

# City of Lawrence

## Opportunity Zone Community Meeting

October 25, 2019

### Summary



*Public service lies at the heart of democracy.*

## Community Meeting Overview and Results

Opportunity Zones are a new federal tool designed to spur development in economically distressed neighborhoods. Investors are given tax incentives to promote growth in these struggling areas.

In 2018, former Gov. Jeff Colyer designated two census tracts in Lawrence as Opportunity Zones. The first tract covers several neighborhoods east of Massachusetts Street, including the East Lawrence Neighborhood, Brook Creek Neighborhood, portions of the Barker Neighborhood, Lawrence Venture Park and East Hills Business Park. The other tract covers the University of Kansas campus and West campus.

The Lawrence Opportunity Zones could benefit from strategic long-term investments in education, the arts, science, and new restaurants and retail businesses.

While local jurisdictions do not control where or how investments are made and the tool can be used without city or community knowledge, local control remains in place and the project must still meet local zoning and land use requirements.

However, should a developer show interest in using the tool within the confines of the City of Lawrence's current policies, the City, together with the Douglas County Community Foundation, the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce, the Lawrence Association of Neighborhoods, and the University of Kansas wanted to identify community priorities within each zone.

To that end, a meeting was convened October 22, 2019 at the Douglas County Fairgrounds. Nearly 50 people attended the meeting, which:

- Educated participants regarding Opportunity Zones
- Described the two Opportunity Zones in Lawrence and the five Targeted Investment Areas (TIA) within them
- Identified community priorities of potential projects

Complete results can be found later in this report, but the top priorities in each of the five TIAs are shown in the following table.

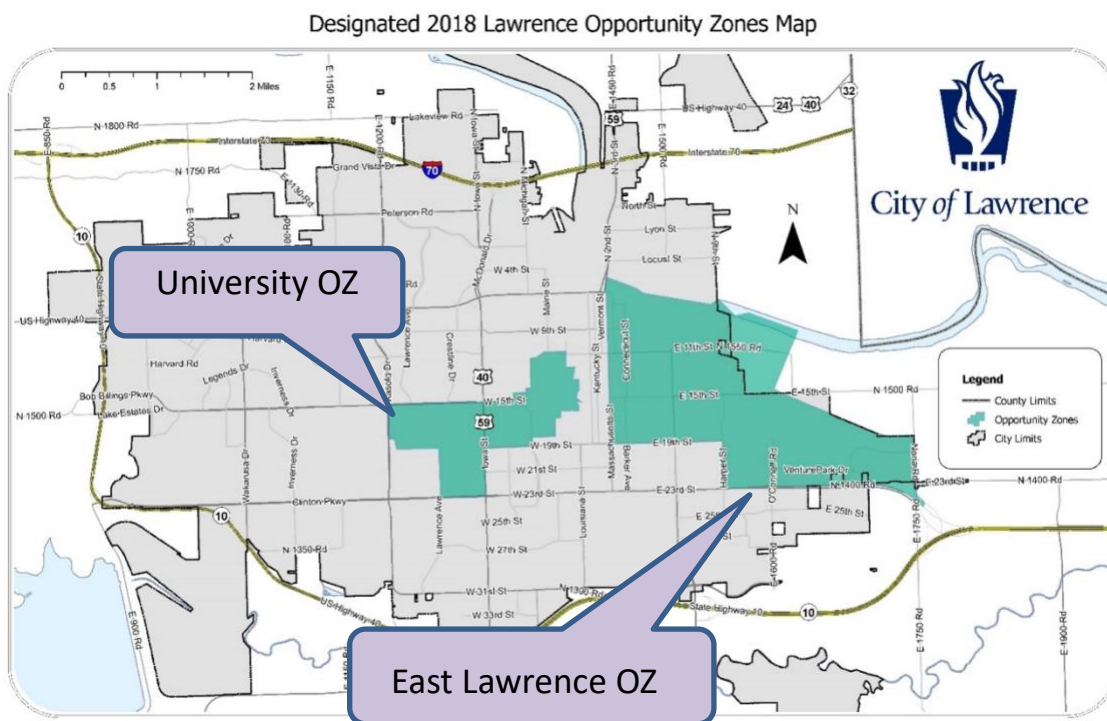
Eastern Downtown Corridor
Grocery store
Quality Commercial and Mixed-Use Projects: Multi story (between 3 and 6 stories) mixed use commercial and residential building with 20% permanent affordable housing
Rehabilitation and protection of historic assets
Historic Warehouse Arts District
Housing for all incomes
Art and cultural projects that serve artists and the Community
Rehabilitation and protection of historic assets
Business Parks: Venturepark and East Hills
Industrial/business park projects that create quality jobs/employment opportunities
Industrial/Business Park projects that incorporate green infrastructure in their site and building designs
Green industry
Eastern Lawrence Neighborhoods
Projects that revitalize vacant properties while respecting the existing character of the area
Early education facility
Projects that provide housing for all incomes
KU Research Partnership Zone
Projects that support Human & Environmental Health, Nature, Community Health
Industry investment and partnerships that connect University research and ideas to the marketplace
Permaculture demonstration site/community center

