



City of Lawrence

The Flame | May 2023

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

Langston Hughes

Celebrating five years of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund

In 2023, the City of Lawrence is celebrating five years of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF). The fund is available through a local sales tax and has three purposes:

1. Providing and improving the quality, availability and affordability of housing in Lawrence;
2. Acquiring land for future affordable housing units; and
3. Investing in private/public partnerships for the provision of affordable housing.

Affordable housing is housing that a household can pay for while still having money left over for other necessities, such as food, transportation and health care. The price that is affordable may vary by household, but the need for housing that is affordable is the same for everyone.

Unfortunately, a growing share of the population cannot afford their housing costs. Locally, almost half (49%) of all renters and one in four homeowners are "housing insecure," meaning they are cost burdened from their housing. If housing costs exceed 30% of household income, that household is considered housing insecure and at risk of homelessness.

The lowest-income households are the most likely to be cost burdened, but even moderate income earners struggle to find affordable housing in Lawrence.

The AHTF supports the development and rehabilitation of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households.

Since 2019, the fund has supported the following projects in Lawrence:

- 645 new affordable housing units for renters and homeowners
- 65 accessibility home modifications for residents with disabilities
- 160 safety and weatherization home improvements
- 1,128 housing vouchers and rental assistance
- 21 first time homebuyers' assistance

Looking toward the future, the City has selected seven organizations/projects to receive funds from the AHTF in 2023:

- Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center was awarded \$108,000 for a new development that will create 22-24 housing units above a commercial space used for job training and development.
- DCCCA, Inc. was awarded \$200,000 for a new development of transitional homes. The project will create 10 units that will house women who are recovering from substance abuse and their children.
- The Douglas County Housing Stabilization Collaborative was awarded \$350,000 for support services to provide rental and utility assistance to those experiencing housing instability.
- Flint Hills Holdings Group, LLC was awarded \$100,000 for an affordable

multi-family housing development that will have 48 affordable housing units on the upper floors with commercial space below.

- Independence, Inc. was awarded \$50,000 for the Accessible Housing Program, which allows seniors and people with disabilities to make needed accessibility modifications to their home.
- The Senior Resource Center for Douglas County was awarded \$53,000 for accessible safe housing for seniors. The funds will go to low-income seniors who need assistance with maintenance and accessibility modifications to keep them aging-in-place safely.
- Wheatland Investments Group, LLC was awarded \$400,000 for an affordable multi-family housing development targeted to seniors that will have 16 two-bedroom units and 22 three-bedroom units.

In addition to affordable housing funds, the City also donated 4.64 acres of city-owned land to Tenants to Homeowners, Inc. in 2022. The land, located at the corner of K-10 highway and Bob Billings Parkway, is adjacent to a parcel of land Tenants to Homeowners already owns. They will build 122 new affordable housing units on the combined parcel.

The City of Lawrence is extremely proud of the work accomplished for affordable housing in the past five years, and we look forward to creating more affordable units in the years to come.

Affordable Housing is growing around Lawrence!

Have you noticed our orange affordable housing signs around Lawrence? Our team has added them at organizations or locations that are benefitting from Affordable Housing Trust Fund allocations.

Pictured immediately to the right are the Penn St. Lofts, which received \$550,000 in funding in 2020. The project created 47 new affordable units. The further picture is the plot of land at Bob Billings & K-10 Highway that will be the future home of a Tenants to Homeowners development of 122 new affordable housing units.



Moving season starts in May!

The month of May signals the beginning of moving season in Lawrence. While moving can be complicated, the City is sharing some tips and reminders from our Solid Waste and Utility Billing teams of important things to keep in mind during your move.

Go online for utility requests

Due to an increase in the number of moves, the summer months are extremely busy for our Utility Billing team. This is the time of year when the City sees a dramatic increase in transfers, disconnects and new service installations.

To help with the high call volume, the utility billing team recommends utilizing online service requests when possible.

Online assistance is available for all facets of managing your account, including starting, stopping and transferring services, as well as restoring service. You can also go online to pay your bill or to set up recurring automatic payments.

You can visit the utility billing web page at lawrenceks.org/utility-billing to learn more about our online capabilities.

Reuse, recycle and safe disposal

While the process of moving can create a lot of waste, a little planning can go a long way toward keeping reusable goods out of the landfill! Here are a few reuse, recycling and safe disposal options from our Solid Waste team.

Reduce the amount of waste generated with packing supplies by using reusable or recyclable padding, like towels or

newspaper, to pack your boxes instead of purchasing Styrofoam peanuts or plastic wrap. Stop by a grocery store or bookstore and ask for free cardboard boxes to use.

Donate gently used clothing and household goods to local charities, hold a moving sale, or post to online Buy, Sell, Trade groups. Donate non-perishable food to food banks, pantries and shelters.

Recycle old electronics, cardboard boxes, newspapers, plastic bags and any other recyclable materials. Search the online Recyclable Materials Directory at lawrenceks.org/swm for local options.

Dispose of paint, automotive products, household cleaners, pesticides and other potentially hazardous chemicals properly at the Household Hazardous Waste Facility. You must schedule your appointment in advance online at: lawrenceks.org/swm/hhw.

Schedule a pick-up for bulky items that are no longer usable, such as couches, appliances and automobile tires. Call our Solid Waste team at 785-832-3032 or fill out the online form to schedule: lawrenceks.org/swm/trash.

What do I do with my carts?

The green City trash carts and blue City recycling carts should not go with you when you move. These carts belong to the address to which they were delivered.

If you have purchased a brown yard waste cart, it can be moved to your new home as that cart belongs to the person/household who purchases it.

Subscribe to our Weekly Traffic Report

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:

- 23rd St. reconstruction
- East 19th St. construction between Harper and O'Connell

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 Weekly Traffic Report.

The Weekly Traffic Report is sent on Tuesdays when there is relevant traffic news for that week. 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.