

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF LAWRENCE/DOUGLAS COUNTY

July 13, 2015

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To: Mike Aymx, Chair, and members of the Horizon
2020 Steering Committee

The League of Women Voters of Lawrence-Douglas County has taken an active part in the community's planning process and appreciates the opportunity to comment on the update to Horizon 2020, our community's comprehensive plan.

The recently released draft of the Issue Action Report includes a strong statement of community vision, and a good list of those things the vision should create and maintain. A few suggestions for tweaks to that list:

For work, **"Investment in diverse economic opportunities for a growing population"** rather than "Investment in a growing population with diverse economic opportunities, and for education, **"a setting** for a strong network of public and private schools."

We also have some comments on several of the issues that are addressed:

Issue 1: Enhance Readability of Plan

The depth and scale of the existing plan has value; the action steps should be accomplished without losing that depth and scale.

Issue 2: Maintain a Strong & Stable Downtown

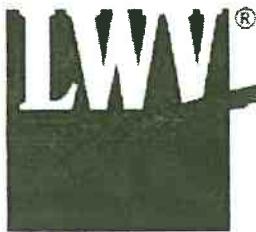
The League has a long history of support for maintaining a strong downtown in Lawrence; we are a bit confused as to what is meant by "appropriate patterns of the riverfront".

Issue 3: Address Quality Housing for All Incomes

*This is a timely and important topic; question, what is meant by "other" in affordable and other housing?
Consider identifying specific policy options such as inclusionary zoning.*

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Issue 6: Create Quality Neighborhoods for All Ages

Horizon 2020 has a good statement of neighborhood concept - community should consider ways to make neighborhoods function for all ages. However, there is also a need to make our policies and standards function for all ages of neighborhoods – the original townsite with alleys and narrow lots calls for different patterns of infill than more recently developed areas.

Issue 8: Managing the Future Lawrence Growth

The population of Douglas County is expected to grow; the plan should address how the community can accommodate that growth without expansion beyond that growth.

Issue 9: Plan For the Size & Location of Retail Development

The plan should provide for appropriate restrictions that reduce the need for incentives: planning should reduce, not increase, public costs.

Issue 12: Consider Increasing Height/Density in Appropriate Locations

There needs to be a public understanding of what would be considered "appropriate" before asking the planning department to identify such locations...revitalization of neighborhoods may be more important to increasing density than simply increased height.

Sincerely yours,

Debra Duncan, President

marci francisco, Director, Member Land Use Committee

PO Box 1072 Lawrence, KS 66044-1072

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Re: Horizon 2020 Update Committee Issue Action Report
Notes to LAN for discussion

Kirk McClure
July 2, 2015

Background

The Horizon 2020 Steering Committee has been meeting since February, 2014. It has gathered information through listening to stakeholders as well as polling the public. The Committee has prepared an Issue Action Report. The draft Issue Action Report is included in the attached document, pages 5 – 43. In the June 8, 2015 meeting, the Committee approved the draft with a few amendments.

The Committee will take public comment on the Issue Action Report on July 13. I recommend that LAN prepare comments and submit them in writing to the Committee and make one or more presentations to the Committee at the July 13 hearing.

Comments on the Draft Issue Action Report

The Issue Action Report identifies 19 issues. Most of these are non-controversial. For example, Issue 2 calls for the City to “Create Employment Opportunities.” The Issue Action Report only identifies the issue of creating employment without making any findings on how this should be accomplished. The absence of meaningful guidance runs through much the report. It is a listing of concerns without sufficient guidance to drive the creation of a plan.

Areas where LAN may want to make comments

1. Issue 4: Address Quality Housing for All Incomes

The Issue Action Report identifies quality housing for households of all income levels as a high priority for the next plan. It does not provide any guidance on how this goal should be accomplished despite hearing a great deal of testimony on the value of inclusionary zoning. Inclusionary zoning is a costless program that requires developers to build a percentage of affordable housing units in all major developments. This program works well throughout the nation, but developers in Lawrence oppose it. Rather than make a decision for or against inclusionary zoning, the Steering Committee chose to avoid controversy and call for further study.

I recommend that LAN endorse the adoption of inclusionary zoning.

