in-house field force training annually, to ensure its preparedness in the event of a riot or large scale hostile issue. For the past two years we have utilized hostile events training to prepare for large scale events encompassing multiple agencies. This year the Sheriff's Office will revisit active shooter training, in either a school or business scenario. The Sheriff's Office has taught numerous businesses, churches and government employees' ways to better survive an active a shooter event.

## 7. Why do my wastewater bills continue to increase year after year?

The Board of County Commissioners approved a 5.5 percent revenue requirement increase in 2016. This increase is necessary due to escalating costs of compliance to meet wastewater treatment standards that ensure public health. Specifically, the department expects increases in several areas, including:

- parts, supplies and labor for maintenance of pumps and machinery
- natural gas and sludge/trash hauling
- personnel, including additional staff for plan reviews and customer service
- billing software

The biggest impact to a Johnson County Wastewater customer's charges is a change in their water use patterns; for example, a water leak or a change in household size. For any other questions please contact JCW customer service at 913-715-8590.

---

## 8. How might public transit services be expanded in Johnson County?

Johnson County Transit, through an agreement with the Kansas City Area Transportation Agency (KCATA), is now managed as part of the "RideKC" regional transit effort. Comprised of five partner organizations — Johnson County; the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas; the City of Independence, Missouri; KCATA; and the KC Streetcar Authority — RideKC seeks to strengthen the regional transit network for residents of each jurisdiction.

Future transit services in our community were given a major boost when the Johnson County Board of County Commissioners approved a .178 mill levy increase for transit improvements — which equates to nearly \$1.5 million in new funding. The funding covers expansion of transit options for disabled and elderly riders and strategic expansion of service in areas that will improve access to jobs for many residents.

The county will better serve seniors and riders with disabilities through greater flexibility of Special Edition, a shared ride program providing affordable curb-to-curb transportation for eligible residents who are 65 or older, disabled or meet income requirements. Starting in January 2016, Special Edition users are no longer limited to medical appointments if they wish to take the service to parts of Wyandotte or Jackson counties. Special Edition users also have a new option to purchase affordable taxi vouchers good for trips up to 15 miles each way. These changes greatly increase the flexibility of the Special Edition program to the benefit of its participants, allowing them to schedule trips directly with taxi providers.

In an effort to create better regional connections between residents, employers, retail outlets and major educational institutions, several positive changes happened to bus service in Johnson County. Recent service improvements have included: improved service linking the Mission Transit Center and existing routes with the KU Medical Center area; better east-west connections on 95th Street from the state line into Lenexa; and improved service in the 75th St./ Metcalf Ave. corridors to connect Oak Park Mall, Shawnee Mission Medical Center, Johnson County Community College, KU-Edwards Campus and Prairiefire.

Learn more about changes to Johnson County Transit routes on [RideKC's website](#).

9. How is personal property appraised in Johnson County?

If a Johnson County resident has questions about his/her appraised real estate value, they can visit the [County Appraiser's website](#), which includes helpful information and tools for researching appraised values. The website includes annual reports, notes of value, the revaluation report, yearly commercial real estate and residential real estate statistics, and general information about the appeals and appraisal process, dates and deadlines, forms and more.

One particularly useful tool on the County Appraiser's website can be found under the "property data" tab and is titled "[land records search tool](#)." This tool allows the user to research property value and other characteristics of their property or others.

If residents have concerns or questions about their appraised value they can call the County Appraiser's customer service line at 913-715-9000 to talk with a support specialist.