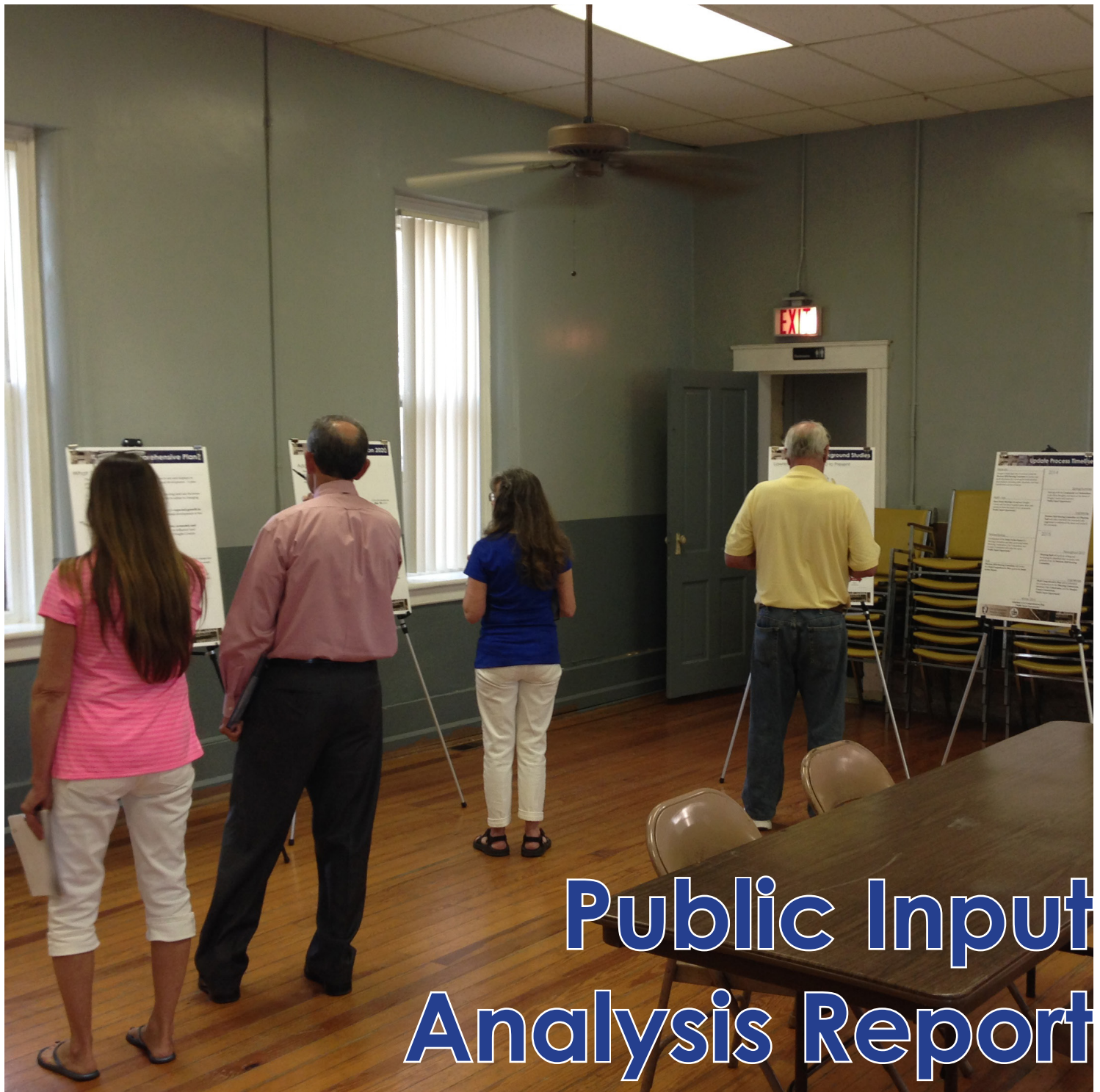


# Comprehensive Plan Update



City of Lawrence  
Douglas County  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



# Executive Summary

## Overview

With two survey instruments of varying methods and inputs captured, this report is intended to provide a quick overview of the key findings of both surveys. While both surveys were completed with differing goals and methods, there were consistent issues that were readily apparent in both results.

