

# Memorandum

## City of Lawrence/Douglas County Planning & Development Services

TO: Lawrence – Douglas County Planning Commission  
Douglas County Board of County Commissioners  
Lawrence City Commission

CC: Sarah Plinsky, County Administrator  
Craig S. Owens, City Manager  
Diane Stoddard, Assistant City Manager

FROM: Planning Staff

DATE: April 19, 2021

RE: Planning Division Work Plan: 2022-2024

With the adoption of [Plan 2040](#) and recent staffing additions, Planning Staff is bringing forward a proposed Planning Division 3-year work plan for input and consideration. The Planning Division is a [joint city/county division](#) within Planning and Development Services. Douglas County funds 1/6 of the division's budget; therefore, the county has historically participated in setting the division's priorities. This work plan is revised annually at the Planning Commission, then scheduled for Board of County Commissioners and City Commission input and consideration.

Generally, the division handles two types of requests: current planning and long-range items. Current planning items are applicant-initiated, which requires addressing in a timely manner and is one of the primary charges of the division. It should be noted that the majority of the Planning Division's time is devoted to current planning items – responding to customer inquiries, reviewing owner-initiated applications, supporting other divisions and departments, and staffing/presenting to the following commissions and boards:

- Affordable Housing Advisory Board
- Douglas County Board of County Commissioners
- Downtown Master Plan Steering Committee
- Historic Resources Commission
- Lawrence Board of Zoning Appeals
- Lawrence City Commission
- Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission

Long-range projects are those that usually have a longer timeframe, are large in scope, and require more extensive public processes than current planning projects. Some examples of long-range projects include specific land use plans (sector plans, neighborhood plans, corridor plans), code text amendments, and other similar applications. Beginning in the 2000s, staff completed the currently adopted [twelve sector and neighborhood plans](#), which are incorporated by reference into *Plan 2040*. Some initiatives are so large or technically-involved that they require outside consultants, so

those initiatives require funding to complete. The Downtown Master Plan, historic surveys, design guidelines, and large corridor studies are recent examples of these types of projects.

With the recent division personnel additions, this work plan reflects an improved ability to continue meeting the expectations for current planning applications and accommodate the long-range planning efforts that have been added to the work plan the last few years.

There are numerous long-term projects currently in progress:

Current Project	Year Initiated	Estimated Completion	Notes
<a href="#">Accessory Dwelling Units in RS5 Districts</a> ( <i>Plan 2040</i> : Ch.3B.6.3)	2020	2022	(TA-19-00602)
Affordable Housing Advisory Board Text Amendments	2018	2021	( <a href="#">TA-20-00002</a> )
Chapter 22 – Historic Resources Update/Amendment	2014	2022	Initiated by the Historic Resources Commission (Jan. 16, 2014)
City of Lawrence Land Disturbance/Grading Regulations	2020	2022	Partnership with Municipal Services & Operations
<a href="#">Downtown Master Plan</a>	2019	2021	CIP: PR1918CIP
Implementation for County Zoning / Subdivision Regulations	2020	On-Going	
Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system for unincorporated Douglas County	2019	2021	Initiated by Planning Commission ( <a href="#">TA-19-00538</a> )
<a href="#">Outdoor Lighting Text Amendment</a> – Land Development Code	2018	2022	(TA-18-00085)

Notes on Planning Work Plan:

- In anticipation of *Plan 2040's* adoption of at the end of 2019, the Planning Commission discussed and prioritized the implementation items in the plan. This work plan strives to reflect that prioritization.
- Several Lawrence neighborhoods have contacted staff in recent years requesting assistance with establishing or updating their plans. This work plan outlines a schedule for those specific land use plans to be started.
- Additionally, the Planning Division can be the lead on a variety of initiatives that arise from the various monthly meetings, strategic planning processes, and other boards' initiatives.

Due to recent changes in the City’s budget, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Land Use & Neighborhood Study (CIP: MS-20-0011), which was scheduled to begin in 2020 [was moved 2022](#) to allow for a thorough public input process and provide time to ensure the plan accounts for new realities related to the pandemic and provide a strong long-range vision.

