



Community Engagement Strategy

July 2022

Introduction

ABOUT THE PROJECT

In November 2019, the City of Lawrence and Douglas County adopted a new comprehensive plan, [Plan 2040](#), and in 2021, the City adopted the [Lawrence Strategic Plan](#). To support the implementation of these plans, the City has initiated an effort to overhaul the Land Development Code (LDC). Key areas of focus for the LDC update that emerged from these efforts include housing affordability and availability; economic development and job creation; accessibility, inclusion and environmental justice; climate change, adaptation, and mitigation; and process revision and efficiency.

The LDC update is being managed by a project team comprised of City staff from the Department of Planning and Development Services and City Communications and Creative Resources Division, with support from Clarion Associates, a national land-use consulting firm.

PROCESS OVERVIEW

The LDC update will take approximately two years to complete. Community engagement strategies will vary depending on the types of information being considered and the level of stakeholder input needed at different points during the process. Major milestones in the process are illustrated below.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The LDC update is a major undertaking that will require input from and collaboration among a wide range of community interests. This CES reinforces the City's commitment to listening, sharing, and engaging with the Lawrence community on important issues to drive action and build trust in City government. Lawrence values a robust and multi-faceted approach to community engagement that is grounded in the core values of the [International Association for Public Participation \(IAP2\)](#) model. Community engagement efforts for the LDC update will be guided by the following objectives:

- Solicit input from those who regularly use the LDC regarding the strengths and weaknesses of its structure, format, and organization and how it might be improved.
- Ensure the public is kept informed, understands the purpose and scope of the LDC update, their role in the decision-making process and how their input influences the LDC project.
- Listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations expressed by participants and collaborate with the community on ways to address them.
- Solicit input from those who may be affected by potential modernization and streamlining of the LDC, including those who may be less familiar with how zoning works.
- Inform and educate stakeholders about emerging practices in zoning regulations and administration that may improve the City's ability to advance community priorities.
- Make LDC concepts accessible to all.
- Provide a variety of ways for the community to provide input.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This Community Engagement Strategy (CES) outlines the City's approach to community engagement in three parts:

- **Part 1: Groups in the Process**—provides an overview of the formal groups that will provide day-to-day guidance to the project team and overview of each group's composition and role in the LDC update process.
- **Part 2: Communication Tools**—lists primary methods that will be used to communicate with the public about the LDC update and get the word out about opportunities for input.
- **Part 3: Opportunities for Input**—identifies a preliminary list of opportunities for public input in the LDC update during each stage in the process, to be refined in advance of each "round" of community engagement.

Section 1: Groups in the Process

The entire community will be invited to participate in the LDC update at key points during the process, as outlined in Section 3. Day-to-day guidance for the LDC update will be provided by the Land Development Code Steering Committee, the Core Team, a Technical Working Group, the City of Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission (Planning Commission), and City Commission. Representation in these groups includes individuals that are familiar with and use the Land Development Code regularly—such as City staff, members of the design and development community, and housing organizations—and those that may be less familiar, but may have an interest in the implementation of *Plan 2040* and growth and development issues generally—such as neighborhood representatives, business owners, and members of other City boards and commissions. An overview of each group's composition and role in the LDC update process is provided below.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The 14-member Land Development Code Steering Committee was established by [Resolution No. 7421](#) on May 3, 2022, to provide input and guidance to the project team, Planning Commission, and the Governing Body throughout the process. The Steering Committee will be asked to provide observations and insights about how the updates to the LDC will work in the community. They will provide guidance on direction for the LDC at key points in the process. To gauge consensus on various options, committee members may be asked to vote on their preferences. Throughout the project, the Steering Committee's role will be advisory in nature and the committee will not have veto power over proposed LDC revisions.

