

# Memorandum

## City of Lawrence

### Planning & Development Services

TO: Thomas M. Markus, City Manager  
Diane Stoddard, Assistant City Manager  
FROM: Amy Miller, Assistant Director - Planning  
CC: Scott McCullough, Director – Planning and Development Services  
Date: August 1, 2017  
RE: Monthly PDS Project Report

The following provides an update on several city of Lawrence projects in process in the Planning and Development Services Department.

#### **Notable Development Projects in the Planning Phase:**

The following list details notable and large development projects that have filed applications with the Planning Division:

- Best Western Plus at Mercato (NE corner 6th and SLT)
- Wesleyan Church (3351 W 31<sup>st</sup> Street)
- KTen Crossing (3500 Iowa Street)
- Grocery/Residential Mixed-Use (700 New Hampshire Street)
- Crimson & Blue Motors (2200 East Hills Dr.)
- McClain's Market & Deli (1420 Crescent Road)
- LMH Parking Lot Expansion (300 Block Michigan Street)
- Zarco 66 – Convenience store and car wash (910 Iowa)
- Boys and Girls Club (2910 Haskell)
- Hotel Development (2222 W 6<sup>th</sup>)
- Greek Housing (1505 Sigma Nu Pl)

**Comprehensive Plan Update** - On August 31, 2015 the *Horizon 2020* Steering Committee approved the Issue Action Report which contains the Steering Committee's findings regarding how to best strengthen the existing plan and ensure that the document reflects the community's vision, while also setting a foundation for creating the inclusive and sustainable community we want Lawrence and Douglas County to be in the future. The Issue Action Report presents 19 major issues to address, based on community input and identified needs, and it outlines action steps to help address and resolve these issues.

The Issue Action Report was presented to the Planning Commission on September 21, 2015 and was unanimously approved. It was presented to the City Commission at their November 10, 2015 meeting and to the County Commission at their November 11, 2015 meeting and was unanimously approved by both governing bodies. Using the Issue

Action Report as a basis, staff developed and presented a new draft comprehensive plan, along with a plan for obtaining public input, to the Steering Committee at their July 31, 2017 meeting. The Steering Committee reviewed the draft plan and directed staff to release the draft plan for a 60-day public comment period, which Staff will do in mid-August. Information on this effort can be found at <http://lawrenceks.org/pds/horizon-2020-update-process>. Jeff Crick is the Staff contact.

**Airbnb** – At their September 20, 2016 meeting, the Commission directed the City Manager to review whether a regulatory framework is needed to address the Airbnb industry in Lawrence (such rentals are currently not permitted in RS districts). A review of land use, taxes, and other aspects related to this industry was completed and submitted to the City Commission on February 25, 2017. Additional direction has not been provided to staff since February, therefore it will be removed from future reports. Danielle Buschkoetter is the staff contact.

**East Lawrence Neighborhood Rezoning** – On August 18, 2015, after considering a Staff memo on the topic, the City Commission directed Staff to further research land use in the area north of 9<sup>th</sup> Street in the East Lawrence Neighborhood and present the Commission with a follow up memo outlining appropriate zoning district(s) and a timeline of the rezoning process in order to consider rezoning much of the area from RM24 to an RS district. Staff met with the neighborhood on March 28, 2016 to review the data in advance of the City Commission reviewing rezoning options for the area. The City Commission reviewed options at their May 24, 2016 meeting and deferred the item so that Staff can revise the boundaries to include rezoning all properties north of 9<sup>th</sup> Street to their current use. The item was initiated by the City Commission at their December 6, 2016 meeting. The item was considered by the Historic Resources Commission at their March 16, 2017 meeting, and was considered by the Planning Commission at their April 26, 2017 meeting. The City Commission adopted the rezonings at their June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017 meeting and staff is following up on recommended implementation steps. As this item has been completed, it will be removed from future reports. Becky Pepper is the Staff contact.

**North Lawrence RS5 Zoning Discussion** – On August 18, 2015 and April 19, 2016 the City Commission considered Staff memos addressing a request from the North Lawrence Improvement Association to review RS5 zoning in North Lawrence. At their April 16, 2016 meeting, the Commission initiated an amendment to the code to require that storm water plans be submitted in conjunction with development projects for RS5 zoned properties in North Lawrence in the areas protected by the levee. The code was revised on July 19, 2016 to require a storm water plan for any residential construction project on RS5 and RS3 zoned lots that are protected by the levee. The Commission also directed Staff to continue to study density and dimensional standards citywide for RS5 and RS3 zoned properties and provide a report to the City Commission at a future meeting. The analysis of RS5 zoning density and dimensional standards is underway but this effort is a lower priority than other initiatives at this time given department resources.

**Parking Regulations Text Amendment** – Staff has been working with the Planning Commission for some time now on revising Article 9 of the Land Development Code

related to parking standards. These revisions will address how parking is calculated, the design and location of parking, and standards related to the parking and storing of RVs, boats and trailers. The Planning Commission received an update on the progress of this item at their November 16, 2015 meeting and discussed alley parking for duplexes at their January mid-month meeting and May 23, 2016 regular meeting. This item will be submitted for a final recommendation from the Planning Commission upon completion of the final draft of the code revisions. Sheila Stogsdill is the Staff contact.