## Community Meeting Summary

The meeting began with an overview of Opportunity Zones by Jeff Jewell of the National Development Council. His presentation can be found in the attachments to this report. Key takeaways, however, are:

- The intent of the Opportunity Zone tool is to spur private sector investment in low-income communities.
- Local jurisdictions do not control where or how investments are made, and the tool can be used without city or community knowledge
- Projects must still meet local zoning and land use requirements.

Lawrence has two opportunity zones, as are depicted in the following graphic.



The East Lawrence Opportunity Zone has four TIAs while the KU OZ has just one.

Facilitators described the characteristics of each TIA and project opportunities that would be currently permitted according to City of Lawrence policies. Participants were given the opportunity to add to those lists of opportunities in identifying what they would invest in; suggestions were then added to the appropriate TIA.

Following the presentation, participants were given two color-coded dots to identify their priorities in each zone. The images that follow show the:

- Targeted Investment Area
- Possible project opportunities
- The results of the prioritization exercise for each TIA

## Eastern Downtown Corridor



### General Characteristics

- Downtown Lawrence is the governmental, social, cultural and historical center
- Mix of commercial, residential, public, and office uses
- Characterized by mixed-use and stand-alone structures, public open spaces, street festivals and activities, and a cycle of 24-7 activities

## Eastern Downtown Corridor

### Possible Opportunities:

1. Quality commercial and mixed-use projects
2. Grocery store.
3. Housing for all incomes.
4. Revitalization of vacant properties.
5. Rehabilitation and protection of historic assets.
6. Projects that create jobs.
7. Status Quo

Possible Opportunities	Dots
Grocery store	23
Quality commercial and mixed-use projects: Multi-story (between 3 and 6 stories) mixed use commercial and residential building with 20% permanent affordable housing	16
Rehabilitation and protection of historic assets	15
Downtown coworking space	9
Revitalization of vacant properties	9
Housing for all incomes; affordable housing with contracted returns	6
Projects that create jobs	5
More focus (displays, etc.) on our fantastic history as a free state	5
Status quo	1
Senior housing in downtown	0

## Historic Warehouse Arts District

East Lawrence Opportunity Zone: Targeted Investment Areas:  
Historic Warehouse Arts District



### General Characteristics

- Located in the historic East Lawrence manufacturing and railroad freight area & part of the East Lawrence residential neighborhood.
- Immediately adjacent to the west and south of the area are historic residential neighborhoods.
  - Governed by the 8th and Penn Design Guidelines,
  - Protects historic assets;
  - Mix of land uses including residential, professional offices, inner-neighborhood commercial uses, and retail operations;
  - Provides a multi-modal transportation system.

## Historic Warehouse Arts District

### Possible Opportunities:

1. Housing for all incomes.
2. Rehabilitation and protection of historic assets.
3. Commercial and mixed-use projects
4. Retail and office incubators that serve the surrounding neighborhoods.
5. Art and cultural projects that serve artists and the community.
6. Status Quo