2. Issue 5: Managing the Future Lawrence Growth

Growth management is a simple concept, allow supply to grow only as fast as the growth in demand for that supply.

The private market is not good at growth management. There is a tendency for the market to build more supply than there is demand to fill the supply.

In the absence of any meaningful growth management, Lawrence has experienced overbuilding, a common pattern found in cities without such growth management. In Lawrence, the overbuilding is especially found in the housing and retail sectors. In both sectors of real estate, the developers have built space at a pace that is much greater than the pace of growth of demand for that space. With

insufficient demand to successfully support all space, the newer space will siphon off existing demand, hurting the older neighborhoods and older shopping districts.

The development industry was well represented on the Steering Committee. The development representatives along with the Neighborhood Representative consistently opposed growth management at all meetings.

I recommend that LAN endorse the concept of growth management and call for its inclusion in the new plan.

3. Issue 10: Appropriately Manage Size & Location of Retail Development

Rather than confront the problem of overbuilding in retail, the Steering Committee chose to promote an approach favored by the development industry, to offer incentives to existing retail space. If there is more retail space than the market's demand can support, incentives are not going to resolve the problem. Incentives are costly to the City and will not create more demand needed to support excessive retail space. Growth management is almost costless to the City and can create a balance between the amount of retail space and the demand for retail space.

I recommend that LAN endorse the concept of growth management in retail space and emphasize that, while incentives can be helpful in some settings, they are not a remedy for overbuilding.

4. Issue 12: Encourage Major Infill Redevelopment

This issue addresses the use of existing land and infrastructure before allowing new development to sprawl into new greenfield areas. The Committee, once again, calls for incentives for existing space rather than growth management,

I recommend that LAN endorse the concept of growth management in all development and emphasize that incentives can be helpful in some settings but stress that they are not a remedy for overbuilding.-SAME AS ABOVE

5. Issue 13: Consider Increasing Height/Density in Appropriate Locations

The Neighborhood Representative often stated that a community must "grow up or grow out." This erroneously suggests that either older neighborhoods must allow taller buildings and greater density or the community must sprawl at the perimeter. What this line of thinking fails to recognize is that many of Lawrence's older neighborhoods are not confronting strong demand and increasing values that is being thwarted by controls on height or density. Rather, many older neighborhoods are confronting declining populations, declining home values and declining reinvestment in older homes. The solution to these older neighborhoods will not be found in greater density or greater height; there is little demand for either. The solution to the problems of these older neighborhoods requires reversing the decline of population and reinvestment. The solution requires a great many actions and commitments by the City, but none will be successful unless the City halts the oversupply of real estate that is siphoning off the demand and reinvestment in these older neighborhoods.

I recommend that LAN endorse the concept of growth management in all development, pointing out that it is crucial to the ongoing health and viability of the City's older existing neighborhoods and shopping areas.

6. Issue 19: **Create Quality Neighborhoods for All Ages**

The Committee recognized that it had done little to address the problems of existing neighborhoods. Issue 19 was added as a weak admission of that problem.

I recommend that LAN call for the next plan to explicitly state that the City is a combinations of neighborhoods and that it is the goal of the City to protect and enhance the viability of all neighborhoods, rather than allowing new neighborhoods to succeed at the expense of older neighborhoods.

From: [Carol](#)
To: [Jeff Crick](#)
Subject: Feedback from Planning and Development Services contact page
Date: Monday, July 13, 2015 1:54:23 AM
Attachments: [H2020-comments.docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)

Please accept the attached comments on the comprehensive plan update. I cannot attend the meeting. I'm not convinced that we shouldn't have a new comprehensive plan, but I do like what I read in the update.

Our Community Vision

- I really like the entire intro.
- Beware of digital storage. (p8) Always have hardcopy available for those who do not access digital platforms and for backup.

Issue 2

- What is the character of the downtown? Elaborate. How does the downtown serve the community? Again, elaborate.

Issue 3 and 6

- Define affordable housing - index based on 25% of median income?
- Much of the affordable housing stock is in older neighborhoods. The integrity of older neighborhoods should be maintained and updated whether or not they have a plan.

Issue 9

- Monitor a "living wage".
- Monitor increase in jobs compared to population growth as an economic development metric.
- Economic growth is when new money is brought into the community. This should be a metric when providing incentives.
- Define the difference between economic development and economic growth. (I don't have a clue, but if they are different, I'd like to know. If they are the same, I'd like to know that too.)