**Sign Code Amendments** – In May 2016, the City Commission, after previously receiving a Staff memo on the topic, re-authorized initiation of certain amendments to the City sign code. The proposed amendments would help address several sign code issues, and would better aid businesses and staff in the use and regulation of signs. However, in September 2016, the City Attorney's Office determined the City sign code should be totally rewritten based on the landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the *Reed v. Gilbert*, AZ sign regulation case. A draft of a proposed new sign code was presented to the Sign Code Board of Appeals at their June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 meeting, and the SCBA voted 6-0-1 (one recusal) to recommend that the City Commission adopt the proposed new regulations. It is anticipated that an ordinance to adopt a new City sign code will be presented to the City Commission for approval and first reading on August 15, 2017. Kurt Schroeder is the Staff contact.

**City Parking Study** – On November 15, 2016, the City Commission authorized staff to negotiate a service agreement with Desman Design Management (Desman) for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive study of the parking system serving Downtown, East Lawrence Neighborhood, and neighborhoods surrounding the University of Kansas. Desman met with stakeholder groups in order to gain input and the consultants facilitated a work session with the City Commission at their February 14, 2017 meeting. The 10-year Parking Operations and Development Plan was presented to and approved by the City Commission at their July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017 meeting with direction that all recommendations included in the plan be brought before the governing body for consideration and a vote before implementation. As this item has been completed, it will be removed from future reports. Brandon McGuire is the staff contact.

### **Community Development Initiatives**

The Community Development Division continues to work through the 2016 CDBG and HOME program year in accordance with the 2016 Action Plan. The Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) has finalized their 2017 funding recommendations for the grant year 8/1/2017 – 7/31/2018, which was approved by the City Commission in May. The City of Lawrence has continued to utilize the "Step Up to Better Housing" strategy as the basis for funding decisions made by the CDAC. Funding in the 2017 grant year will once again focus on five key areas: Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent/Supportive Housing, Revitalized Neighborhoods and Community Facilities. While the 2017 Annual Action Plan has completed the 30-day public comment period, the 2017 final allocation has not been received from HUD yet, so as soon as staff receives the final numbers the 2017 grant can be processed and submitted to HUD.

The Community Development Division of Planning and Development Services, The Fair Housing Division of The City Attorney's Office, and the Lawrence-Douglas County Housing Authority have continued to work through the Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH), a United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirement under the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule. The AFH is required of all communities and states that receive federal funding, as well as all public housing authorities. The AFH process has been ongoing since fall of 2016, and has included statistical analysis, formulation of narrative, AFH committee meetings, public meetings, and public participation. The purpose of the AFH is to assist the community in setting Fair Housing goals and priorities for the City. The final AFH document is due to HUD on November 1, 2017, and city staff will be bringing the draft document with the draft goals and priorities to the City Commission in September, with adoption being requested in October.

Community Development Staff continues to support the staffing efforts of the Affordable Housing Advisory Board. Information and agendas can be found at <http://lawrenceks.org/boards/affordable-housing/>.

Danelle Dresslar is the Staff contact.

## **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Studies**

### Transportation 2040

The MPO staff have completed the first round of public engagement hosting 4 open houses, 38 mobile meetings/tabling and collected 1555 surveys to solicit feedback from the community about their vision and priorities for transportation. Staff is working to compile the feedback and begin drafting the existing conditions and goal for the transportation plan update. A second round of public engagement will occur in the fall. The updated plan is expected to be approved by March 2018. Visit [www.lawrenceks.org/mpo/t2040-update](http://www.lawrenceks.org/mpo/t2040-update) for more information.

### Crash Safety Analysis and Countermeasure Identification

The Lawrence-Douglas County MPO has hired CFS Engineers to conduct a crash safety analysis and countermeasure identification. CFS Engineers will work with City GIS staff to compile a geodatabase of crash histories that will identify locations with a high traffic crash record for Lawrence and Douglas County, Kansas. CFS will work with MPO and city staff to prioritize at least 12 locations for identification of cost-efficient countermeasures. The analysis will provide a strategy to address the region's transportation safety. The study will be completed by December 31, 2017.

### Bus Transfer Location Analysis

TranSystem's team has been hired to assist the Lawrence Transit in a bus transfer location analysis. The study team will host a process to engage the public in a vision for bus transfer sites and consider community values in selecting a location for bus transfers. The first public meetings are scheduled for August 3<sup>rd</sup>. Follow our progress on [www.lawrencetransit.org/bus-transfer-location-analysis](http://www.lawrencetransit.org/bus-transfer-location-analysis). The study will be completed by December 31, 2017.

### Lawrence Loop Alignment Study

The Lawrence-Douglas County MPO has hired BG Consultants to conduct a Lawrence Loop Alignment Study to determine the feasibility of alignments for two incomplete sections of the Lawrence Loop Shared Use Path between the north end of the Burroughs Creek Rail Trail along 11<sup>th</sup> Street to the Shared Use Path in Burcham Park and the west side of the Sandra Shaw Trail to the Peterson Road Shared Use Path. The first open house was conducted in June and approximately 100 community members showed up to discuss alignments. The next open house for public input will be held in early to review possible alignments. For more information and to see the study timeline visit: [www.lawrenceks.org/loop](http://www.lawrenceks.org/loop)

Jessica Mortinger is the Staff contact.