

League of Women Voters of Lawrence-Douglas County

P.O. Box 1072, Lawrence, Kansas 66044

August 20, 2006

Holly Krebs, Chairman
Members
Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission
City Hall
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

RE: **ITEM NO. 1: AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTERS 4 AND 5 TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Dear Chairman Krebs and Planning Commissioners:

We appreciate the changes that you propose for Chapters 4 and 5, *Horizon 2020*, to provide guidance for development in the UGAs and Rural Area of Douglas County. We understand that these regulations are not the ideal, but rather, represent a carefully considered compromise. We also would like to reiterate that in line with the adopted positions of the LWV L-DC on rural development, we believe that a policy in the Rural Area of limiting residential parent parcels to 40 acres rather than 20, with one residence per parent parcel, would be preferable. We also would like to suggest again that an "ultimate build out" scenario for both the UGA and Rural Areas is advisable to ascertain the eventual result of these new regulations.

Regarding the changes to Chapters 4 and 5, *Horizon 2020*, there is some wording in both chapters that appears to conflict with the purpose of protecting the rural character of the Rural Area and preserving the agricultural land.

On page 5-13, Policy 2.2 States "*Protect Areas Planned for Agricultural Uses, Discourage development of land for urban density residential purposes in the unincorporated rural area beyond the designated UGA's when such division would conflict with or inhibit agricultural use of the land*"[underline emphasis added]. The inference here is that unless it can directly be proved that there is a conflict, urban density residential uses would be allowed. We suggest that this policy be reworded to make clear that urban density residential uses in the Rural Area are prohibited.

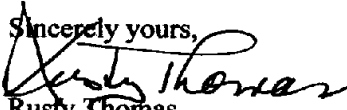
There are some other inconsistencies that we noted.

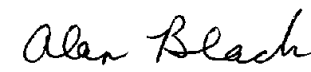
On page 5-5, the first paragraph, second sentence includes the phrase, "*and larger acreages for platted subdivisions.*" We suggest that you eliminate this phrase because the proposed Subdivision Regulations applied to the UGA outside of Service Area One and the Rural Area do not permit platted subdivisions, but rather, utilize the concept of Certificates of Survey to describe parcel boundaries.

On page 5-5, the third paragraph under Rural Area reads, "*Rural subdivision should be directed to the designated UGA and Planning Areas of incorporated cities and should not be scattered through the Rural Area. Criteria which could support the location of a subdivision within these areas would be...*"[underline emphasis added]. We suggest that you change the wording to state, "Criteria which could support the location of a subdivision within the UGA would be..." to make the meaning of this paragraph quite clear, because only in the UGA would residential subdivision be allowed.

One point that we would like to make is that because there is no method of preventing residential land divisions in the UGA, or the Rural Area, for that matter, as long as the configuration of the property and the other criteria are met as required by the County Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, restricting the land divisions to specific locations will not be feasible and random residential developments will result. It is our hope, therefore, that the entire UGA can be carefully preplanned throughout the growth area for future annexation.

We sincerely hope that the changes to these two chapters in *Horizon 2020* will serve as clear guides to allow future annexation of the UGA, and serve as protections to preserving the integrity of the Rural Area. Thank you very much for your commitment to these goals and for your intensive work on these issues.

Sincerely yours,

Rusty Thomas
President


Alan Black, Chairman
Land Use Committee