Issue 10

- "Study design standards and guidelines to help create context-sensitive commercial/retail establishments." The expression context-sensitive" doesn't work. Are you suggesting that the retail/commercial will service the surrounding neighborhoods?
- Give weight and credence to the neighborhoods served by neighborhood commercial. A neighborhood might not want a bar, for example.
- Strengthen the neighborhood commercial zone.

Issue 12

- What about encroachment into neighborhoods?

Issue 15, 17

- Needs more work
- What does Parks and Recreation have to do with pedestrian and bicycle safety?

Issue 19

- Needs more work

- No discussion of intermodal?
- What about integrating the transportation plan with land use?

I looked for mention of seniors, young families, and disabled in the housing, economic, and transportation issues. See the Retiree Attraction and Retention task force report, May 2012

One of the things I've noticed over the years is that users of H2020 wear out the pages of certain chapters and never relate to other chapters. I'd like to suggest that threads of live, work, learn, and play be integrated across all the chapters. i.e., The relationship between neighborhoods and infill development.

Change H2020s name.

From: Mark Kaplan [mailto:marklkaplan@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, July 12, 2015 3:59 PM
To: Jeff Crick
Subject: Feedback from Planning and Development Services contact page

Dear all --

I don't expect my wishes to be respected by a city hall that's owned and operated by wealthy and well-invested special interests In Lawrence. But as a 40-year resident and property owner of Old East Lawrence -- I would like to see this important half of our Original Town Site respected, and not tossed to out-of-town development interests like raw meat -- simply because the neighborhood retains its historic infrastructure of small and unpretentious single-family homes, and working-class residents. The entire neighborhood, from its western boundary of Rhode Island and New Hampshire streets, from the Kaw to East 15th, to the old spur RR tracks on the east, should be zoned RS-5 -- with non-conforming residential uses grandfathered in. This entire district comprised much of the town that rose from the ashes of the pro-Slavery terrorist attack from neighboring Missouri in 1863. To allow its degradation, through corrupt projects like the Free State Boulevard Arts Corridor, only disrespects the national history and heritage which the Original Town Site represents.

Mark Kaplan
1029 Delaware
Lawrence

From: Virgil Dean [mailto:vwdean51@gmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, July 12, 2015 5:06 PM

To: Jeff Crick

Subject: Comprehensive City Planning Document--Issue Action Report

Dear Mr. Crick,

I am leaving town tomorrow afternoon for a few days, so I will be unable to attend the steering committee's public meeting (Monday, July 13). But I did want you to know that as a long-time Lawrence resident who has been quite active in the preservation community (HRC and LPA board), I support a strong, thoughtful "growth management" plan for the city. I am currently the Westwood Neighborhood's representative to LAN, so I am interested in all issues having to do with the well-being of our older and newer neighborhoods. But I am especially concerned about the quality affordable housing issue in Lawrence and would encourage you to support the adoption of inclusionary zoning.

Respectfully,

Virgil W. Dean
11 Westwood Road

From: [Candice Davis](#)
To: [Jeff Crick](#)
Cc: [Scott McCullough](#); [Diane Stoddard](#)
Subject: H2020 steering committee
Date: Friday, July 10, 2015 1:46:33 PM
Attachments: [H2020 7-13-15-w-out.docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)

Hi Jeff. Please distribute this letter to the H2020 Steering Committee. Thanks,
Candice Davis LAN Chair

Dear Steering Committee for the Comprehensive Plan,
 The Lawrence Association of Neighborhoods, LAN, supports having a comprehensive city-planning document in place that clarifies in detail the planning vision for our entire city. It should be the foundation for over-all city planning, a guide for growth, development, maintenance, health and safety. Your review of this document, H2020, is extremely important to effective and wise city planning.

LAN is most interested in neighborhoods. Chapter 5 on **Residential Land Use** already has many good components that apply to neighborhoods but should be rewritten with 3 sub-headings instead of the 2 shown (Residential Development, Neighborhood Concept)

1. *Neighborhood Concept*: This is a statement, and a good one.
2. *Residential Development*: rewrite, minor changes.
3. *Existing Residential Neighborhoods*: rewrite larger changes with additions.

