



City of Lawrence

The Flame | April 2022

"We Have
Tomorrow –
Bright Before
Us, Like A
Flame."

Langston Hughes

City hires new Chief of Lawrence Kansas Police Department

In January 2022, the City of Lawrence welcomed Rich Lockhart as the new Chief of the Lawrence Kansas Police Department (LKPD).

"We are extremely pleased to welcome Rich to the City of Lawrence," said Craig Owens, City Manager. "Rich brings a wealth of experience from his previous positions, and we are excited to have him join our team and help us make Lawrence a community where all people feel safe and secure."

Lockhart previously served a 26-year career with the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department (KCPD) before retiring in 2016. He then served as the Police Chief for the Warrensburg, Missouri Police Department before accepting the position with the City of Lawrence.

He has worked in various assignments throughout his law enforcement career, including human resources, patrol, special operations, and research and development. He was the department spokesperson for KCPD for more than eight years.

Chief Lockhart has a master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas and a bachelor's degree in biology from Harding University. In his time off duty, he enjoys photography and classic cars. He and his wife Laura have seven kids.

Get to know Rich Lockhart

We asked Chief Lockhart to answer a few questions to help the community get to know him better.

Hometown: Flint, Michigan

Places you have lived: Flint; Searcy, Arkansas; Kansas City, Missouri; Warrensburg, Missouri; and now Lawrence

Family: My wife and I have seven kids, six boys and one girl

Education: Bachelor's of Science in Biology from Harding University and a Master's of Public Administration from the University of Kansas

Favorite sports teams: Michigan Wolverines Football and KU Basketball

The last book you read: Lies My History Teacher Told Me by James W. Loewen

The last thing you listened to: George Winston solo piano

The last thing you watched: Game of Thrones for the fifth time

Favorite holiday: Thanksgiving

Favorite Lawrence restaurant (so far): Ladybird Diner

Favorite spring activity: The first round of golf



Bucket-list vacation: Tahiti

Your favorite way to spend a day off: Riding around in my classic Corvair convertible with the top down

What you're most excited for as Chief of the Lawrence Kansas Police Department: Getting to know the members of the department and the community

Have you seen the City's new online **Community Engagement Hub**?

We have current and recent community engagement projects listed, with links to more information and **how you can get involved**. Check it out on our website at lawrenceks.org/community-engagement.



Strategic Plan Update: Prosperity and Economic Security

The Prosperity and Economic Security outcome of our strategic plan works to achieve community success through collective prosperity and a vibrant, sustainable local economy.

One of the key factors the team is focused on to ensure the health & resiliency of our economy is commercial and industrial development.

Commercial and industrial development is one of the most efficient ways to broaden our City's tax base and meet our quality-of-life goals. This is because commercial and industrial real estate has a property tax assessment rate of 25% while residential property is assessed at 11.5% and exempt properties are not assessed and therefore do not pay property taxes.

Currently, Lawrence is dominated by the residential and exempt real estate classes, which are the least efficient at bringing in tax revenues. Approximately 71% of real estate in Lawrence is residential.

To alleviate some of the burden on residential taxes, we need to grow our most efficient real estate class, commercial and industrial, to a greater proportion of our property tax base.

Within the next five years, the Economic Prosperity and Security team will be working toward strategic plan strategies focused on retaining, attracting, growing and expanding commercial and industrial businesses. These strategies include establishing Lawrence as the most business friendly community in the



region and increasing and focusing resources to generate entrepreneurial and tech-related company growth. Specifically, that means concentrating on the following activities:

- Attracting more commercial and industrial capital investment. This can include developing a new industrial park, developing the KU Innovation Campus, and transforming the riverfront into an economic asset.
- Retaining, supporting, and growing our existing corporate assets.
- Redeveloping underutilized City lots.
- Fostering entrepreneurship.

We anticipate that these strategies will help us improve on several of our progress indicators for the strategic plan. You can check in on our progress with Prosperity and Economic Security as well as the other strategic plan outcomes at any time online at lawrenceks.org/strategic-plan.



April is Fair Housing Month

Fair Housing Month is celebrated in April in commemoration of the Fair Housing Act, which was passed in April 1968. The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, color, national origin, religion and gender.

In Lawrence, Chapter 10 of our City Code contains our local laws that prohibit discrimination within housing, public accommodations and employment.

The City of Lawrence's Human Relations Division is a resource to any resident who believes they may be the victim of discrimination in housing, employment or public accommodation. Residents are encouraged to confidentially contact our staff to discuss whether they might be a victim.

For more information, you can email the Human Relations Division at humanrelations@lawrenceks.org or call 785-832-3310.

Construction Season!

Spring means it's time for construction projects to get underway! Once the snow stops, our City team is hard at work making sure our streets, sewers, sidewalks and other infrastructure are well-maintained and functional.

There are a few major projects that are underway this spring, including:

- Traffic signal, pedestrian and water main improvements at 9th & Iowa
- Street reconstruction and sidewalk improvements on East 19th Street

You can stay up-to-date on the latest construction news by visiting our construction web page at lawrenceks.org/construction, or by subscribing to our e-news. To subscribe, visit lawrenceks.org/subscriptions, enter your email address, and check the box next to "Construction" under Municipal Services and Operations. Be sure to scroll to the bottom of the page and hit "subscribe" to have your selection confirmed.

Please be careful and drive slow when you see our crews at work this spring!

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We create a community where all enjoy life and feel at home.