The Steering Committee includes representatives from existing advisory boards and commissions as well as appointed representatives:

- Non-voting City Commission (1), serving as Chair
- Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission (1)
- Multi-modal Transportation Commission (1)
- Sustainability Advisory Board (1)
- Affordable Housing Advisory Board (1)
- City Commission appointed architect (1)
- City Commission appointed developer (1)
- City Commission appointed homebuilder (1)
- City Commission appointed real estate representative (1)
- City Commission appointed engineer (1)
- Lawrence Association of Neighborhoods Representative (1)
- Lawrence Chamber of Commerce Representative (1)
- City Commission appointed At-Large Positions (2)
- Staff Liaisons (2)

A list of Steering Committee members and their contact information is available on the Steering Committee's [webpage](#). The Steering Committee will meet eight to ten times during the LDC update process to review and discuss interim drafts of the updated LDC and offer detailed

feedback to the project team. Meeting agendas, video, and summaries will be posted on the Steering Committee's webpage.

CORE TEAM

The Core Team is comprised of staff from the Planning and Development Services department charged with the day-to-day administration of the LDC. This group will be responsible for providing the technical review of all interim work products; providing detailed or department-specific knowledge of specific conditions, issues, or concerns; introducing ideas for consideration; responding to department-specific questions; and considering the enforceability and administrative effort required by proposed changes. The Core Team will meet bi-weekly throughout the LDC Update process. Meetings with the larger Planning and Development Services team and/or other departments that deal with zoning and land-use issues will be convened as needed.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS

City staff and Steering Committee representatives from both bodies will provide regular updates to the City Commission and Planning Commission throughout the process to keep elected and officials informed about the overall direction of the LDC update, the execution of this CES, and community input received. City staff and the project team will also seek guidance on key policy choices and potential tools to implement them. City staff will provide brief updates on the project to both bodies at regular work sessions.

Section 2: Communication Tools

Establishing and maintaining open lines of communication about the LDC update is a central component of this CES. Project updates and notifications will be timed to coincide with project initiation and major project milestones. Generally, each time a major deliverable is made available for public review, and/or approximately two weeks in advance of public meetings, events, or input opportunities. Primary methods of communicating with the public about LDC update are anticipated to include, but not be limited to:

PRIMARY COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Tool	Objectives	Responsibility
WEB/INFORMATIONAL VIDEOS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated project website City website Informational videos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide general project information Advertise upcoming meetings and events Provide access to online input opportunities Provide access to work products, input summaries, and other project-related materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarion will be responsible for managing materials and information posted to the project website Clarion will work with City staff to prepare video messages to help get the word out about the process and educate the community about the LDC
SOCIAL MEDIA		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook Twitter NextDoor YouTube Instagram 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand awareness of public meetings and events Direct community to online engagement activities Highlight participation in community events and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarion will prepare a series of suggested posts and a tentative timeline for distribution City will incorporate as part of scheduled posts on respective sites, as applicable
E-MAIL BLASTS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Lawrence listserv¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide brief updates on the project Advertise upcoming meetings and engagement activities (e.g., online surveys, DIY kits, Question of the Week) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarion will draft e-blast content for staff review Staff will send email blast from MailChimp listserv

¹ The project website will include an opportunity for participants to sign up for updates via the City's Planning & Development News list.

Tool	Objectives	Responsibility
PRINT/ONLINE MEDIA		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawrence Journal World • The Lawrence Times • The University Daily Kansan • The Indian Leader • Other? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build awareness of the LDC update process • Expand reach of advertising for online input opportunities, public meetings, and community events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarion will prepare draft press releases for review and distribution • City will distribute to news outlets as appropriate
MULTIMEDIA		
<p>City of Lawrence multimedia and audio/visual productions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government access Channel 25 • YouTube • Live streaming video 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand reach of advertising for public meetings and events • Provide access to and document meetings and events in formats that are known to the community as a reliable source of information about City happenings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City will advertise upcoming events and input opportunities as appropriate • City will record videos of Steering Committee meetings and project updates to the Planning Commission and City Commission and/or live stream videos
FLYERS AND OTHER PROJECT MATERIALS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community message boards • City buildings, as well as local businesses, libraries, community centers, other buildings with message boards, and Lawrence Transit buses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote awareness of the project and/or upcoming community engagement opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarion will develop flyers, doorhangers, and surveys for distribution • City staff will print and distribute as appropriate