This sub-heading should be revised to also include:

1. Esthetic environment as mentioned in the “neighborhood concept”.
Properties should be properly maintained according to city codes-
 structures, trash, yard, etc.
2. Importance of neighborhood schools.
3. Adequate off street parking should be provided.
4. Emergency street access to residential areas by the police and fire department should be essential.
5. Neighborhoods need to be involved in the planning process of their neighborhoods from the start of development or redevelopment.
6. Established neighborhoods should have overlay districts to address their unique qualities that differ from new residential development.
7. Neighborhoods need to have neighborhood plans that are referred to and followed by the city planning department and various city commissions.
8. Creating higher density in established neighborhoods must be carefully considered in light of neighborhood plans, the “neighborhood concept”, and the unique qualities that exist in older neighborhoods.

In general LAN supports citywide planning that supports the health and welfare of the entire city versus the interests of any one entity. We also support the enforcement of established city codes. Everyone should play by the same rules. If a code becomes outdated or ineffective, then a change in the code should be considered.

Thank you for your dedication to a better Lawrence, Candice Davis LAN Chair

From: Dale Nimz [mailto:dalenimz@gmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2015 12:42 PM

To: Jeff Crick

Subject: Feedback from Planning and Development Services contact page

Good morning,

I read with interest the list of areas needing attention in the comprehensive plan recently posted.

I am disappointed that there is no mention of the crucial goal of "sustainability" and making Lawrence a resilient community capable of adapting to the predicted extremes of climate change. Also, historic preservation and neighborhood conservation are essential tools for adaptation. We cannot build our way to sustainability; we must use what we have and have inherited more efficiently and wisely.

If this has already been addressed, then fine. If not, then the other goals must rest on that foundation

thank you,

Dale Nimz

Lisa Koch\$✉👤 LISA KOCH @ kolisach

planner and owner of Groundswell Consulting passionate about social equity, mobility & community. books, movies, art, music, the 90's, humor, & KU Jayhawks.



[twitter](#)



@lawrenceks tie plan to capital improvement plng - "visioning" documents will sit on shelf unless there are things the City can implement

kolisach replied to **lawrenceks** an hour ago



[twitter](#)

@lawrenceks unique community engagement - focus groups, business owner panels, town/gown engagement - not just public meetings

kolisach replied to **lawrenceks** an hour ago



[twitter](#)

@lawrenceks considerations for new housing types, such as patio homes (popular with retirees and couples w/o children).

kolisach replied to **lawrenceks** an hour ago



[twitter](#)

@lawrenceks market study to determine what the needs is and at what price point for apartments and retail. Current new development is wrong.

From: Laura [mailto:laura.gloeckner78@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2015 1:22 PM
To: Jeff Crick
Subject: Action Report for Comprehensive Plan Update

Dear Committee Members,

If you haven't already, please consider the following:

- Create quality neighborhoods for all ages;

Please consider that cut through traffic behaviors impact the quality of our neighborhoods and the value of our homes. Cut through traffic is a nuisance and a safety issue and quickly destroys neighborhoods. There is a traffic calming list of neighborhoods that have requested traffic calming that has projects approved that date back a decade that are still unfunded with Public Works. These are primarily neighborhood streets that are being severely abused by cut through drivers and these needs and requests seem to be unimportant. If the city cannot afford traffic calming then maybe there are other things that can be done to respond to this problem. Regardless neighborhoods and home owners need more support in protecting their streets from being abused by non residents looking to cut minutes off of travel by blowing through neighborhood streets intended to be used by the residents.

- Update the parks & recreation master plan.

Please consider dealing with the growing coyote population. This seems as a non issue for animal control until someone gets hurt. Home owners living by Naismith Park have been reporting coyote issues that have lived there for 20+ years but are told it is normal and they have always been there. Home owners are afraid to let their animals out and are being kept up through the night with howling. The more the population grows the more dangerous it becomes as you have basically a large pack of wild hungry dogs living in a city park but a domestic animal that has gotten out is seen as more of an issue?

Thank you for your time,

Laura Gloeckner

"All your life, you will be faced with a choice. You can choose to love or hate...I choose to love." - Johnny Cash