Staff is also pursuing consideration to seek a consultant to streamline and revise the Lawrence Land Development Code. This would allow for the implementation of a user-friendly, flexible, and intent-grounded code applying various recent planning efforts. The proposed revision would help address and advance several key planning efforts that our community has recently undertaken. Those include affordable housing, economic development, equity and inclusion, climate change, and overall code and process efficiency for all parties.

Additionally, if there is interest in expediting specific land use plan revisions, an option could be to engage a consultant for that effort. While this would require some staff oversight and management, it would expedite completing those plans, while creating additional staff capacity to continue working on other long-range planning items. Staff estimates this may cost \$150,000 and would require additional consulting resources to be identified.

**Upcoming Items**

**2022**

Project	Notes
<b>Implementation Projects</b>	
23rd Street Land Use & Neighborhood Study	Previously: <a href="#">CIP: MS-20-0011</a> , \$150,000 budgeted
Climate Change Adaptation & Mitigation Plan ( <a href="#">Plan 2040</a> : Ch.2.6.1)	Identified by Planning Commission as high priority / Partnership with Sustainability Office
Lawrence Annexation Policy ( <a href="#">Plan 2040</a> : Ch.3A.3)	Identified by Planning Commission as high priority
Stream Buffer Ordinance	Partnership with Municipal Services & Operations ( <a href="#">TA-18-00385</a> )
<b>Specific Land Use Plans</b>	
East Lawrence Neighborhood	Requested in 2018
<a href="#">West of K-10 Plan</a>	Plan first adopted in 2015

## 2023

Project	Notes
<b>Implementation Projects</b>	
Multi-Modal Connectivity ( <a href="#">Plan 2040</a> : Ch.5.2.1)	Identified by Planning Commission as high priority
Protect High-Quality Agricultural Soils ( <a href="#">Plan 2040</a> : Ch.2.2.7) & Environmentally Sensitive Lands ( <a href="#">Plan 2040</a> : Ch.3B.4.3, Ch.3C.3.9, & Ch.3D.4.2)	Identified by Planning Commission as high priority
Review & revise <a href="#">Commercial/Industrial Design Guidelines</a>	Adopted 2010
<b>Specific Land Use Plans</b>	
<a href="#">HOP Plan</a> Update (Hillcrest, Old West Lawrence Pinckney) / Pinckney Neighborhood Plan	Adopted in 2005, requested by City Commission ( <a href="#">9 March 2021</a> ) / Pinckney Neighborhood requested in 2013
<a href="#">K-10 &amp; Farmer's Turnpike Plan</a>	Plan first adopted in 2008 / Revised in 2016

## 2024

Project	Notes
<b>Implementation Projects</b>	
Strengthen Floodplain Regulations ( <a href="#">Plan 2040</a> : Ch.2.1.8)	Identified by Planning Commission as medium priority
Increase Small Neighborhood Commercial Options ( <a href="#">Plan 2040</a> : Ch.3C.5.4)	Identified by Planning Commission as medium priority
Increase Height & Density ( <a href="#">Plan 2040</a> : Ch.3B.6.2)	Identified by Planning Commission as medium priority
Creation of Design Guidelines for Multi-Family Dwellings	Public Requested Item
<b>Specific Land Use Plans</b>	
Indian Hills Neighborhood	Requested in 2013
<a href="#">Revised Southern Development Plan</a>	Plan first adopted in 2007 / Revised in 2013

## Future Items

Project	Notes
<b>Implementation Projects</b>	
Reducing Vehicle Emissions ( <a href="#">Plan 2040</a> : Ch.2.3.1)	Identified by Planning Commission as medium priority
<b>Specific Land Use Plans</b>	
Centennial Neighborhood Plan	Requested in 2016
<a href="#">Northeast Sector Plan</a>	Adopted in 2012
<a href="#">Southeast Area Plan</a>	Adopted in 2008