## ETC Survey

This [survey](#) was conducted by the ETC Institute in the spring of 2014 of residents of unincorporated Douglas County and also residents within the City of Lawrence. With the intent of capturing a statistically valid finding, the ETC Institute conducted a random sample of households throughout both the Lawrence and Douglas County that returned 1,046 surveys. The sample and survey was constructed to ensure the findings were both consistent with the socio-economic construct within the community and that the findings were quantitatively measurable.

## Open House Survey

To provide a forum for written input, gain more open-ended comments, and compliment the findings of the ETC Survey, the Horizon 2020 Steering Committee and Planning Staff conducted a series of Open House Forums to supplement the quantitative results with qualitative input. This survey was gathered over the course of four months, both during the nine public forums as well as online.

## Results

Both surveys resulted issues that the community felt was the most important. As a way to concisely identify the key issues, this report was created to provide a list of 16 of the key issues. The following analysis includes questions on both surveys that highlighted these topics, the chapters in *Horizon 2020* that speak to those issues, and staff's professional opinion of how strong the existing *Horizon 2020* document addresses these issues.

Issue	Policy Strength in <i>Horizon 2020</i>
1 Create Employment Opportunities	High
2 Downtown Stability	High
3 Quality Housing for All Incomes	Low
4 Managing Future Lawrence Growth	Medium
5 Better Protection of Natural Resources	High
6 Sidewalks/Trails/Walking Paths	High
7 Arts & Cultural Amenities	Low
8 Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety	High
9 Utilizing Existing Retail Space	Medium
10 Small Neighborhood Retail	Medium
11 Major In-Fill Redevelopment	Medium
12 Increasing Height/Density	Low
13 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space	Medium
14 Preserving Historic Buildings & Structures	Medium
15 Expansions of Downtown Retail	High
16 Maintaining Agricultural Uses in Douglas County	Medium

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## Issue 1: Create Employment Opportunities

### Analysis:

Description: Throughout both the Open House survey and also the ETC Survey, employment/job creation was the major issue that was a constant concern throughout Douglas County and Lawrence.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 13c, 14

ETC Survey: Question 1m/2, 3i/4, 5i, 16d

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 7: Industrial and Employment-Related Land Use, 12: Economic Development

Horizon 2020 Policy Strength: **High** || *Horizon 2020* devotes an entire chapter to this issue. The main focus of existing policies and goals is principally oriented towards attracting and growing existing businesses through ensuring the availability of appropriately zoned land and other similar land use related policies, stressing the need for diverse categories of employment uses. One area, however, that could be better represented in the plan is options for funding economic development.

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## Issue 2: Downtown Stability

### Analysis:

Description: Expressed in both the write-in sections as well as the questions themselves, this topic was a principal concern throughout the Open House process.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 12, 24

ETC Survey: Question 1c/2, 1h/2, 3f/4, 3g/4, 5o/6, 12, 16f, 15a

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 6: Commercial Land Use, 11: Historic Resources

Horizon 2020 Policy Strength: **High** || The prominence of Downtown Lawrence as a commercial and cultural commodity is strongly worked into *Horizon 2020* at present, especially its place as the dominant commercial and cultural center for Lawrence. Chapter 11: Historic Resources is in need of updating with respect to the utilization of historic resources to enhance economic development and to foster our sense of place by the identification, evaluation, documentation, and preservation of historic resources.



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### Issue 3: Quality Housing for All Incomes

#### Analysis:

Description: The concern most commonly expressed regarding this issue was availability, but also geography in the community was also significant.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 8, 9c

ETC Survey: Question 1c/2, 1e/2, 3h/4, 5g/6

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 4 (partial): Growth Management, 5 (partial): Residential Land Use

*Horizon 2020* Policy Strength: **Low** || While the current plan does have a chapter on residential uses, affordable housing has a minimal appearance (Chapter 5: Policy 4.6). With some of the recent situations within the national and local economy, affordable housing is an issue that is both a concern within Lawrence, but also throughout Douglas County.