Possible Opportunities	Dots
Housing for all incomes	22
Art and cultural projects that serve artists and the community	13
Rehabilitation and protection of historic assets	11
Retail and office incubators that serve the surrounding neighborhoods	11
Accessible senior housing	11
Multi-use building incorporating retail, office, and residential use +/- 4 stories	9
Mixed-use retail/residential to house a small business incubator/popup; art studio space/good all for restaurant incubator	
A Meow Wolf-type artist-based tourist attraction	
Art/nonprofit/gallery/community space	6
Commercial and mixed-use projects	4
Status quo	2
Affordable housing - single-family or townhome; Uses with goal to keep fixed cost per unit under \$150k; Low income housing/apartments/transitional housing; Permanently affordable housing with either a mixed-use or live/work areas or dense neighborhood	0
Commercial	

## Business Parks: VenturePark & East Hills



### General Characteristics

- Existing industrial uses and platted and zoned lots intended to support new industrial projects
- Residential and many commercial retail uses are prohibited through the area's zoning and would not be compatible in this area.

## Business Parks: VenturePark & East Hills

### Possible Opportunities:

1. Industrial/business park projects that create quality jobs/employment opportunities.
2. Industrial/business park projects that expand and diversify the city's economy.
3. Industrial/business park projects that incorporate green infrastructure in their site and building designs.
4. Status Quo

Possible Opportunities	Dots
Industrial/business park projects that create quality jobs/employment opportunities	34
Industrial/business park projects that incorporate green infrastructure in their site and building designs	21
Green industry	16
Industrial/business park projects that expand and diversify the city's economy	10
Self-storage facility	1
Status quo	1



## Eastern Lawrence Neighborhoods



### General Characteristics

- Variety of land uses, which maintain economic viability and also define the physical character of the neighborhood
- Industrial uses that are important to the long-term viability of the neighborhood.
- Residential and industrial uses mostly separated.

## Eastern Lawrence Neighborhoods

### Possible Opportunities:

1. Projects that provide housing for all incomes.
2. Projects that revitalize vacant properties while respecting the existing character of the area.
3. Projects that rehabilitate and protect historic assets.
4. Neighborhood commercial projects that provide services to the neighborhood residents.
5. Projects that incorporate the arts for the benefit of the public.
6. Status Quo

Possible Opportunities	Dots
Projects that revitalize vacant properties while respecting the existing character of the area	16
Early education facility	14
Projects that provide housing for all incomes	12
Neighborhood commercial projects that provide services to the neighborhood residents	9
Grocery store in east Lawrence or a venture that would offer good paying jobs for 5-20 people; two grocery stores - one in north Lawrence and one in east Lawrence.	8
Redevelop corner shopping center - multi-use multi-modal access, retail & offices, small business startup space, apartments/condos var. sizes, opportunity for local investment gas station, groceries, dollar store, pharmacy barber/stylist, daycare, pet care, coffee shop whole block mixed-use development at 19th & Haskell (strip mall) retail housing - regular & affordable units & affordable daycare on-site	8
Project that rehabilitate and protect historic assets	3
Affordable housing Transitional housing for at-risk groups A ranch home that would be accessible for older people transitioning from a multi-story home	3

<p>A multigenerational, varied sized homes but none huge with shared amenities around a "village green"</p> <p>A small home neighborhood with green homes for singles, young families, and those at-risk</p> <p>Recreational access to the river extending from below the spillway up past the I-70 bridge with amenities for all abilities</p> <p>Energy efficient neighborhood with mixed housing types where there is designed community space for supportive services, local Business and housing for all incomes</p>	3
Tiny house development for U.S. Veterans	2
Projects that incorporate the arts for the benefit of the public	2
Status quo	2

## KU Research Partnership Zone



### General Characteristics

- Known as the Research Partnership Zone in the University of Kansas 2014-2024 Campus Master Plan,
- Focus on public-private partnerships that would benefit the university – space for research, start-ups, and industry partnerships; pharmaceutical and animal science facilities; and support spaces for students.

## KU Research Partnership Zone

### Possible Opportunities:

1. Projects guided by the Adopted KU 2014-2024 Campus Master Plan
2. Industry investment and partnerships which connect university research and ideas to the marketplace.
3. Status Quo

Possible Opportunities	Dots
Something related to health, climate change, reducing waste human & environmental health, nature, community health	30
Industry investment and partnerships that connect university research and ideas to the marketplace	20
Permaculture demonstration site/community center zero waste	16
Business incubator	9
Projects guided by the adopted KU 2014-2024 campus master plan	3
Status quo	3