Section 3: Opportunities for Input

Levels of public participation and the public's role in the LDC update will vary during the process based on the topics being addressed and the types of input needed. Opportunities for public input will generally fall on the **inform**, **consult**, and **involve** end of the [IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation](#). However, opportunities for the public to **collaborate** may arise at key decision points, such as when options are presented as possible strategies that the City could pursue to implement community priorities (e.g., expanding affordable housing, protecting historic resources, advancing sustainability initiatives) through the LDC update. The Steering Committee in particular will have a more collaborative role in the process.

Public participation objectives, opportunities for public input, and the anticipated timing of input opportunities for each stage of the LDC update are outlined in the table below. Specific meeting dates and input opportunities for each round of engagement will be added to the 'Upcoming Events' section of the project website as the process progresses. All meetings will be advertised and open to the public. A summary from each round of community engagement will be posted to the project website (with input organized by meeting or event).

Clarion will work with the City's Communications Division to incorporate interactive tools and techniques used on other City initiatives for continuity where possible, but will also utilize other tools and techniques to make the process engaging and accessible to all.

Engagement Objectives	Opportunities for Input	Timing
1 - PROJECT ORIENTATION (JUNE 2022 – AUGUST 2022)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop awareness in the community about the LDC update process (<i>Inform</i>) Identify strengths and weaknesses of the format, structure, and organization of the current LDC, as well as issues related to the implementation of <i>Plan 2040</i> (<i>Consult</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community round tables (e.g., sustainability, housing, neighborhoods, code users) Steering Committee kick-off meeting Community open houses (different locations and times) Initial online survey (also available in hard copy form) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal project kick-off meetings June 29-30 Initial survey distributed in advance of August public kick-off meetings and remain active through the end of September
2: CODE ASSESSMENT (SEPTEMBER 2022 – DECEMBER 2022)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present and confirm key themes that will be used to inform next steps in the LDC update (<i>Consult/Involve</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Commission and Planning Commission update(s) Steering Committee meeting Community meetings (different locations and times) Online survey more detailed as a follow up to initial round tables (also available in hard copy form) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early December 2022

Engagement Objectives	Opportunities for Input	Timing
3: DRAFT LDC MODULES (JANUARY 2023 – NOVEMBER 2023)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage key stakeholders in an in-depth review of each draft module of the LDC (<i>Consult/Involve/Collaborate</i>) Provide the public with periodic updates, with an emphasis on informing them of notable changes to the current ordinance and engaging them on a targeted set of questions to help inform the drafting of each module (<i>Inform/Consult</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Commission and Planning Commission update(s) Steering Committee meeting(s) Community meetings (different locations and times) Mini-surveys/"Questions of the Week" e-blasts and/or DIY kits targeted to build awareness about particular topics and solicit input on potential changes to the LDC KU planning student assignment or workshop [Potential to engage urban design/ architecture students in the "testing" of design standards proposed as part of Module 2] 	<p>One round of public input opportunities will be provided for each of the three draft modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Module 1: Districts and Uses (April 2023) Module 2: Development and Design Standards (August 2023) Module 3: Administration and Procedures (November 2023)
4: LDC FINAL DRAFT & ADOPTION (DECEMBER 2023 – JUNE 2024)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek input on the consolidated draft LDC, (highlighting notable changes based on public input received) before the draft is finalized for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Commission (<i>Consult/Involve</i>) Provide an opportunity for public comment on the adoption draft of the UDC (<i>Consult/Involve</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering Committee meeting(s) City Commission and Planning Commission update(s) Public hearings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidated draft LDC (February 2024) At least two study sessions and two public hearings on the Adoption Draft of the LDC will be held (one study session and one public hearing each with the Planning Commission and City Commission)