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### Issue 4: Managing Future Lawrence Growth

#### Analysis:

Description: This was a main concern during the creation of *Horizon 2020*, and a strong concern for both residents within Lawrence, as well as those outside of it in survey responses. This issue also dovetails with the desire to maintain agricultural uses in the county.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 4, 5, 6/7, 26a, 27

ETC Survey: Question 1c/2, 1o/2, 3p/4, 3q/4, 5d/6, 5k/6, 16b, 16e

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 4: Growth Management, 5: Residential Land Use, 6: Commercial Land Use, 7: Industrial and Employment-Related Land Use, 8: Transportation, 12: Economic Development

*Horizon 2020* Policy Strength: **Medium** || The significance of this issue has not declined and it showed in both surveys. While *Horizon 2020* does contain significant goals and policies towards managing growth, revisions and additions may be necessary to bring them more in-line with best practices, the current state of the economy, and the physical reality of the community.

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## Issue 5: Better Protection of Natural Resources

### Analysis:

Description: An issue that received strong responses in both surveys, which is also seen to be of interest for both residents within the rural and urbanized areas of Douglas County.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 5, 25, 26a, 26b, 26c, 26d, 27

ETC Survey: Question 1a/2, 1l/2, 1o/2, 3j/4, 3q/4, 5d/6, 5n/6, 16a, 16e

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 16: Environment

Horizon 2020 Policy Strength: **High** || The recent creation of Chapter 16: Environment provides up-to-date policy language, giving *Horizon 2020* a strong stance on this topic.

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## Issue 6: Sidewalks/Trails/Walking Paths

### Analysis:

Description: In both surveys, residents expressed the need for more bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 9a, 9h, 15, 16, 19e, 19g, 20, 22

ETC Survey: Question 1f/2, 1i/2, 3d/4, 5c/6, 7e/8, 7f/8, 7g/8, 7h/8, 7i/8, 7j/8

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 8: Transportation, 10: Community Facilities, 16 (partial): Environment

Horizon 2020 Policy Strength: **High** || Through the incorporation of T2040 in Chapter 8: Transportation, an importance is placed on the development of infrastructure for multiple modes of transportation. New efforts related to multi-modal issues were incorporated in T2040, leading to new policies for developing complete streets and other initiatives in the City of Lawrence.

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## Issue 7: Arts & Cultural Amenities

### Analysis:

Description: A major topic of concern and/or interest within the Lawrence & Douglas County community, even though there was not a high number of questions dedicated specifically for this topic.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 10, 23b, 29

ETC Survey: Question 1j/2, 3u/4, 5a/6, 5l/6

Reference: N/A

Horizon 2020 Policy Strength: **Low** || While there are a few indirect policies that have an effect on this issue, there is not a set of direct policies that address the concerns and issues expressed by the respondents regarding arts and culture.

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## Issue 8: Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety

### Analysis:

Description: While many responses see the availability of facilities as an issue, an equal, if not stronger, concern is the safety people feel while using bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 9a, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 29, 30

ETC Survey: Question 1f, 1i/2, 3d/4, 5c/6, 7e, 7f, 7g, 7h, 7m/8

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 4 (partial): Growth Management, 8: Transportation, 10: Community Facilities, 16 (partial): Environment

Horizon 2020 Policy Strength: **High** || Chapter 5 of T2040 (Chapter 8: Transportation) devotes a considerable number of policies that speak to the safety of both modes of transportation.

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## Issue 9: Utilizing Existing Retail Space

### Analysis:

Description: While not as clear in the response from the surveys, there is considerable strength in the views and desires of a sizeable portion of respondents to encourage the use of existing retail spaces before creating new space.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 12, 28, 29

ETC Survey: Question 1q/2, 3p/4, 15a, 15d, 16b, 16c, 16e, 16f

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 4 (partial): Growth Management, 6: Commercial Land Use, 12 (partial): Economic Development

*Horizon 2020* Policy Strength: **Medium** || There are currently many policies that speak to a more general set of policies and goals, but specifically prioritizing the utilization of existing retail space over the creation of new spaces may need to be addressed.

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## Issue 10: Small Neighborhood Retail

### Analysis:

Description: Responses indicated that residents wanted the inclusion of small retail centers within their neighborhoods.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 5, 9e, 11c

ETC Survey: Question 3s/4, 5b/6, 15c, 15d, 16c, 16g

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 4 (partial): Growth Management, 6: Commercial Land Use

*Horizon 2020* Policy Strength: **Medium** || While the framework for inclusion of small neighborhood retail centers exists, locational and prioritization policies may need to be incorporated into the update.

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## Issue 11: Major In-Fill Redevelopment

### Analysis:

Description: The topic was mentioned in both surveys in terms of importance to the community. Promoting major in-fill development utilizes existing land resources before developing undisturbed areas.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 5, 11, 12, 28, 30

ETC Survey: Question 1q/2, 3p/4, 3s/4, 11/12, 15d, 16

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 4: Growth Management, 5: Residential Land Use, 6: Commercial Land Use, 7: Industrial and Employment-Related Land Use

*Horizon 2020* Policy Strength: **Medium** || Policies exist that encourage and accommodate in-fill redevelopment, but may need to be reviewed to give them strength.

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## Issue 12: Increasing Height/Density

### Analysis:

Description: Respondents of the survey indicated that they were willing to accept developments of increased heights and density.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 5, 28, 30

ETC Survey: Question 1q/2, 3p/4, 15a, 16b, 16e, 16f, 16g

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 4: Growth Management

Horizon 2020 Policy Strength: **Low** || Some policies exist to allow for developments of increased height and density as an effective growth management strategy. More policies are needed to address how and where they are located.

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## Issue 13: Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

### Analysis:

Description: Provisions for parks, recreation and open space contribute to the overall livability of a community.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 9h, 19 a-g, 20, 21, 22, 24

ETC Survey: Question 1f/2, 1n/2, 3c/4, 3d/4, 3t/4, 5h/6

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 9: Parks, Recreation, Open Space Areas and Facilities, 10: Community Facilities, 16 (partial): Environment

Horizon 2020 Policy Strength: **Medium** || The promotion of and provision for parks, recreation, and open space are included in the comprehensive plan but may need to be updated to reflect current amenities, trends, and future needs.

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## Issue 14: Preserving Historic Buildings & Structures

### Analysis:

Description: An issue for both Douglas County as well as the City of Lawrence, ensuring the structures and landscapes that help define both the history and character of the community are kept for future generations.



Input: Open House Survey: Question 9d, 23 a-c, 24

ETC Survey: Question 1b/2, 5j/6

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 5 (partial): Residential Land Use, 6: Commercial Land Use, 11: Historic Resources

Horizon 2020 Policy Strength: **Medium** || Chapter 11: Historic Resources is a chapter that is completely dedicated to this issue; however, it is in need of updating and revision.

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## Issue 15: Expansions of Downtown Retail

### Analysis:

Description: In a similar line as the stability of Downtown Lawrence, the concern with the mixture of the commercial uses, with other uses, within the core is also a notable concern among a larger portion of survey respondents.

Input: Open House Survey: Question 11, 12, 30

ETC Survey: Question 1h/2, 3f/4, 15a, 15d, 16f

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 6: Commercial Land Use, Chapter 11: Historic Resources

Horizon 2020 Policy Strength: **High** || The stability, and ensuring the prominence of the Downtown within the community is addressed, by encouraging and supporting the development of a broad mix of land uses, with an emphasis on retail as a major land use, the provision of parking facilities, improved accessibility, and the expansion of Downtown Lawrence while maintaining the integrity of surrounding neighborhoods.

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## Issue 16: Maintaining Agricultural Uses in Douglas County

### Analysis:

Description: This item entails both the preservation of prime agricultural soils (Type I & II), and ensuring that the historic land use that has been the predominant feature of Douglas County for many decades is not permanently or inappropriately lost to development.

Input: Open House Survey: Question D, E, F, 5, 26a, 27, 28, 29, 30

ETC Survey: Question 1a/2, 1o/2, 1q/2, 3q/4, 5q/6, 16a, 16b, 16e

Reference: *Horizon 2020*: Chapter 4: Growth Management, 7: Industrial and Employment-Related Land Use, 9 (partial): Park, Recreation, Open Space Areas and Facilities, 16: Environment

*Horizon 2020* Policy Strength: **Medium** || Due to agriculture's place and prominence in the county, there is similar prominence given to it throughout various chapters of the existing comprehensive plan. Chapter 7: Industrial and Employment-Related Land Use and Chapter 16: Environment both contain policies that address preservation of high-quality agricultural soils, but the plan may need to incorporate more policies regarding growth management/sprawl that address the economic importance of agriculture to the community.

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